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# Kurdish Minority Politics in Iraq

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KURDISH MINORITY POLITICS

IN IRAQ

(TITLE)

BY

HASSAN A. BAZZAZ

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE . . . . .	.i11
CHAPTER I.     INTRODUCTION. . . . .	1
The Background; Kurdistan; Population; Geographical Location and Economy; Language; Society; Political Parties; The Development of the Problem.	
CHAPTER II.    KURDS UNDER TURKEY AND IRAN . . . . .	15
CHAPTER III.   KURDS UNDER BRITISH CONTROL 1917-1932 . . . . .	19
CHAPTER IV.    KURDS UNDER INDEPENDENT IRAQ 1932-1958. . . . .	24
CHAPTER V.     KURDS UNDER REPUBLICAN IRAQ . . . . .	29
The Demands of the Kurds; The Agreements of the Iraqi Governments with the Kurds.	
CHAPTER VI.    CONCLUSION. . . . .	45
The Differences Among the Kurds; Kurdish Position In Both Turkey and Iran; The Influence of the Kurdish Problem On the Iraqi Foreign Policy; Opinion.	
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	61



## PREFACE

I do not think that the wise and the intellectual people among the Kurds will question my opinion, that the work for having an independent Kurdish State is hard. More than that, it is not in the favor of the Kurdish of Iraq. The real and just demand is not the political separation, but the recognition of their national existence, and the acceptance of their nationalism within the framework of the unity of the Iraqi State. The recognition of the existence of several nationalities in Iraq should not drive us to accept divisions of Iraq into separate, autonomous states.

The Kurds should, also, realize that world politics today is increasingly moving toward unity and alliance of states and people. The small nations now have no chance to compete with the big nations and allied states. The Kurds have some sense of unity, but they are divided among many states of the Middle East. This division prevents them from forming any centralized national movement.

If the Kurds expect any measure of success they must be flexible in their demands. On the other side, the Iraqi government should take a sympathetic attitude towards demands for autonomy. This solution would give the units of the Iraqi State the chance to keep their identity and be self-governing in local affairs.

The sources employed in my research come mainly from English publications. Such sources tend to be more objective than either the Arabic or the Kurdish sources. However, Arabic material has been depended upon to study the Iraqi position.

The problem within Iraq gives me more chance to find varied explanations and documents, which I probably could not find in any other language. This is because there are many opinions from the government and from the people, which have not been translated into English.

The Kurdish language is primarily a spoken language. Because of its many different dialects, it is often not written. Intellectuals among the Kurds were writing in Persian, Turkish, or Arabic languages. They attempted to have a common dialect to facilitate written communication. Most of their publications are still in the Arabic language. This utilization of Arabic favored me because of my ignorance of the Kurdish language.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Background

Kurds are an established minority in Iraq, as well as in other neighbouring countries. More than three-fourths of the people of Iraq are Arabs. The Kurds, comprising at least 15 percent of the population, live in the northern mountain areas. Other Kurds live in Syria, Turkey, and Iran, and are divided into tribes, clans, and sub-clans. They speak various dialects of Kurdish. However, most of them can speak Arabic, though they are trying to have the Iraqi government accept Kurdish as one of the official national languages of the country.

The Kurds are a people of Indo-European origin who are related to the Persians and speak an independent language of the Aryan or Iranian family. Ethnically and linguistically, the relation between Kurds, Persians, and Afghans is comparable to those that exist between Italians, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Catalans, and Portuguese, or between Russians and Poles.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Isast Cheriff Vanly, The Revolution of Iraqi Kurdistan (Published by the Committee for Defense of the Kurdish People's Rights, 1965), p. 3.

Kurdish people have their own divisions within society. They include farmers, city dwellers, and nomads who carry on a variety of occupations. Their home is the Zagros Mountains which stretch from Kermanshah to the Soviet border and beyond. Flanking the mountains on either side are the Kurdish towns, notably Sulymania and Rawanduz on the Iraqi side, and Sarandaj, Saqqiz, and Mahabad on the Iranian side.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the Kurds who live in valleys of the Zagros Mountains and within the boundaries of Iraq, Turkey, and Iran, have had sufficient time to develop a number of dialects. The Gilakis are the Caspian Kurds with colonies in the provinces of Mazandaran and Gorgan.<sup>3</sup> The region is bordered by the eastern slopes of the Zagros Mountains up to Lake Rezaiyeh with an Azeri incline around the town of Rezaiyeh, and extends to the southeast up to a line running half-way between Sarandaj, Kermanshah, and Hamadan. The region in the South extends a rough line which takes in Kermanshah and Kirkuk and just excludes some of Masul, while taking in Mardin, Viransehir, and Urfa. (Map #1)

Historically, looking at the Kurds background, Arafa says,

In a Sumerian inscription dated 2000 B.C. a country known as Kardaka is mentioned, and afterwards the Assyrian King Tiglath Pileser appears to have fought a tribe known as Kur-ti-e. In 400-401 B.C. Xenophen speaks of the Kardukai, a mountain folk who harassed his march towards the sea. According to the Arab historians and geographers, Balahuri, Tabari, and Ibnel-Athir, the tribes who were afterwards known as the Kurds, occupied chiefly the country to the east of the river Buhtan (Bahtan), and the north bank of the Tigris to the north of Cisre (Jaziraht-ibn-Omar).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Carleton S. Coon, Caravan: The Story of The Middle East (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1958), p. 215.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup>Hassan Arafa, The Kurds (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 3.



*1 - Region Inhabited by Kurds*



2

Mulla Mustafa<sup>5</sup> stated that Kurds are those who feel that they are Kurds. Similarly the French, or Germans, or Iranians are those who feel themselves to belong to those nationalities. He was naturally influenced by the nationalistic movement in the Middle-East, especially after the two World Wars.

Several theories have been advanced by Middle-Eastern authorities, in an attempt to prove that the Kurds belong to some racial group, but these theories are chiefly based on politics and have little value from an ethnographical point of view.<sup>6</sup>

The Middle-Eastern communities are difficult to separate into ethnic and racial groups for the confusion goes beyond the racial identities. As a result, it is difficult to define to which race the individuals in different communities in the Middle-East belong. Racism in that area is still in the vanguard of political beliefs.

The Kurds are scattered in eastern Iraq, east Azerbaijan, and even in south-eastern Iraq. The people of Garrus, in spite of their common ancestry have abandoned the Kurdish language and habits of life, and lost all affinity with the bulk of Kurds living around the frontiers of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. Thus they cannot be considered as forming part of the Kurdish people of today, although, the Marwarids, as well as, the Hasanwayhs belong to the Kurdish race; they were considered Arabs after being officially invested by the Khalifs, and having adopted Arabic as the official language of their states.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>The present day leader of the Kurds in Iraq will be discussed later in this paper.

<sup>6</sup>Arafa, The Kurds, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, p. 8.

4

The name "Kurd" dates from the Arab invention of their country, the plural being, according to the rules of Arabic grammar, "Akrad."

### Kurdistan

Kurdistan refers to where the Kurdish people now live. These areas as we have said are located in different states and have political boundaries. Kurdistan also means the land where the Kurds form the overwhelming majority of the population, far outnumbering the minorities living among them.<sup>8</sup>

The word "Kurdistan" which means "the land of the Kurds" includes two words, "Kurd" and "Stan." "Kurd" means the Kurdish people and "Stan" means the location or the country.<sup>9</sup> This term was founded in the 12th century as a geographical term referring to a certain area. But now it has a political meaning, rising up with the Kurdish national movement.

Vanly says that Kurdistan is a vast country with an expanse of some 500,000 square kilometers. It is a country that is geographically continuous, but divided by political frontiers, mainly between Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. Turkish Kurdistan covers the eastern provinces of that state. Iranian Kurdistan extends over the western edge of the Iranian plateau, and Iraqi Kurdistan covers the northern provinces of the state.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Derk Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 1.

<sup>9</sup>Jalal Talabani, Kurdistan Wa al-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya ("Kurdistan and The Kurdish National Movement") (Baghdad: Dar al-Jumhuriya, 1970), p. 8.

<sup>10</sup>Vanly, The Revolution of Iraqi Kurdistan, p. 4.

In addition, there are also some Kurds in northern Syria, adjacent to the Turkish-Syrian border. In the Soviet Union there are Kurdish communities which are dispersed in the Soviet Socialist Republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. These are not in political sympathy with the Kurds of Kurdistan, for the Soviet Union has effectively prevented them from having any contacts across the borders.

### Population

It is not easy to estimate the total population of the Kurds, because there are some states who deny their existence. Others try to reduce their numbers. A reasonable estimate may put the population of the Kurds at about six million.

The Kurdish population during the Ottoman Empire was less than half a million. It rose to about 600,000 in 1931. In Iraq now their population is about one and a quarter million.<sup>11</sup>

Kinnane says that well-informed sources agree that there are about 1,200,000 Kurds in Iraq, 1,400,000 in Persia, 2,500,000 in Turkey, 250,000 in Syria, and between 60,000 and a 100,000 in the Soviet Caucasus. This puts the total between five and six million.<sup>12</sup>

Although accurate statistics on the size of ethnic and religious communities in Iraq are not available, and estimates vary widely, the estimates of the proportion of Kurds in the

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<sup>11</sup> Abdul-Rahman Baszaz, Al-Iraq min Al-Ihtilal Hats Al Istiqlal ("Iraq from Occupation to Independence") (Baghdad: Al-Ani Press, 1967), p. 285.

<sup>12</sup> Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 2.



population range from under 15 to more than 20 percent.<sup>13</sup>

### Geographical Location And Economy

The area in which the Kurds live is a mountainous area, rich in mineral resources, with green valleys and internal plains that are regularly cultivated. The mountains are very wooded and have many forests. The climate is severe, very cold in winter, with heavy snow, and fairly hot and dry in summer, except in the mountains. The Tigris and the Euphratis flow in that area also. (See Map #2)

The Kurds of Iraq are regarded as hardy mountaineers, many of whom are still tribally organized. The majority are settled farmers or semi-nomadic crop raisers and stockbreeders.

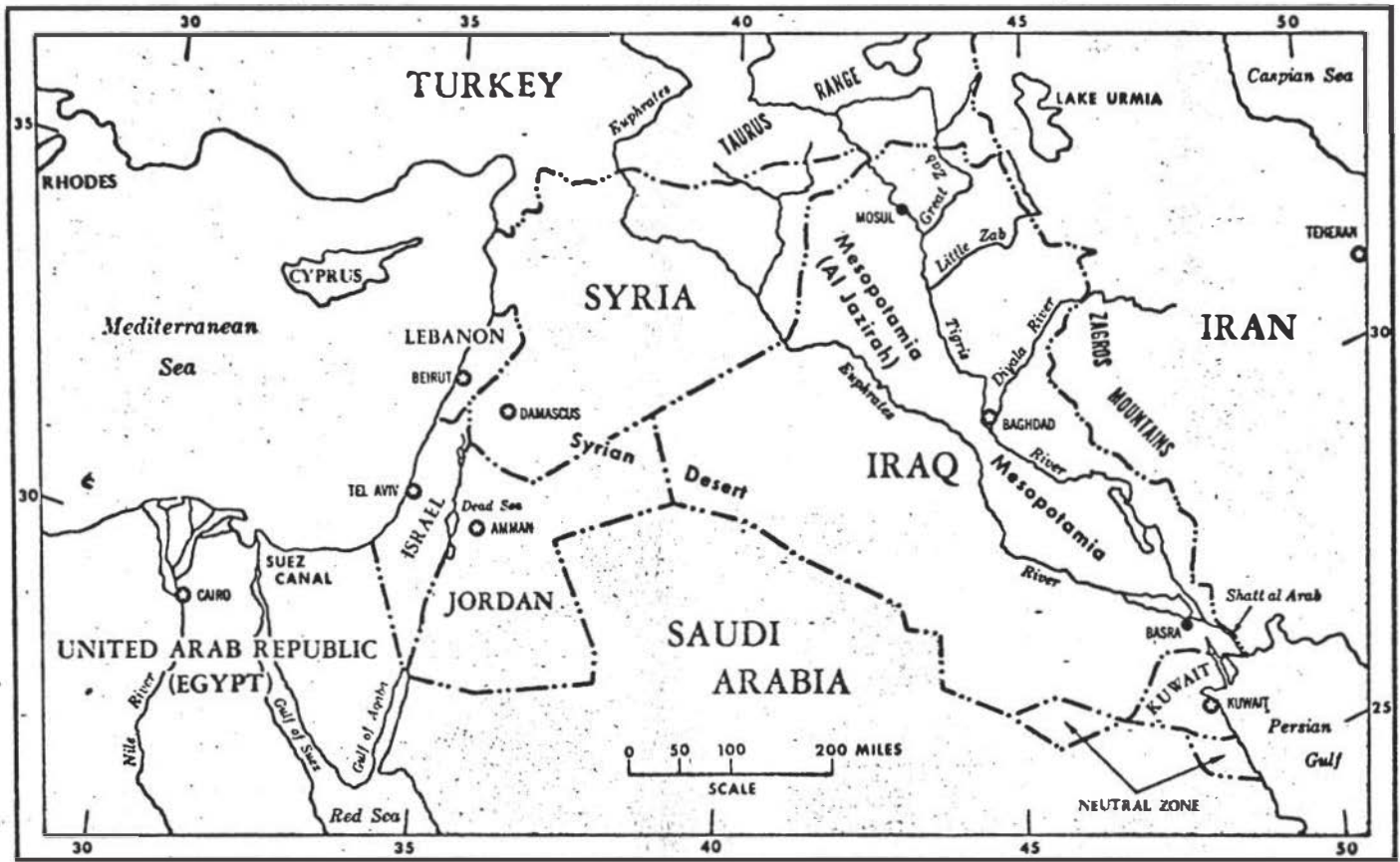
Farming is the main occupation of the Kurds. The people who live on the slope of the mountains usually send their flocks to the mountain pastures in the summer. In the winter, when the snow is deep, they stable them in caves.<sup>14</sup>

The plain of Arbil in the North of Iraq produces a high grade of wheat. Tobacco is an important source of income for the Iraqi Kurds. Goats and sheep are the principal animals kept by the farmers. Rice and barley are also produced in the North. Horses and donkeys supply transportation and power for farm labour, especially in the mountains. Raisins, apricots, melons, almonds, figs, and other fruit grow wild or are cultivated in gardens and orchards. The Iraqi Kurds profit from the oil in their area.

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<sup>13</sup>Harvey H. Smith, and others, Area Handbook for Iraq (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 61.

<sup>14</sup>Coon, Caravan: The Story of The Middle East, p. 217.



2 - Location of IRAQ

## Language

Iraq is predominantly an Arab country where people are more than 90 percent Moslem. Arabic is the official language and the mother tongue of more than three-fourths of the people. Kurdish, the native tongue of 15 to 20 percent of the population, is the most widely spoken minority language. According to an agreement signed in 1966 it has an official status equal to that of Arabic.<sup>15</sup>

Before Islam the Kurdish language used its own alphabet. After Islam, the Kurds started using the Arabic alphabet in their language. The Iraqi Kurds and Iranian Kurds are now using the Arabic Alphabet. The Kurds of the Soviet Union are using the Russian alphabet. In Turkey and Syria they use the Latin alphabet.<sup>16</sup>

As mentioned previously the Arabic language is the official language of Iraq. The Iraqi constitution did not forget the other minority languages. For example, Article 17 from the first Iraqi Constitution clarified that the Arabic language is the official language of Iraq. However, another official language besides Arabic may be accepted by special decree.

In 1931 the government published the law of the local languages. Article Two included the counties (Alwiah) which could use the Kurdish language as an official language. Article Three included the counties which could use the Arabic or the Kurdish language as an official language. Article Six says, "In all the (Qadhas and liwas) which are mentioned in Article Five, the learning language should be either Arabic, Turkish, or Kurdish."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Smith and others, Area Handbook for Iraq, p. 66.

<sup>16</sup>Talabani, Kurdistan Wa as-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya, pp. 18-19.

<sup>17</sup>Bazzaz, Al-Iraq min Al-Ihtilal Hata Al-Istiqal, p. 297.

Kurdish language, in general, had difficulties equaling other languages because of the different alphabets and dialects. For example, Smith says that Kurdish, and Indo-European language, related to, but in many ways different from Persian is spoken by the main body of Kurds and by the Shabaks and Sarlyaks. The Yazidis use Kurdish as their vernacular, but Arabic is their religious language of the three Kurdish dialects. Kurdi is spoken by the Suran and Baban Kurd. The Bandinan Kurds speak the Kermanji dialect. The Kakai speak a dialect called macho-macho (or Gorani).<sup>18</sup>

### Society

Like other groups of the Middle-Eastern society, traditional Kurdish society is based on the secular and the spiritual chieftains and the ties of their families. The people of the mountains, and the commoners, tend to belong to the tie of the tribal families. In the foothill area the tendency seems to be more for the feudal relationship and less tribal tie, and the commoners are not related by family ties.

In addition, there is a difference between the Kurds of the mountains and of the plains. The Kurds in the mountains recognize their own literature. Plains Kurds differ from the hill groups that they must be treated as a separate culture.

The socio-political institution in the Kurdish community of Iraq starts with "Ashiret" which is the largest political organization in that community. This word comes from the Arabic language and

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<sup>18</sup>Smith and others, Area Handbook for Iraq, p. 67.



it means "Tribal". Ashiret is made up of Tira, the primary political land-owning class whose members descend from a common ancestry. The latter are divided into "Khesl"; its members all descend from a common patrilineal ancestor who in turn are descendants of the Tira founding father. It has a head referred to as "beg or Agha." The head usually has a great political power within the political economy of the Tira.

The tribal system has earned the Kurds a bad reputation in Europe. They are accepted and approved part of tribal life, and it is held to be a respectable occupation. Brigandage is a logical expression of tribal circumstances, economic scarcity, political fragmentation, and social dependence on the leader. The rule of Aghas and Sheikhs is strengthened by successful raids, and the decline of these brigand bands has gone together with the decline of the tribal feudal order. The agha or Sheikh may be feared and hated but his followers continue to submit to his authority and leadership. The Kurds distinguish between Sheikhs who come from families claiming descent from the Prophet and those who cannot. The latter are called "prayer-carpet Sheikh's".<sup>19</sup>

Most of the Kurds are Muslims and the majority of them are Muslims of the Sunni Sect. They entered Islam during the first half of the Seventh century when the Arabs established the Islamic Empire. Some of the Kurds who live in Persia are Shia. The Sunni Kurds as a political entity tended to support the Turkish Empire, which the Shia Kurds in Persia tended to support Persia. They respected the Arabs because they considered the latter as "bringers" of Islam.

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<sup>19</sup>Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 16.

So far very little Kurdish literature has been written in the major European schools of drama. The Kurdish literature is rich in poetry. It may belong either to popular traditions or to more sophisticated forms. There is a written literature as old as the tenth century A.D. Most writing is done in the Arabic alphabet, but in recent times, some nationalists have preferred to use the Roman alphabet.

Moreover, the Kurdish language is as first printed in the newspaper "Kurdistan," established in 1892 in Cairo. Until now most of the interesting literary historical and critical work done in Kurdistan has been published outside Kurdistan, especially Baghdad and Damascus. A great deal has been published in Sulymania in the north of Iraq.

Dress is a matter for individual preference and taste. The traditional Kurds have their own style of clothes. The Iraqis may wear, according to their choice, traditional Arab garments or the traditional Kurdish outfit. The bulk of the population in the cities and bigger towns has taken to European form of dress. For the sake of practical convenience, dress itself could hardly alter one's obligations and privileges to the nation.

Finally, women among the Kurds enjoy considerably more freedom than Turkish women, Arabs, or Persians. The veil is uncommon, and though modest behavior, they are not particularly shy of strange men. The physical life of the women among the Kurds is rough, because of the heavy work. She is respected and listened to in the political leadership of tribes.

Political Parties

The Democratic and Radical ideas, which came up strongly after World War I, and the changing in the societies of the Middle East, helped to promote the radical and national feelings. The movement of Arab Nationalism in the Arab world as well as in Iraq and other neighbouring countries, also helped the Kurds to look to nationalise.

The first communist Kurdish party was established in Iraq under the name of "Shorish" -Hizb Razkari Kurd-Hizb Taharor Alkurd. In 1945 the Iraqi communist party divided into two wings; the Iraqi communist party and "Hizb al-Shaab." The Kurdish communists in that time established their own which they called "The Kurda Communist Party." Salih Al-Haydari was elected as a secretary of the party.<sup>20</sup>

The Kurdish Democratic Party was not in the same position as other parties were.<sup>21</sup>

There were other small wings of the Kurdish Communist Party such as (Z.K.) which was led by Ibrahim Ahmad, and also other wings led by Mulla Sharif Al Arbili. The latter had published a newspaper named "Nazadi-Al-HurriaR."

The "Haywa" party supported Mulla Mustafa Barazani in 1944. In 1945 Barazani became the leader of the party and changed to Malitia.

The leaders of the National Democratic Party in 1946 held a secret conference in Baghdad. They elected the central committee and published a newspaper "Razkari." The first name of the party

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<sup>20</sup> Talabani, Kurdistan Wa al-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya, p. 78.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

was "Party Demokrati Kurd-Iraq or Al Hizb al-Democrati Al-Kurdi-Iraq" or "The Party." The name, after 1959 was changed to the Kurdish Democratic Party. The leading figure of the K.D.P. before Mulla Mustafa Barazani had become its leader, was as the secretary-general of the party, but he proved to be the most active member of the group.<sup>22</sup> Barazani though reluctantly accepted as the leader of the K.D.P. belonged to the old generation. The son of a tribal shiekh and dependent on the tribal loyalty of his followers, his views of Kurdish nationalism necessarily differed from those of the Young Kurds.<sup>23</sup> Generally, the party of K.D.P. is a party of the working and peasant masses, the lower middle classes, and the old Kurdish generation. Kurdish political newspapers, such as the Khebat were the official organ of the K.D.P. These people became prominent dailies of the party.<sup>24</sup>

Besides these parties, there are other groups and organizations, which have different approaches to the problem. For instance, there are some Kurdish tribes in favour of the Iraqi government, and against Barazani, who they called "Forsan Saladin or Salahad-din" and the bloody conflict between the D.P.K. and the Kurdish Communist Party.

#### The Development Of The Problem

Following the long Turks revolution in 1908 Kurdish political clubs were established in Constantinople, Mausal, Diyarbakir, and

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<sup>22</sup> Majid Khadduri, Independent Iraq 1932-1958 (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 176.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>24</sup> Vanly, The Revolution of Iraki Kurdistan, p. 15.



Baghdad. All were imperial centers with a learning of intelligentsia educated in Western thought. In 1910 a new society of students and lawyers was founded.

Kurdish nationalists had begun as soon as they ended soliciting for Kurdish statehood, sinking their differences with the Armenians, in order to pursue mutual interests.

In 1919 the British decided to train Sheikh Mahsud's rebellion. In 1920 a referendum was held in Iraq to approve accession of Prince Faisal. In 1930 a revised Anglo-Iraqi treaty was signed which provided for an end to the mandate in 1932. Disappointed by the absence of any specific safeguard for Kurdish rights, the Kurdish nationalists campaigned for a boycott of the general elections for a new parliament which would be asked to ratify the treaty.<sup>25</sup>

In 1943 Mulla Mustafa escaped from Sulaymaniyah, and in 1945 an amnesty bill was prepared for Mulla Mustafa and other Kurds who had fought the government.

In 1958 free officers of the Iraqi Army took power. In March 1959 the leftists with Qassem's support organized a major rally to take place in Mosul. Brigadier Shawaf, an Arab nationalist demanded that the meeting should not be held. Qassem introduced a national Resistance force to destroy the anti-left, nationalist. Mulla Mustafa claimed that he did not take part in the Mosul and Kirkuk massacres and appears to have remained sympathetic to Shawaf. Although Qassem asked his involvement against nationalists in these two places. On the other hand, the leftists Kurds did take part.

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<sup>25</sup>Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 39.

By the end of 1959 Qassem had decided to license political parties and the D.P.K. was to be one of them.

In October 1960 Mulla Mustafa had gone to Russia. In the same year Abbas Mohummad Agha formed a military coalition among Kurdish tribes centered in Sulymania.. This provoked the sending of an army column from Kirkuk. The column was stopped at Darbandi-Khan by Mahammad's forces. This appears to have been the first major military confrontation between the government and the Kurds, which continued until the Bazzaz agreement.

The Baath government which came after Qassem in 1963, failed also to settle the problem. The fall of the Baath, though caused mainly by internal dissension was perhaps speeded by divergent issues on the Kurdish question and resumption of the Kurdish war.<sup>26</sup>

Premier Bazzaz made in June 29, 1966, a public declaration from his twelve point program for settlement of the Kurdish question.<sup>27</sup>

In 1968 the Baath again came to power. In 1969 they followed the July 29 agreement with some other clarifications to the general agreement.

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<sup>26</sup> Khadduri, Republican Iraq, p. 272.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 274.

## CHAPTER II

## KURDS UNDER TURKEY AND IRAN

The Iraqi Kurds as well as the Arabs in Iraq tried many times to have their independent national states. Iraq and Syria got their independence after World War I. Many Kurds migrated from Turkey to Syria between 1924 and 1938 when Kemal Attaturk attempted to force his reform programs on the Kurdish community there.<sup>28</sup>

In Turkey, the Kurds make up the largest of the Muslim minorities, 1.5 million or about 6 percent of the total population.<sup>29</sup> Some sources say that the greatest number of Kurds live in Turkey.<sup>30</sup>

Kurdish history in Turkey includes a lot of rebellions during the periods of Empire and the Republic. From 1843 Badir Khan Emir of Jasirat-ibn-Omer in Botan, revolted against the Ottoman Empire to have an independence, but he did not succeed.<sup>31</sup> In Shamsian, Sheikh Obiadallah al-Nahri in 1881 revolted against the Empire and also did not succeed.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Foreign Areas Studies, U.S. Army Area Handbook for Syria (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 49.

<sup>29</sup>Thomas D. Roberts and Others, Area Handbook For the Republic of Turkey (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 71.

<sup>30</sup>John K. Cooley, "Ankara Admits Kurdish Threat," The Christian Science Monitor, May 3, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Galabani, Kurdistan Wa al-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya, p. 45.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

Religion played a main role in Turkey, because the Kurds are Muslims, they were fighting for the Sultan of Turkey against the Armenians. But in another time the situation was profoundly changed and the Kurds and Armenians were reconciled. Kurds sheltered Armenians from a Turkish massacre in 1916.

In fact the Ottoman Empire represented World War I as a Holy War (Jihad), and this helped the Sultan get the support of the Kurdish masses. There were many intellectuals amongst them who rejected the idea of the Holy War.

The Empire came to an end militarily on October 31, 1918, Kurdish Nationalism immediately began to work for an independent state. They based their appeal on President Wilson's 14 points of January, 1918, which provided for an opportunity for autonomous development for minorities within the Ottoman Empire.<sup>33</sup>

Sheikh Said who had a great influence in all Turkish Kurdistan, and who was the son of Sheikh Ali of Palu, chief of the Nakshbandi sect of Dervishes, started an armed revolt against the Turkish authority, proclaiming a Jihad against the Godless Turkish administration and calling on all Turkish Muslims to join his rebellion against the Republic. The government of Turkey declared that religious fanaticism was one among several reasons favoring the independence movement. The other reason was the foreign influence especially from the British side. Sheikh Said and nine of his companions were tried, condemned to death, and hanged, others being given imprisonment.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Kinman, The Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 27.

<sup>34</sup> Arafa, The Kurds, p. 37.

In 1928, the government of Attaturk replaced the Arabic Alphabet with which the Kurds use in Iran, Iraq, and Syria.<sup>35</sup>

In June 20, 1930, the Kurds of the Jelali tribe dwelling on both sides of the Turko-Iranian frontier rebelled. The rebellion was crushed by a joint Turko-Iranian military operation.

Before and after the death of Kemal Attaturk, it became increasingly difficult for the Kurds to revolt. The Turkish government made greater efforts to integrate the Kurds, and they now came to be called the "mountain Turks". More than that after the good relationship which grew among Turkey, Iran, and Iraq (Baghdad Pact) and the cooperation on the Irano-Turkish frontier prevented the Kurds from mounting any serious secessionist movement.

The Kurdish movement in Turkey did not have any activities for sometime. Kurdish Organizations started actively again in 1967; active groups were the Liberation Party of the Kurds of Turkey and the Association of the Liberty. These organizations usually demand economic, language, and political rights. More than that the Democratic Party of Kurdish Turkistan (DPKT), however, wants to transform the present Kurdish Republic into a federation between a Turkish Republic and the Kurdish one.<sup>36</sup>

Ismail Arar, Turkish Minister of Justice, recently declared that at the instigation of Mulla Mustafa Barazani, the Iraqi Kurdish leader, moves were afoot to set up an independent Kurdish state in Turkey.

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<sup>35</sup> Idid., p. 38.

<sup>36</sup> Cooley, "Ankara Admits Kurdish Threat," p. 1.



Newspaper reports spoke of the seizure in the Kurdish areas of big catches of Czech make weapons, alleged to have been sent in by General Barazani's forces.<sup>37</sup>

In Iran, Kurdish movement had taken similar pattern. Salar-ed Dowleh Qajar first revolted against Mohammad Ali Shah in 1907 and after that against Ahmad Shah Qajar in 1911. He tried it again in 1915. In 1926 Sardar Rashid with Dowleh fled to Iraq after the failure of the revolt. Iran also, as we mentioned before, co-operated with Turkey against the Jelali revolt in 1930-31. Hama Rashid, an Iraqi Kurdish leader, during the second World War, entered Iran and occupied Baneh, until the summer of 1942, when it was reoccupied by the government forces.

On January 22, 1946, Qazi Mohammad proclaimed in Mahbad, the Kurdish Autonomous Republic. Mohammad appointed himself as a leader and President of the Kurdish Republic. Barazani and other Iraqi Kurdish leaders held high government offices in this republic.<sup>38</sup>

The Republic did not live long after the Iranian Army led by Colonel Chaffari entered Mahbad and put an end to the first ever Kurdish state.<sup>39</sup>

Qazi Mohammad, his brother and his cousin were hanged on three separate gibbets in the Otwar Chira circle of Mahbad.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Arafa, The Kurds, p. 84.

<sup>39</sup> William Engleton, The Kurdish Republic of 1946 (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 115.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

## CHAPTER III

## KURDS UNDER BRITISH CONTROL 1917-1932

The Kurds like the Arabs tried to attain independence from the Ottoman Empire. Thus, they co-operated with the British forces against the Turks. Both Kurds and Arabs had fought against the Turks. Both Kurds and Arabs had fought against the British, who dominated the power in the country after the Turks. British troops entered Iraq from the south in 1914. The last twenty months of the war, while British forces occupied Iraq and established relations with the Administration were a tense period in Anglo-Iraqi relations.

The British troops declared that they came to help the people to get their independence from the Ottoman Empire and not to occupy the country. During World War I, they also contacted the leaders of the Kurds in Iraq and promised to help them against the Turks and to give them independence.

One of the British officials wrote: "British policies at that time were to avoid commitments in the hill be setting up one or several semi-autonomous Kurdish provinces to be loosely attached to whatever regular administration might ultimately be established in the plains."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 35.

Longrigg says, "The dream of Kurdistan for the Kurds, under British patronage seemed for a few weeks to have come true as the Agha's flocked to and from Sulaymaniya, the Turks had vanished, the British were encouraging, tactful and generous."<sup>42</sup>

British forces appointed political officers in most of the areas they controlled. The political officers of the advancing army had had no contact with the Kurds before the fall of Baghdad, and the first relations after March, 1917, were unfortunate. The British exchanged letters with the Iraqi Kurds of Sulaymania and Kirkuk, but no relations were established. The only Kurdish area open to British operation was Khanigun Kifri which was occupied in April, 1918. On May 7, 1918 British forces occupied Kirkuk and a few days later, Sulaymania.

At a meeting held in Sulaymania the Kurdish Chiefs and notables decided to set up a Kurdish government under Sheikh Mahmud with the help of the British authorities.<sup>43</sup> After a short period of time, the Kurds, who were first imprisoned and later released by the British, co-operated with the Turks.

In 1919 the Acting Civil Commissioner, clarified the following:

We authorize you to take in hand the construction of five provinces for Iraq proper on the same lines as recommended by Hawell in enclosures five and six of your letter of April 6th. You will also proceed with the creation of the Arab province of Mogull fringed by autonomous Kurdish states under Kurdish Chiefs who will be advised by British Political Offices.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Stephen H. Longrigg, Iraq 1900 to 1950 (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 104.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>44</sup>Willard Ireland, Iraq (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), p. 186.



Sheikh Mahmud had the main role in the rebellion against the British. He was a born rebel and a member of an influential family. The first rebellion in 1919 was against the British administration in Baghdad.

Late in May 1919, Sheikh Mahmud with the help of supporters from across the Persian frontier imprisoned the British officers in Sulamaniya, cut all communications, and proclaimed the independence of Kurdistan. The Iraqi government sent Mahmud to exile in India, from where he returned to Sulymania. Sheikh Mahmud was later appointed the chairman of the Local Committee or the local administration. August 10, 1920, the western powers signed a treaty called "Seifer," which included a plan for the central independence of the Kurdish area which was located in East of Euphrates, south-west Armenia and north of the Turkish borders. The British did not, however, complete the plan.<sup>45</sup>

The Kurds of Mosul, Kirkuk, and Salymania were not thought to be ready for self-government, but the high commission's willingness to govern them directly did not appeal to the Iraqi ministers, in whose view the Kurds had to form an integral part of Iraq. Kirkuk had accepted a Mutasarif in February 1921. Arbil became a sub-line of it under a Deputy Mutasarif; Mosul, since December 1920, remained under British Political Officers. Sulymania Liva refused for the moment, but finally accepted.

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<sup>45</sup> Bazzaz, Al-Iraq min Al-Ihtilal Hata Al-Istiqlal, p. 289.

In September 14, 1922, Sheikh Mahmud declared himself the "King of Kurdistan" and declared the independence of Kurdistan.<sup>46</sup>

In 1923 Lansanne Treaty had left the Turk-Iraqi frontier undetermined. The Kurds had been fermenting disturbances in the defatable land but these were ended by firm air action undertaken by the British Air Force, which in accordance with the Cairo decisions had taken over in October 1922.<sup>47</sup>

In January 27, 1927, the British in Iraq and Sheikh Mahmud signed a treaty to settle the troubles of the Iraqi Kurdish area, but that treaty did not work out, which led the latter to take action against the authority. In the winter of 1927 Sheikh Mahmud again started his activities against Iraqi rule in the Sulaymania, directing it from across the Iranian border. But in the summer of the same year, as a result of the military operations of the Iranian Army, Sheikh Mahmud returned to Iraq again. He was sent in exile to the south of Iraq. The same year (1927) Sheikh Mohammad of Barzan started his rebellion against Iraqi authorities. But after he failed in his rebellion, he left Iraq and went to Turkey, where he was killed by the Turks.<sup>48</sup>

His younger brother Sheikh Ahmad became the head of the family. The latter, also in 1932, after his troubles with the government, was forced to leave Iraq. Later the British, Turkish, and Iraqi governments agreed to allow him and his family to return to Iraq. They lived four years in the South and seven in the North.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 291.

<sup>47</sup> Ernest Main, Iraq from Mandate to Independence (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1935), p. 86.

<sup>48</sup> Arafa, The Kurds, p. 117.

In 1929 when the parliamentary elections took place, the Kurds in Sulymania boycotted the elections. This led to violence in the area.

As a result of that trouble, in 1930, Sheikh Mahmud again entered Iraq secretly from Iran and occupied Panjvin. He demanded the creation of an autonomous Kurdistan. Military operation attempted to drive him out of the country. The Iranian Army on their side prevented him from taking refuge in Iran. He finally submitted to the Iraqi authorities, and was sent to Nasiriyah in the south as a forced resident; later he was allowed to return to Sulymania.<sup>49</sup>

In 1930 Britain and Iraq signed a treaty which provided for an end to the mandate within two years. Sheikh Mahmud rose again in Sulymania. He sought a Kurdish autonomous area under British protection and free of direct rule from Baghdad. But the British refused.

In 1932, the Iraqi troops with the cooperation of the Royal Air Force stationed in Iraq took action against the Barzanes, and forced Sheikh Ahmad of Barzan to flee to Turkey. But he returned to Iraq during the first rebellion of Mulla Mostafa Barzani in 1943.

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

## CHAPTER IV

## KURDS UNDER INDEPENDENT IRAQ 1932-1958

In 1932 Iraq became an independent state. On October 3, of the same year, it was admitted to the League of Nations as an independent country.

Nationalism became a main political power in Iraq after the first World War. The rise of Iraqi Arab nationalism had an impact on the Iraqi Kurds. The national Turkish movement, led by the "Young Turks," motivated the Arabs and Kurds to pay more attention to the national ideals, more so than the idea of Islamic unity of the Muslim nations. From 1932 to 1958 the Kurdish movement differed from what it was before. During this period there was less violence in comparison to the past years. Political development and political activities were more stressed than rebellions.

Mulla Mustafa Barzani, a Kurdish leader of Iraq, since 1933 and considered a hero of the Kurdish movement, that of his Barzani tribe. But during World War II, the Iraqi people fought with the Germans against the British. Mulla Mustafa claimed from that time on that he is working for the liberation of all the Kurds including the Kurds who live outside Iraq. He has, to some extent, created the impression that he is the sole representative as well as the acknowledged leader of all the Kurds. He has professedly devoted his life and resources to their political emancipation as well as their material well being.

According to his propaganda, he has made major sacrifices towards the attainment of his goal. Barzani has carried his message to Iran and the U.S.S.R. He wanted to ascertain the attitude of the government of the U.S.S.R. toward his goal. Later he was invited to Baku in 1946 and given the authority to command the troops in the services of Qazi Mahammad. The latter was the head of the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad.

In 1933, the Kurdish students in Baghdad established an association called Koma-Li-Juwan or Youth Organization. It published a magazine called Yid-Kari-Juwan.<sup>50</sup> In the same year, the Barzani Kurds were subdued by a joint Iraqi-Turkish operation which resulted in the capture of Sheikh Ahmad. They gave further trouble in 1934 under the truculent leader of Khalil Khushawi.

The Communist ideas became more evident than before. Two Kurdish language Communist magazines, later merged into one (The al-Azadi or freedom), appeared in Iraq in 1934. It propagated the communist doctrine and worked with the progressive Arabs against feudalism and status quo. But the Persian Communist magazine spoke for exclusive Kurdish unity and rights.<sup>51</sup>

In August 1935, Sayid Muhammad Pickola, of Sulymania liwa, led looting parties into Iraq from a base in Persia. He surrendered to the Iraqi forces and pardoned.<sup>52</sup>

Between 1935, and 1939, Sheikh Lateef, the son of Sheikh Mahmad, established an organization called (Barzala-Tee or the Brotherhood)

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<sup>50</sup> Talabani, Kurdistan wa al-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya, p. 66.

<sup>51</sup> Longrigg, Iraq 1900 to 1950, p. 326.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 243.



in Sulymania. It did not have a major role and was finished.

In 1939 (Hywa or Hope) party came into existence. During World War II, it became very strong. But in 1945, most of the members of this party pledged to another party called (Fizb Rizkari Kurd or The Party of Kurds Liberation.)<sup>53</sup>

During 1941-1942 the Kurds were less violent toward the government of Iraq and its struggle against the British forces, except Sheikh Mahmud, who was living in Baghdad. He cooperated with Rashid Ali against the British power. Sheikh Mahmud left Baghdad to Sulymania and died there in 1956.

As mentioned before, until the midsummer of 1943, the Barzani leaders, Sheikh Ahmad and his younger brother, Mulla Mustafa, gave no support. At that time Mulla Mustafa escaped from Sulymania, regained control of Barzan and joined a Turkish-Kurdish outlaw, Sa'id Mirakhi.<sup>54</sup>

After this power struggle Mulla Mustafa became more powerful. The British officials in Iraq at that time, started to pay more attention to his movement and his demands. Mr. Edmonds, The British Counselor at the ministry of the Interior, received this letter from Mulla Mustafa:

He (Mulla Mustafa) desires nothing from him (Mr. Edmonds) but his good will and patronage. If called upon he (Mulla Mustafa) would build a fire and give himself up to the flames. He is ever at his (Mr. Edmonds) command. He (Mulla Mustafa) wishes him (Mr. Edmonds) greatness. To act on his (Mr. Edmonds) orders would be a matter of great honor.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Talabani, Kurdistan Wa al-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya, p. 79.

<sup>54</sup> Longrigg, Iraq 1900 to 1950, p. 325.

<sup>55</sup> Nauman M. Kanaane, Limelight on the North of Iraq (Baghdad: Dar al-Jumhuriya, 1965), p. 46.

The British Embassy in one of its communications replied:

On several occasions in your communications addressed to British authorities, you have emphasized the affection and trust which you repose in the British Government. On their part, the said British authorities advised you to accept the terms prescribed by the Government, however you did not accept the advice. In fact, your conduct actually jeopardizes our communications. As such, the British government considers your attitude toward itself as being hostile and takes the opportunity of warning you against the consequences.<sup>56</sup>

The British advised the Iraqi government, to pay attention to the Kurds. At the same time the British asked Mulla Mustafa to cease his actions against the Iraqi government.<sup>57</sup> Mulla Mustafa accepted, with Prime Minister Nuri Said who was himself sympathetic to the Kurds and ready to accept the demands. Nuri Said sent a Kurdish minister to the Kurdish Area.

As a result of these talks, the following proposals were submitted to the Iraqi government:

1. The constitution of a Kurdish province to comprise the districts of Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah, Arbil, Diyah, and Hamaqin.
2. The Appointment of a special Minister for Kurdish Affairs inside the Iraqi cabinet, who would be responsible to the Iraqi government for the affairs of this province.
3. A Kurdish assistant-Minister to be appointed to each ministry.
4. The Kurdish province to have cultural, economic, and agricultural autonomy and all internal matters to depend for the Provincial Authority except those concerning the Army and the gendarmen.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Kanaane, Limelight on the North of Iraq, p. 47.

<sup>57</sup>Iraq was allied to the United Kingdom and any aggressive move against it would be considered a hostile action against all the allied powers.

<sup>58</sup>Arafa, The Kurds, p. 121.

In May 1944, Prime Minister Nuri Said proposed the establishment of an all-Kurdish liwa formed from the Kurdish qadhas of Mosul, and the appointment of officials to it by the Kurdish representative minister in the cabinet. He also made the offer of a Deputy Director-General in the Ministry of Education, the improvement of social services in the North, the grant of agricultural loans, and reconsideration of the unpopular tobacco monopoly, etc. But his cabinet refused to support him.

In 1945 Barzani had his last struggle against the government. The Iraqi forces with Kurdish tribesmen loyal to the Iraqi government, (mainly the Bardisan and Zaibar, with other Tribes such as Servari, Berashi, Sherfoni, and Duseki), attacked the Barzani forces and forced them to flee to the Iranian borders.<sup>59</sup>

Until 1961, the Iraq Kurdish region was fairly quiet. Most of the events during that time were political activities. During the rule of Nuri Said, a Kurd by birth,<sup>60</sup> the membership of parliament consisted of 116 Arabs and 19 Kurds.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Arafa, The Kurds, p. 128,

<sup>60</sup> Waldemar Callman, Iraq Under General Nuri (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1964), p. 9.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 7.



## CHAPTER V

## KURDISH UNDER REPUBLICAN IRAQ

The Demands of the Kurds

In 1958 when Iraq and Jordan declared the Arab Union, the agreement angered the Kurds who took it as a further neglect of their rights as a minority. The Baghdad pact also had the same reaction from the Kurds. They considered the pact as an Iraqi plot to get military equipment to suppress them. Thus the Kurds welcomed the July 14 revolution of 1958. Mulla Mustafa, who for about 13 years had been in exile returned to Iraq on an invitation from Qassem.

The revolutionary regime, after coming to power, stated that the Iraqi State is an "Association of Arabs and Kurds" and guaranteed Kurdish communal rights within the framework of the Iraqi unity.<sup>62</sup> More than that, the provisional constitution of July 27 of the same year proclaimed in Section 3 that "Arabs and Kurds are partners in this homeland." The same section confirmed "Their national (qawaiya) rights within Iraqi unity (Wahda)."<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Israel T. Neazani, "The Kurdish Drive of Self-Determination," The Middle East Journal, XX (Summer, 1966), 289.

<sup>63</sup>Uriel Dann, Iraq Under Qassem (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), p. 136.

To show its sincerity, the regias appointed a number of Kurds to high offices. Thus, Khalid Naqshbandi was appointed to the sovereignty Council and Baba Ali to the Cabinet.<sup>64</sup>

Qassem who faced external and internal problems, had no group or party to support him. The conflict within the government, between Qassem and Arif, weakened the authority of the leaders and gave a great chance to the Kurds to apply more pressure and demand more from the government.

The Kurdish Communists differed among themselves. The left wing was supporting Qassem and the right wing was more conservative and more national. But Barzani stayed away from this conflict. Qassem allowed the Kurds to express their opinion especially after he licensed the political parties in Iraq including the KDP. Mulla Mustafa who was the chairman of the party fought against the Communists in the party. The struggle ended with Mustafa in control of the party. At the same time, there were clashes among the Kurdish tribes.

After this, Barzani joined the fighting against the government. Qassem declared at a press conference that the rebels were supported by the British, particularly after Qassem had claimed Kuwait to be a part of Iraq. The Economist ratified this by saying, "...the implication is that Britain, with Kuwait, was bent on creating serious trouble in the Kurdish north of the country in order to weaken General Qassem's stern resolve."<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 136. (The Sovereignty Council had three members which had the authority of the President.)

<sup>65</sup>"Iraq: Old Perfidious." The Economist, September 23, 1961, p. 1238.

In June 1961 a delegation of Kurdish nationalists sought to petition Qassem for redressing their grievances which included among others attempts to settle Arabs on land used by Kurdish tribes and the government's price for the tobacco crop. On July 20, 1961, Barzani and the P.D.K. presented to Iraqi government a petition officially asking for the following:

1. To withdraw the forces that were lately sent to specific places in Kurdistan, to its original places. Unusual military mobilisation other than its regular bases should not be allowed.
2. Replace the chiefs of administrations, security police and other officials who played an essential role in the last confrontations, and bring them to trial.
3. To restore the Kurdish officials to their previous jobs. New Metaarifs, and their secretaries, should be appointed from Kurds to the Kurdish Liwas.
4. Applying the third article of the Iraqi constitution efficiently, and providing equality between the two groups -- Arabs and Kurds -- under the sovereignty of the Iraqi government.
5. To dismiss the officials who were against the 14th of July revolution.
6. Establish the democratic process and end the transition period and allow the people to elect their representatives to the Parliament, and doing away with the court martial.
7. Putting into effect the decisions of the 1960 conference of the Kurdish Teachers.
8. To make the Kurdish language the official language in the Kurdistan region.
9. To do away with the discrimination against the Kurds and punish those who support the discrimination.
10. To liberate the tobacco plantation from the acreage policy in the fertile areas.
11. To reform the new tax law on land to help the farmers..

12. Solve the unemployment problem by providing for new industrial and development projects, continuing the working on the old plans and creating new projects in the economic plan.
13. To follow a new policy to solve the problem of living expenses.<sup>66</sup>

Qassem did not pay any attention to the demands. He sent more troops to the area, thinking of a military solution to the problem. He did not succeed, and opposition to his policies multiplied.

On February 8, 1963, Abd al-Salam Arif led a coup d'etat which ended Qassem's regime. The new government was dominated by the Baath Party. The Baath government had agreed to Kurdish rights on the basis of decentralisation. But the Baath activities toward Pan-Arabism left question marks for the Kurds.

A Kurd representative, Jalal Tababani went to Egypt and met President Nasser who told him that if the Arabs believed in the justice of their own national aspirations, then morally they must also admit the Kurds to self-rule. But Tababani returned to Iraq without practical support from Nasser.

On March 1, 1963, the Kurds made these demands of the Baath government:

1. Equal rights for Arabs and Kurds within a unified state, the Vice-President and assistant Chief of Staff to be Kurds.
2. Kurdistan to comprise the provinces of Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Arbil, and the Kurdish districts of Mosul and Diyala. Provinces to have their own executive and legislative councils; the authority of the Kurdish administration to include justice, internal affairs, education, health, agriculture. The central government to retain control of all matters of common interest including defense and foreign affairs. Appointment of Kurds to all official posts in Kurdistan with Kurdish being the second official language there.

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<sup>66</sup>Talabani, Kurdistan Wa al-Haraka Al-Qawmiya al-Kurdiya, pp.187-188.  
(Translated from Arabic)



- 3. Kurds to belong to the N.C.R.C. (the National Command of the Revolutionary Council) in proportion to their population in Iraq.
- 4. Oil revenues and customs dues to be shared on the same proportional basis.
- 5. Military movement in Kurdistan to be made only with the consent of the Kurdish military administration.<sup>67</sup>

These demands were rejected by the N.C.R.C. for it was thought that the demands could be a step toward complete separation. After some discussion, the Kurds revised their demands. On March 8, they presented their revised demands. These were:

- 1. Recognition of Kurdish rights within the framework of the decentralization plan, the detail of which would be worked out by a joint committee, and embodied in both the provisional and permanent constitutions.
- 2. General amnesty for all persons convicted or under prosecution for their contribution to the Kurdish revolution including immediate release of all prisoners.
- 3. Replacement of certain officials in Kurdistan who were considered offensive by the Kurdish people.
- 4. Revocation of all orders confiscating Kurdish property belonging to persons who participated in the Kurdish revolution.
- 5. Lifting the economic blockade of Kurdistan.
- 6. Withdrawal of the army units to their former regular positions. (This would mean that only the second division of the Iraqi army, regularly stationed in the North, would remain in Kurdistan.)<sup>68</sup>

The government and the Kurds did not reach any point of agreement. The fighting between them continued. In June of the same year, the Mongolian People's Republic requested the Secretary General

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<sup>67</sup> Khadduri, Republican Iraq, p. 270.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 270-271.



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of the United Nations to include "The policy of genocide carried out by the Iraqi Government against the Kurdish people on the agenda of the coming session of the General Assembly." On July 9, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, handed the Iraqi ambassador in Moscow an official protest against the conduct of the war.<sup>69</sup> On October 28, the International League for Rights of Man, already recognized by the United Nations, condemned the Iraqi Government for its "mass slaughter and virtual genocide."<sup>70</sup>

Another coup d'etat was led by Arif on November 18, 1963. He controlled governmental power in the country after he destroyed the Baath authority. A few months after that, President Arif and Kurdish leader Barzani on February 10, 1964, announced a cease fire. The Kurds again presented a revised form of demands on June 11, 1965. These were:

1. To readmit the official use of the historical name of our country, by creating an autonomous "Vilayet of Kurdistan," with five Kurdish provinces;
2. The pillars of this autonomy will be a Kurdish legislative body, freely elected by all the Kurds, and an Executive Council drawn from this body and responsible to it;
3. Matters of education, justice, police, administration, tobacco, agriculture, forests, municipalities, labor and social legislation will be, in the Kurdish territory, the responsibility of the autonomous authorities. Defense and foreign relations, and other important matters, will remain in the hands of the Iraqi central government.
4. Taxes collected locally will be spent locally. But the large revenues of Iraq, oil royalties, revenues of ports, customs and airports should be shared, and the Kurdish part in them will be proportional to the population of the Kurds in the Iraqi Republic.

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<sup>69</sup>Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 76.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

5. Kurdish conscripts will accomplish their military service in the Iraqi Army, but in Kurdistan. If the central Government wishes to send more troops to Kurdistan, this can be done only with the agreement or at the request of the Kurdish autonomous authorities. Martial law can be proclaimed in Kurdistan by the Iraqi Government only in the same manner. This should be understood as a guarantee against any other Iraqi aggression in Kurdistan in the future.
6. In the case of unity between Iraq and any other Arab country, the people of Iraqi Kurdistan have their right to self-determination.<sup>71</sup>

Arif, who had a civilian Prime Minister Dr. Bazzas, died before he could reach any agreement with the Kurds. Premier Bazzas continued in power, even after the death of the President. He established good relations with neighbouring countries, particularly with Iran, considered a best place of supplying the Kurds of Iraq. Bazzas, after many talks with the Kurds, announced a settlement plan. The agreement was not a result of negotiations. Bazzas stated that the plan which provided for Kurdish local autonomy was a result of "meetings and talks" but that there had not been "negotiations" with the Kurds because brothers do not negotiate.<sup>72</sup> The agreement was welcomed by both the Arabs and the Kurds. But a few days after that the Bazzas government was replaced by a military government headed by an Army officer who was known to be opposed to it.

As Hottinger says, "The Army, however, does not as yet appear to have come round to this point (minorities participations) of view.

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<sup>71</sup>Naamani, "The Kurdish Drive of Self-Determination," p. 290.

<sup>72</sup>Thomas P. Brady, "Iraqi Says Kurds Agree to Peace," New York Times, July 30, 1966, p. 4.

The formation of political parties and establishment of an elected assembly would of course endanger their entrenched position. Their fear of such development was clearly demonstrated in their reaction to Bazzas.<sup>73</sup>

On July 17, 1968, the Baath party came to power again. The new government which faced and is still facing many internal and external problems, worked to come to agreement with the Kurds. The agreement took six months of negotiations, with some Soviet newsmen acting as unofficial intermediaries. The new agreement was announced on March 11, 1970, and was followed by the appointment of five Kurdish ministers to the cabinet.<sup>74</sup>

#### The Agreements of the Iraqi Governments with the Kurds

Agreements between Iraqi Kurds and Iraqi governments have existed since the first world war. These Agreements dealt with different matters, such as cease fires, temporary solutions, or a partial solution. The agreement of June 29, 1966, between the Kurds and Bazzas was the first agreement which embodied a complete solution for peace in the area. The Bazzaz program consisted of the following points:

In its desire to put an end to the unnatural conditions in certain parts of the north according to paragraph four of the letter of designation forming a Government, to preserve the unity of Iraqi soil and to achieve national unity, to confirm the existing bonds between Arabs and Kurds - which require them to act sincerely and persistently in the interest of their common homeland - this Government announces the following program and declares its categorical determination to abide by it and to apply it in letter and spirit as soon as possible.

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<sup>73</sup>Arnold Hinger, "Iraqi Puzzle," The New Middle East, December, 1968, p. 36.

<sup>74</sup>"Kurdish Insurrection Ends in Iraq," Middle East, XI, (June, 1970), 22.

1. The Government has ~~ostentatiously~~ recognized Kurdish nationality in the amended provisional constitution and is ready to emphasize and clarify this point in the permanent constitution, whereby Kurdish nationality and the national rights of the Kurds within the one Iraqi homeland, which includes two main nationalities - Arabs and Kurdish - will become clear, and Arabs and Kurds will enjoy equal rights and duties.
2. The Government is ready to give this wholesome fact its real existence in the provisional law, which is to be promulgated on a decentralized basis. Each province, district, and subdistrict will have a recognized corporate personality. Furthermore, each administrative unit will have its own elected council which will exercise wide powers in education, health, and other local affairs, in addition to anything that has any connection with domestic and municipal affairs as detailed in the said law. The same law authorizes amendments within the framework of administrative units when necessary according to the public interest.
3. Needless to say, the Government recognizes the Kurdish language as an official language in addition to Arabic in regions where the majority of the population are Kurdish. Education will be in both languages in accordance with the limits defined by law and the local councils.
4. This Government intends to hold parliamentary elections within the period stipulated in the provisional constitution and the Cabinet policy statement. Kurds will be represented in the next national council in a percentage proportionate to the whole population and according to the procedure laid down by the election laws.
5. Also, needless to say, Kurds will share with their Arab brothers all public posts in proportion to their population, including ministries, public departments, and judicial, diplomatic, and military posts, with due regard for the principle of efficiency.
6. There will be a number of scholarships, fellowships, and study grants in all branches and at all levels for Kurds, who are to be sent abroad for specialization with due regard for efficiency and the country's needs. Baghdad University will give special attention to the study of the Kurdish language and its literature and its ideological and historical traditions. The University will open branches in the north when funds are available.



7. Needless to say, government officials in the Kurdish provinces, districts, and subdistricts will be Kurds as long as the required number is available. Such posts will not be given to others unless it is in the interests of the region.
8. Parliamentary life will be accompanied by the establishment of certain political organizations. The press will be enabled to express the people's desire. The Government will allow the Kurds to do so within the limits provided by law. The political and literary press in the Kurdish regions will be in the Kurdish or the Arabic language or in both languages according to the request of the people concerned.
9.
  - (a) When acts of violence end, general amnesty will be granted to all those who participated in acts of violence in the north or who had any connection with them, including all those against whom sentences were issued in connection with such acts of violence.
  - (b) All Kurdish officials and employees who will return to their previous posts and employment will be treated with justice.
  - (c) The Government will do its best to return all dismissed Kurdish workers to their previous employment.
10. Immediately after the issue of this statement, men of the armed forces will return to their units, provided all this takes place within two months. Those returning will be treated sympathetically and will be granted amnesty.
  - (a) Those who were in the army should return to the army with their arms.
  - (b) Those who were in the police force should return to the police force with their arms.
  - (c) Those who have borne arms will be regarded as a body attached to the Government, which will assist them to resume a normal life. Until this is done the Government will be responsible for them. All those who resume a normal life should surrender all their equipment, arms, and ammunition to the Government. All this will be carried out by all concerned according to a prearranged plan.
  - (d) The horsemen will naturally return to their positions when peace is established. Their arms will be withdrawn according to a prearranged plan.



11. Needless to say, funds now being spent resisting violence -- funds spent unnecessarily -- will be spent on the reconstruction of the north, a special organization will be formed to reconstruct the Kurdish region in Iraq. The necessary money will be allotted to it from the economic plan to under take reconstruction and development projects in the area. The administration of summer resorts and afforestation and tobacco affairs in the north will be assigned to a special Minister who will supervise the coordination of the affairs of the administrative units, the majority of whose inhabitants are Kurds and whose affairs are at the heart of the Kurdish question-- affairs such as Kurdish culture and education in the Kurdish language. The Government will do its best to compensate all those who suffered damage to enable them to return to a productive and useful life in security and peace and to participate in the promotion of the country's economy and prosperity. For national and humanitarian reasons the Government will take care of all orphans, widows, and disabled persons who have been victims of violence in the northern part of the homeland. In co-operation with the department concerned the Government will establish shelter and professional institutions as soon as possible.
12. The Government will endeavour to resettle all individuals and groups who left or were evacuated from their regions with the aim of re-establishing a normal situation. Anything the Government finds necessary to control later in the general interest should, according to the provision of the law be coupled with a speedy and fair compensation.<sup>75</sup>

Since the date of the agreement, the relations between the Kurdish leaders and the government have been correct. Mustafa Barzani continued his authority over the region. In fact he has established his own administration which is almost independent from the central government, especially in the far regions of the mountains. Finally, the Kurds have got a great opportunity, and have won a great victory, by signing the treaty of March 11, 1970.

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<sup>75</sup>Khadduri, Republican Iraq, pp. 274-276.

Besides the written treaty, the government promised to do

the following:

- A. Recognition has been extended to the lawful presence of the Kurdish nationality in accordance with the resolutions of the 7th Regional Convention of the Arab Baath Socialist Party and in accordance with all official and press statements emanating from the revolutionary authority. This fact will be finally inserted in the text of the Interim Constitution and, subsequently, in the text of the Permanent Constitution.
- B. The Revolutionary Command Council has approved the establishment of a university in Sulaymaniyah and the establishment of a Kurdish Academy of Letters. It has also endorsed all cultural and language rights of the Kurdish nationality. It ordered that Kurdish language be instructed at all schools, institutes, universities, teachers training institutes, the Military College and the Police College. All Kurdish books--scientific, literary and political--expressive of the national and nationalist ambitions of the Kurdish people shall be given wide circulation. Kurdish writers and poets shall be enabled to find a federation of their own. Their books and writings shall be printed and full opportunities shall be made available to them for developing their scientific and technical capabilities and skills. A publishing and printing house in the Kurdish language shall be set up and Directorate General of Kurdish Culture created. A weekly newspaper and a monthly magazine shall be published in the Kurdish language. Kurdish programmes of the Kirkuk Television Station shall be increased until a television station exclusive for Kurdish language be set up.
- C. As an act of recognizing Kurdish rights to revive their traditions and national days and in order that the whole of the people might join with Kurdish fellow-countrymen in observing their days, the Revolutionary Command Council has declared Naqrooz Day as a National Day to be observed throughout the Republic of Iraq.
- D. The Revolutionary Command Council has promulgated the Governorates Law which provides for decentralization of the local administration and approved the creation of the Governorate of Duhok.
- E. Further, the Revolutionary Command Council issued general amnesty to all civilians and military personnel who joined in acts of violence in the north so as to remove all vestiges of the former passive conditions and usher in the features of new national life based on durable foundation for the attainment of general security and comprehensive national fraternity.

The Revolutionary Command Council has resolved to do the following:

1. The Kurdish language shall be, alongside with the Arabic language, the official language in areas populated by a Kurdish majority. The Kurdish language shall be the language of instruction in these areas. Arabic language shall be taught in all schools, where the Kurdish language is the language of instruction while the Kurdish language shall be taught in schools throughout Iraq as a second language within the limits stipulated by law.
2. The sharing of our Kurdish brothers in government and nondiscrimination between the Kurds and others in the assumption of public offices including sensitive and important posts in the state such as cabinet portfolios, army command, etc., have been and still remain among the important objectives which the Revolutionary Government seeks to achieve. The Revolutionary Government, in approving this principle, stresses the necessity of working for its fulfillment in an equitable ratio with due regard to the principle of efficiency, the proportionate distribution of inhabitants and iniquities which had befallen our Kurdish brothers in the past.
3. In view of the state of backwardness which in the past, afflicted the Kurdish nationality from the cultural and educational standpoints, a plan shall be worked out to make good the backwardness. This is to be achieved by:
  - (a) Speeding up the implementation of the resolutions of the Revolutionary Command Council concerning the language and the cultural rights of the Kurdish people and placing under the jurisdiction of the Directorate General of Kurdish Culture and Information the task of preparing and steering radio and television programmes concerning Kurdish national issues.
  - (b) Reinstating all students who were dismissed or were compelled to leave the school on account of circumstances of violence in the area regardless of their ages or producing a convenient remedy for their problem.
  - (c) Building more schools in the Kurdish area, elevating the standards of schooling and education and admitting, in just proportions, Kurdish students to universities, military colleges, educational missions and fellowships.



4. In the administrative units, populated by a Kurdish majority, officials shall be from among Kurds or from among persons well-versed in the Kurdish language provided the required number is available. Appointment shall be made of the principal officials-Governor, Qaimaqam, Police Commandant, Security Director, etc. Work will promptly commence to develop state machineries in the area in consultation with the High Committee supervising the implementation of this statement in a manner assuring such implementation and cementing national unity and stability in the area.
5. The Government concedes to the Kurdish people their right to set up student, youth, women, and teachers organizations of their own--such organizations to become affiliated in the corresponding national Iraqi organizations.
6. (a) The operative period of paras (1) and (2) of the RCC's resolution No. 59 dated August 5, 1968, shall be extended right up to the date of the issuance of this statement and shall extend to all of those who took part in the acts of violence in the Kurdish area.  
  
(b) Workers, officials, and employees both civilian and military shall return to service without this being affected by cadre restrictions. The civilians among them shall be put to use in the Kurdish area within the limits of its requirements.
7. (a) A body of specialists shall be constituted to work for uplifting the Kurdish area in all spheres as quickly as possible and for compensating it for what has descended upon it in the past number of years. An adequate budget is to be set aside for this purpose. The body in question shall operate under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Northern Affairs.  
  
(b) The economic plan shall be drawn up in such a way as to assure development in various parts of Iraq with due attention to the Kurdish area.  
  
(c) Pensions shall be granted for the families of those who met with martyrdom in the regrettable circumstances of hostilities. This is to be enacted by a special legislation on the pattern of other legislations in force.  
  
(d) Speedy efforts shall be made to provide relief to stricken and needy persons through the accomplishment of housing projects and assuring work to the unemployed.

8. The inhabitants of Arab and Kurdish villages shall be restored to their former places of habitation. As to the villagers of areas where housing units cannot be set up and which are taken over by the Government for public utility purposes under law, they shall be resettled in neighbouring areas and duly compensated.
9. Speedy measures shall be taken to implement the Agrarian Reform Law in the Kurdish areas and amending it in such a manner as guarantees the liquidation of feudalist relations and the acquisition by all peasants of appropriate plots of land side by side with waiving for them agricultural taxes accumulating over the years of unfortunate hostilities.
10. It has been agreed to amend the Interim Constitution as follows:
  - (a) The people of Iraq is made up of two principal nationalities; the Arab nationality and the Kurdish nationality. This Constitution confirms the national rights of the Kurdish people and the rights of all minorities within the framework of Iraqi unity.
  - (b) The following para shall be added to Article (4) of the Constitution: 'The Kurdish language shall, alongside with the Arabic language, be an official language in the Kurdish area.'
  - (c) The above shall be confirmed in the Permanent Constitution.
11. The broadcasting station and heavy weapons shall be returned to the government this being tied up to the implementation of the final stages of the agreement.
12. A Kurd shall be one of the vice-presidents.
13. The Governorates Law shall be amended in a manner conforming with the substance of this statement.
14. Following the announcement of this statement, necessary measures shall be taken, in consultation with the High Committee supervising its implementation to unify the governorates and administrative units populated by a Kurdish majority in accordance with official census operations yet to be made. The state shall endeavour to develop this administrative unity and deepen and broaden the exercising by the Kurdish people therein of the sum of its national rights as a guarantee to its enjoyment of self-rule. Until this administrative unity is achieved, the Kurdish national affairs shall be coordinated through periodical meetings between the High Committee and the governors of the northern area. As the self-rule is to be achieved within the framework of the Iraqi Republic, the exploitation of national riches in the area will naturally be under the jurisdiction of the authorities of the Republic.



15. The Kurdish people shall share in the legislative power in a manner proportionate to their population ratio in Iraq.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>The Ministry of Culture and Information, Directorate General of Information, The Historic Statement of the Revolutionary Command Council on the Peaceful Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Issue (Baghdad: General Establishment for Press and Printing, 1970), pp. 11-20.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

#### The Differences Among the Kurds

As has been mentioned before, the Kurdish movement started as a tribal move, which was carried out first, by the Barzani tribe led by tribal leader, Shiekh Mahmud. Since World War II the Barzani tribe is leading the movement. Mulla Mustafa al-Barzani of Barzan is considered a "father figure" of Kurdish Iraq.

From 1933, Kurds were divided among themselves. Many of their tribes fought beside the government against Barzani tribe. Kurds who fought beside the government after 1961 were the same tribes who fought against Barzani before. Some of these people supported Barzani in his last rebellion, because of the national feeling, which influenced many Kurds in the last decade. This feeling came out strongly after 1945 when Mulla Mustafa declared that he is not fighting for his own interests, but for the Kurdish of Iraq and those who live in Turkey and Iran. Some others fought beside them because of the fear of Barzani force. Others fought because of the fear of the government forces.

During the time of fighting, the Iraqi government supplied some Kurdish tribes with equipment and salary to fight against the Kurdish rebellions. In 1963 the Iraqi High Command enlisted the services of several Kurdish tribes. These were: the Sharafi, the Zibari, the Baradost, the Lowlan, and Kawanelok, the Berati, the Mandan. They all worked under Salah-ed-Din.<sup>77</sup> Besides those Kurdish tribes, the government of Iraq used some other Arab tribes and worked under "Forsan Khalid-ibn al Waleed Force."

The conflict among the Kurds followed a new path. It became more ideological. In 1961, the conflict started between Mulla Mustafa and Talabani. The latter and his followers (the Party) considered the KDP a revolutionary radical party, and considered it as a national front for the independence of Kurdistan.

Talabani continued in his bloody struggle against Barzani, encouraged by the government. Barzani still holds real power. He is the one who negotiates with the Iraqi Government and represents the Kurdish side.

#### The Current Position of the Kurds in Iraq

The Kurds have complete rights in Iraq. Their history proves that they have been living in this area for a long time. They have the elements of nationalism; they have a common history, language-though it has different dialects; and a common feeling.

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<sup>77</sup> Arafa, The Kurds, p. 145.

<sup>78</sup> Talabani, Kurdistan Wa al-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya, p. 93.

They are, in the modern concept of nationalism, a nation that has its own national ideology. The fact that the Kurdish language is not a complete language, as the Arabic language is, prevents them from having a recorded national history. But they still have the basic elements of national feeling and have the full right to express their national ideals the way they feel.

Nationalism in the Middle East, including Kurdish nationalism, developed a nationalistic ideology. The Kurds have developed a strong nationalistic aspiration of their own, "but it is still limited in its effect by the persistence of tribalism, which is still a stronger force than nationalism."<sup>79</sup> It is more logical for the Kurds to realize that there is a difference between the feeling of nationalism, and the "national state."<sup>80</sup>

Looking back to the Kurdish demands, it may be very difficult to discuss each of them. For this reason I will present the demands which are commonly accepted by Iraqi Kurds:

1. The national rights of the Kurds as a people must be recognized and guaranteed.
2. The name "Kurdistan" must be recognized and its boundaries within Iraq delineated in keeping with historical, geographical, and ethnic realities.
3. Kurdistan must be granted the fullest autonomy within the Iraqi Republic.
4. The Kurdish language must be recognized as the official language of Iraqi Kurdistan.
5. Kurdish culture must be allowed to develop and the right of the Kurdish people recognized to educate their children in their own language and bring up in their own culture.

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<sup>79</sup>P.A. Sehermerhorn, Comparative Ethnic Relation (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 141.

6. The Kurds standard of living must be raised and they must be given equal and just opportunity for social and economic development. Oil royalties occurring from oil production in Kurdish territory must be diverted for the benefit of the Kurdish nation, in a just proportion and taking into account the size of the Kurdish population in Iraq.
7. The Kurds must be allowed to maintain their own distinct police and security forces which will remain in Kurdistan as guarantee of any peaceful solution.
8. The Iraqi central government must be so composed as to give authentic representation to both the Arab and Kurdish nationalities. Military dictatorship must be abandoned and democratic liberties must be respected.
9. Should the Iraqi government refuse to accept the above demands, the Kurdish people will strive to exercise the right of self-determination, under the international control of the United Nations.<sup>80</sup>

Starting with point two, it is illogical to organize any country on the basis of ethnic groups when the country has a mixed ethnic population. Decentralization of the country administration does not mean the geographical separation built on racial and ethnical terms. It is more rational to achieve the law of "Mohafazat" which divides the country into fourteen counties, and to create a new country named Dohok thus creating a large Kurdish majority there.

Point four states that the Kurdish language is to be an official language in the Kurdish region. But the Arabic language should be the official language besides the Kurdish.

Point six maintained that the oil production should be for the benefit of the Kurdish social and economic development. For instance the Kurds, as a part of the Iraqi people, have the full

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<sup>80</sup> General Representation of the Revolution of Iraqi Kurdistan, Pesh Merga (June, 1966), pp. 8-9.



rights to share with other people in the natural resources for the social and economic development. But the oil, as a national resource, must be under the central government control. When the government could justify the developing program to the country as a whole.

Minority problems are basically an internal problem, which does not belong to any external or international problem. Though it may influence the country in its foreign relations with other countries. The Kurdish question as an internal case should be solved within the country, or if both parties agree, with a mediation of other countries or international organizations. But that does not give them the right to exercise the self-determination under the international control of the United Nations, as what was mentioned in point nine.

Finally, I will condone what came out of point eight. This as I see, is the main step toward the real and just solution of the question.

Let us turn to the June 24 agreement. Edmonds says, "On the other hand there are in the Kurdish proposals several demands which seem to me quite useless, indeed prejudicial, and which they will be well advised to drop (point 4 & 5). . ." <sup>81</sup>

If we look carefully at this twelve-point manifesto, we could say that it is this agreement which gives both the Kurds and the

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<sup>81</sup>  
Hewrami, "Edmond's Plan for Peace," The Kurdish Journal, VI, (March, 1969), 18.

government full and equal rights and obligations. The agreement of March 11, was a great chance for the Kurds. The Kurds should have realized that they won great victory from the government of Iraq. There was a secret treaty between the present government and the Kurds which proved that the government was negotiating from a weak position. The Economist says, "The Kurds have won a great victory in obtaining their rights to autonomy. . . . What is openly accepted is that their heavy arms and their radio station are not to be handed over until all fourteen clauses of their agreement with Baghdad are in force."<sup>82</sup>

Commenting on the demands of the Kurds, Dana Adams Schmidt described the Kurdish demands as follows:

A related complaint was that Kurdish newspapers and magazines have been suppressed. . . special Kurdish language broadcasts on Baghdad radio have been cut down. . . the campaign against the Kurdish language had gone to such far fetched lengths as an order of the Ministry of Agriculture changing the name of so called Kurdish wheat to 'Northern' wheat. . . Not only had the government refrained from appointing Kurdish officials in the Kurdish regions, or promoting those already in office but hundreds of Kurdish officials had been dismissed or transferred to the South of Iraq. There was discrimination also on the economic assistance treaty including the building of radio and television stations all over Iraq, but very few in Kurdistan. The Kurdish Democratic party had been persecuted, it was charged. . ."<sup>83</sup>

Iraq, of course, is not the only country which has a Kurdish minority. Besides that, minorities usually should live in harmony with the majorities. The Kurds who have less than 20 percent of the population of the country, have the same rights and obligations

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<sup>82</sup>"Iraq: Two Nations in One State," The Economist, CCXXXIV, (March 21, 1970), p. 26.

<sup>83</sup>Kanaane, Limelight on the North of Iraq, p. 7.

as the Arabs in the country. If there are any political, economical, or social problems, they are not due to any discrimination against them, but due to the instability of the political life in the country. This may be supported by the following facts.

Iraq is the only country in the world which recognizes Kurdish nationalism. Iraq is a country of two nationalities, the Kurds and the Arabs.

It is also the only country which recognizes and treats Kurdish language as an official language. It is a second language in the country. It would surely be a good case, that the wheat cultivated by Kurds should be called Kurdish, if its counterpart were referred to as Arab wheat.

Arabic language should be elective and should be thought in secondary schools for preparation of the Kurdish people for admission to the universities. There could be no objection to this procedure since they are naturally desirous of acquiring higher education. In addition Arabic is the medium of instruction which not only qualifies them for higher education in Iraq, but also elsewhere in the Arab World which today has extensive facilities for advanced education in every sphere. In any case, as Kananni has said university education in their own language (Kurdish) would be impracticable since textbooks on various subjects are not available in Kurdish. But this still does not prevent the Kurds from using their language taking into consideration the national interests of the country.

The headquarters of the Kurdish Democratic Party were closed not because it was a Kurdish party, but because there were no political parties during that time, and besides, the DKP had created a violent situation which the government had the right to end. This treatment will happen not in Iraq only, but will happen ~~everywhere~~. Besides that, those points do not give any minority the right to create a civil war in a country.

Changing centers of Army training from north to south or other places was a wise military policy. No country would keep its budding soldiers and army units exposed to propaganda and attempts aimed at treating disaffection and disloyalty. An efficient army administration must be free from any limits and boundaries within the country. Military affairs should be carried out by the Parliament or the Council which must include a Kurdish representative.

In the formation of ministries in more recent times, the Kurds had two to four ministers of their community, whereas, the strength of the cabinet did not exceed beyond eight. Some of them served as Deputy Prime Ministers, such as Jamal Baban.<sup>84</sup>

Nuri Said, who headed the government of Iraq thirteen times between 1945-1958 was a Kurd by birth<sup>85</sup> though he was not a fanatic Kurdish nationalist. In Syria, which the Kurds considered as more prejudiced against them, the former President Shishekli was a Kurd.<sup>86</sup>

On the military and civil administration, the Kurds shared the Iraqi Arabs, and most the time held the lions share in comparison

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>85</sup> Main, Iraq from Mandate to Independence, p. 7.

<sup>86</sup> Coon, Caravan: The Story of The Middle East, p. 352.



with other groups; the Shiaa Arabs for example. Officers of the General rank were mostly out of that community. Senior commanders and staff officers of the army were usually Kurds, such as Generals Baker Sidki, Amin Zeki Sulaiman, Noorudin Mahmud, etc... Many of the "brass hats" in the civil services, also, were Kurds. As Kananni has said, of the fourteen Mutasarific (now fifteen after the new agreement which will create a new Kurdish Mohafaza called Dohok) in the country, the Kurds have had as many as ten appointments. Their representation by far exceeds the share due to them by virtue of their population. Official records reveal that 23 percent of all such appointments have been in their hands, though they represent less than 20 percent of the total population.

Under the old and the new Iraqi laws, every national has the full right to enjoy perfect freedom of movement and travel throughout his country. As a result of that, a large number of Kurds left their region and settled down in the cities, the towns and even the countryside of Iraq. They usually live peacefully with their Arab neighbours. On the other side, the Arabs who like to live in the regions which have a Kurdish majority are not given a proper reception. The understanding and the cooperation between both the Arab and the Kurd, all over the country and in every field and at every level, is the only way to bring peace and justice to the country.



Kurdish Position in Both Turkey and Iran

In Turkey until 1968, nobody could speak openly of the Kurdish people. They were given a new name called the "mountain Turks" or "Turks of the highlands." Kurds' separate identity was denied while Iraq considered them as a separate nationality. Turkey encouraged the Kurds to spread all over the country. This move caused the separatist feelings to disappear and class consciousness diminished. Kurds are all Turks, belonging to their homeland Turkey, with no separate identity. In Turkey there is no such thing as a language question. Kurdish language does not exist, and no one could ever speak it, teach it, or study it, and nothing is ever printed or published in it openly. The change of alphabet from Arabic to a Roman script made it difficult for the Kurds to use their language which has Arabic Alphabet. The Turkish government replaced the tribal law and administration by the national law and administration of Turkey.

Iran, too, does not acknowledge the existence of a Kurdish nationality. All the people who are residents of Iran are Iranians. The term "Kurds" is not of Iranian origin and is not recognized as such formally. Iranian forces, put down the Kurdish Republic in 1946. They also hanged the Kurdish leaders publically.

Finally I agree with Hassan Arafat when he says that:

1. The Turks say, 'You are Turks not Kurds, there are no Kurds in Turkey. There are "mountain Turks."
2. The Iranians accept the Kurds, but they say that the Kurds belong to the same race as the Iranians do. Therefore, they are part of Iran. So there is no Kurdish question in Iran.

3. The Iraqi say, 'You are Kurds, we are Arabs, but together we are Iraqis. Iraq is a part of the Arab Nation, but as you are not Arabs, we agree to grant your autonomy on the condition that you continue to be a part of Iraq, and do not attempt secession.'<sup>87</sup>

### The Influence of the Kurdish Problem on the Iraqi Foreign Policy

Minority problem, in general is an internal problem. It is a constitutional problem within the state. The minority problem is an issue of domestic policy, a matter of internal adjustment. However, the reactions and the events created by the minority within a state, effect the internal and sometimes, the external policy of a state.

Kurdish minority in Iraq as well as in other states in the Middle East is considered a large ethnic minority in the area. The Kurds have had the biggest role in influencing the internal policy of Iraq for many years. The Kurdish problem has been used by a number of foreign states to forter unstability in Iraq. Documents prove that the Kurdish movement had been encouraged and supplied from outside.

Talabani, the Iraqi Kurdish leader, has said that the Barzani movement ought to be fought against the fact of its close connections with the imperialists, Zionists, and the Shah's government of Iran. He also added that the Barzani movement forms a direct threat to the liberal, revolutionary, and democratic Kurdish movement.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Arafa, The Kurds, p. 150.

<sup>88</sup> Talabani, Kurdistan Wa al-Haraka Al-qawmiya al-Kurdiya, p. K.

Kurdish movement, though it has its national character and ideology, is encouraged and used by the British. Britain used the movement to keep the Iraqi government in economic and political troubles. Thus British Oil Companies would have the control of the oil resources.

Britain also used the movement to threaten the Turkish government during the war. Talabani in this connection said that in 1943 Britain used Al-Barzani, to flee from Sulaymaniyah to Barzan, and to carry out his revolt. In the meantime Britain asked Baghdad's government to meet some of Barzani's demands. Likewise Britain encouraged Kurds to rise against Turkey.<sup>89</sup>

Iran contributed the lion's share in this problem. Because of its close geographic proximity to the Iraqi Kurdish region, Iranian government was able to help Iraqi Kurds. Kurds were supplied arms and equipment through Iran. Kurds crossed the borders whenever they found any pressure from the Iraqi forces. For these reasons, Bazzaz's government took steps to establish better relations with Iran. Quite realistically this was considered by Bazzaz as a pre-condition for a reasonable settlement with the Barzani Kurds.<sup>90</sup>

Oil is the most important Iranian source of income. For that reason the Shah's government has tried to pressure the successive Iraqi governments causing political instability. For political stability would, perhaps, lead to a union with other Arab States.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. W.

<sup>90</sup> J. Gaspard, "The Eastern Arab Front: The Dispute Between Iraq and Iran and Its Impact On Kurdistan," The New Middle East, X, (July, 1969), p. 24.

Then Iraq will have a stronger position in the Gulf. Thus, "Iran's involvement in the Kurdish struggle against Baghdad has been unofficial but never the less real."<sup>91</sup>

Another reason is that since the Iraqi revolution of 1958, the Iraqi governments have been composed of radical types known for distaste of feudalism and anti-Westernism. The Shah's government has viewed this as a threat to its legitimacy. The New York Times explains all that by saying, "Iraq sought to settle the Kurdish problem for the same reason that Iran wanted to prolong it. Both countries have an eye on the really big stakes in the Persian Gulf region to the south."<sup>92</sup>

In Turkey, the Kurdish activities are still very limited. Some of the Kurds joined both the right and the left of the Turkish political movements. The Kurds of Iraq moved recently to help the Kurds of Turkey to get the same demands as they got from the Iraqi Republic. At the instigation of Larzani, they have planned to set up an independent Kurdish state in Turkey. But if there is any trouble in Turkish Kurdistan at the present time it is on a limited scale.<sup>93</sup>

The Arab-Israeli conflict, may be an indirect factor in the Kurdish question. Iraqi leaders who officially declared war against Israel claimed that they cannot send any troops to help other Arab troops in fighting against Israel. The Iraqi officials claimed that those who encouraged the Kurdish struggle in the North, had created another problem in the south which prevented the other part of the Iraqi army to move to the borders of Israel.

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>92</sup>Dana Adams Schmidt, "Rulers of Iraq Place Priority on Consolidating Their Power," New York Times, March 13, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>93</sup>"Turkey and the Kurds," Christian Science Monitor, May, 1971, p. E.



After the March 11 agreement between the Iraqi Kurds and the government of Iraq, the Israeli military analysts stated that this agreement would probably enable the Iraqi officials to send to the Israeli from some of the forces that had been fighting the Kurds.<sup>94</sup>

Dr. Mahmud Osman, speaking for the Kurdsih leader Barzani, has stated that Kurds would now take their place along side the Iraqis in the battle against Israel.<sup>95</sup>

Kinnane said, "...like the Persians and the Turks, the Kurds regard the Palestine question as an Arab affair which does not directly concern them. They have been careful not to antagonize the Arab world further by seeking help from the Israelis."<sup>96</sup>

The internal problem not only influenced the Iraqi foreign relations with its neighbors, but also with other Arab States. The setting up of a union of Iraq, UAR, and Syria in 1963 had pushed the Kurds to assure their identity within the Arabs. Kurdish representatives met in Cairo and Nasser promised them full identity of the Kurdish nationality, and autonomy within the Arab Unity. As a matter of fact, Nasser and Khrushchev told the Iraqi President that they regarded the Kurdish problem as an internal question of Iraq to be dealt with without foreign intervention. But they both agreed that the Kurds be given some kind of autonomy.

Finally, as Thomas Bals says, "The sense of concrete realities,

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<sup>94</sup> Schmidt, "Rulers of Iraq", p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan, p. 77.



in which the reality of Kurdish nationalism must be included, must lead to an equitable solution of a problem which otherwise is going, for a long time, to disturb the equilibrium of the Middle East,"<sup>97</sup>

### Opinion

The relationship between majorities and minorities is one of many problems of politics. When any group in a society for any reason, tries to differentiate itself from the mass members of the community, a minority problem arises. Thus, the nature of minority problems is not always and everywhere the same.

In addition, minorities everywhere have to co-operate and co-exist with the majority communities. The majorities must be expected to manage with minority participation, their affairs in a manner so as not to practice a policy of racial, ethnic, or religious bias. Minority on its side has to be patient and cooperative.

Kurdish minority question in Iraq in the first and the biggest problem among many others which is causing political and administrative instability. Without doubt, it is a very serious problem of national integration and must be tackled properly. The problem is not "impractical" and not "unsolvable."

The solution could be built on the basis of cooperation between the Arabs and the Kurds. Together they would create a common nation based on a democratic popular system. Such a system would provide the rights and democratic freedoms.

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<sup>97</sup>"Statement by the Executive Bureau regarding the recent announcement made by the Agency for the Affairs of the North," The Kurdish Journal, IV, (March, 1969), p. 23.

Political stability is very badly needed in the country. This will come as a result of constitutional and administrative stability. The latter usually comes by nation-building when people have transferred their loyalties and commitments to the central political system.

Since 1958, the military leadership has failed in two respects in finding a solution to the problem; the absence of a balance in the political system, which did not exist on the basis of equality with other groups in the society. The second is finding a way to solve the problem by a peaceful way.

A "permanent solution" perhaps will come not by formal agreements only, but by the common acceptance of the following:

1. Psychological aspect: The establishment of mutual trust and confidence between the parties.
2. Military dictatorship must be abandoned and democratic climate should be respected, and the establishment of parliamentary government must be encouraged.
3. Considerable degree of autonomy for the Kurds by decentralization of administration in the country must be guaranteed.
4. The rule of law must be practiced in the country.
5. Eliminate, carefully, the concept of "Nationalism" and strike out the ideas of national prejudice, and racial superiority.
6. Encourage the ideas of the "good citizen" by equality for all.

These points will probably help the Iraqis to have a "national unity" and to get the chance to play a great role in the Arab Unity that does not neglect Kurdish rights and existence.

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