IRAQ

INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND IRAQ TO REVISE THE BRITISH-IRAQI TREATY OF ALLIANCE OF JUNE 30, 1930; THE QUESTION OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ

741.90G/11–2647: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iraq

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, November 26, 1947—7 p. m.

441. For Dorsz. Dept understands Busk Brit Chargé d’Affaires is being instructed to enter into top secret negotiations with Iraqi Govt looking forward to revision of Brit-Iraqi Treaty. Busk is also being instructed to keep in touch with you re developments. Dept considers that it is in interests of US that outcome of these negotiations be such as to insure satisfaction of Brit strategic needs in Iraq. You are therefore authorized to cooperate with Busk in this matter and to give him such support as you and he might consider appropriate.

In lending your support you may in case the two of you should consider it helpful discreetly mention matter to Regent or pertinent Iraqi officials pointing out importance to security of Middle East which US ascribes to successful outcome of negotiations.

LOVEIT

1 See also Instruction 17, March 29, to Baghdad, ante, p. 77.
2 Edmund J. Dorsz, First Secretary, of Embassy in Iraq, at this time serving as Chargé.
3 Abdul Ilah.

741.90G/12–847: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Douglas) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, December 8, 1947—11 a. m.

6361. For Henderson.1 Michael Wright2 December 6 asked following status report re secret Anglo-Iraqi treaty talks be conveyed Henderson.

1 Loy W. Henderson, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs.
2 Michael Wright, Superintending Under Secretary of the British Foreign Office.
1. Negotiations have been carried as far as possible at moment and Garran special British negotiator returned December 6 to report.
2. At Prime Minister and Regent level “very good progress” has been made and “virtual agreement” reached on wartime use bases. Only important point is Iraqi reluctance specify in treaty that British forces will be given facilities uses bases jointly with Iraqi forces during peacetime. Prime Minister asserts his intention invite British forces to do this but doubts advisability making formal provision this effect.
3. No further meetings yet scheduled but plan is that if agreement can be reached Iraqi Prime Minister will eventually come London to sign.
4. Wright said consequences UN Palestine decision have so far not shown any sign of interrupting talks and in case Prime Minister they have had “rather the reverse effect”. However, Wright believes Iraqi Govt might be forced suspend talks if popular agitation Iraq re Palestine grows much stronger.
5. Wright again expressed appreciation for Dept’s interest this question. (Dept’s Top Secret 441, November 26 to Baghdad).

DOUGLAS

Salah Jabr.

741.90G/1-548: Telegram

The Chargé in Iraq (Dorsz) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

Baghdad, January 5, 1948—11 a.m.

7. At audience with His Royal Highness mentioned Embtel 5, January 5, I expressed views along lines those Embtel 503, December 31. His Royal Highness said he was glad learn US Government felt this way as he believed satisfactory revision Anglo-Iraqi Treaty would be important factor in promoting stability Middle East. As result progress made in preliminary discussions with British, he was hopeful that mutually beneficial agreement would be reached during Prime Minister’s visit to UK. Weather permitting Prime Minister was scheduled depart January 6.

I mentioned that local press and several prominent political leaders had been bitterly attacking government for Iraq’s treaty relationship with Great Britain and had been demanding that no arrangement be made that would infringe Iraq’s “sovereignty and full independence”. His Royal Highness responded by saying that treaty revision was designed to benefit both countries and that “my people must take into consideration the realities” of existing conditions in the world which for security reasons requires sound treaty relationship of this nature with friendly power.

3 Not printed.
Although I did most of talking His Royal Highness seemed genuinely interested in subjects mentioned Embtels 5 and 6, January 5 and particularly as regards US Government's attitude on treaty revision matter. On this subject he twice remarked that he was glad to receive information conveyed.

Sent Department 3, repeated London 3.

Dorsz

*Not printed.

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Editorial Note

Demonstrations against the proposed treaty with the British occurred at Baghdad on January 5, when students at the Baghdad Law College clashed with the police. The following day, an Iraqi delegation consisting of Prime Minister Jabr, former Prime Ministers Nuri as-Said and Tawfiq as-Suwaidi, and Defense Minister Shakir al-Wadi enplaned for London to conclude the negotiations. They were joined there by Fadhil Jamali, the Foreign Minister (airgram 55, February 7, from Baghdad, 890G.00/2-748).

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741.90G/1-1048: Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Gallman) to the Secretary of State

SECRET US URGENT

LONDON, January 10, 1948—6 p.m.

97. 1. According Wright who asked Loy Henderson be informed soonest twenty year Anglo-Iraqi treaty was initialed this afternoon.\(^1\) Formal signature expected January 15.\(^2\)

2. Embassy pouching text which Wright describes as "very satisfactory" and possible cornerstone on which future British relations with Egypt and other Middle East countries can be based.

3. Foreign Office tonight instructing British Embassy Jidda to outline substance treaty to Ibn Saud.\(^3\) and to say that HMG would be pleased to make similar treaty with SAG. Visit Feisal\(^4\) London end January is suggested as possible opportunity for treaty talks.

Sent Department 97, repeated Baghdad 4, Jidda 2.

Gallman

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\(^1\) The Department, on January 13, informed Cairo in telegram 40 (repeated to other Arab capitals and London) that it considered "agreement this general type in interests of US." (741.90G/1-1348)

\(^2\) The treaty was formally signed at Portsmouth, England, on January 15; for text, see British Cmd. 7309, Iraq No. 1 (1948): Treaty of Alliance between His Majesty in respect of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and His Majesty the King of Iraq.

\(^3\) Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, King of Saudi Arabia.

\(^4\) Amir Faisal, Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister.
SECRET

WASHINGTON, January 18, 1948—6 p. m.

19. Embtel 49, Jan. 14. 1 Dept approves of attitude you have assumed when approached by members Iraqi parliament on subject of Anglo-Iraqi treaty and believes that it would be helpful for you to assume similar attitude when approached by other key Iraqi officials. It feels that your attitude would be more effective if you refrain except in unusual circumstances from taking initiative in conversations of this kind; if such conversations are carried on in a casual rather than pointed manner; and if they are limited to persons of influence known to be friendly towards US. Our objective might be defeated if the impression should be obtained that the British and Americans have some kind of an understanding with regard to the treaty and that Americans are acting as British tools.

You are commended for effective and tactful manner in which you have carried out this delicate task.

MARSHALL

3 Not printed; it advised that, in conversations with prominent Iraqis, Mr. Dorsz had expressed the "view that it would seem to be in Iraq's interest to have a mutually agreeable treaty relationship with friendly power such as UK. Otherwise security of country might become seriously endangered by an unfriendly power seeking opportunity to impose police state conditions such as prevail in eastern Europe" (741.30G/1-1448).

Editorial Note


Chargé Dorsz reported that "On January 21 HRH the Regent made an announcement which must have come as a bombshell to the British. Alarmed by the now serious riots and the possibility of a public upheaval, he summoned a conference of elder statesmen to the Palace and after a five-hour-meeting announced that 'the treaty does not realize the aspirations of Iraq and is not a useful instrument to consolidate the friendship between the two countries.' The Regent further promised Iraqis that no treaty would be ratified which did not insure the interest of the country and its national aspirations." The Jabr Cabinet resigned on January 27 and the next day a new government headed by Mohammed Sadr came to power (airgram 55 from Baghdad). Foreign Minister Hamdi al-Pachachi, on February 4, handed Mr. Busk a note communicating his Government's rejection of the treaty and
concluding that the Iraqi Government was agreeable to opening negotiations for a new treaty (telegram 146, February 7, 8 a.m., 741.90G/2–748).

London, on February 13, advised that it had "no information rejection AIT has in any way altered general British policy vis-à-vis Middle East countries although recent experience is likely to make Bevin and Foreign Office more wary. HMG concept of replacing old British position of strength by developing mutual defence and other interests with Arab states is unchanged. In view British Cabinet, essential merits its basic postwar attitude towards Middle East are too great to be abandoned lightly. However, Palestine partition has created dangerous reservoir emotionalism in all Arab states and even some minor event might set off conflagration. If this should happen HMG would have to meet new situation with materials at hand and might be forced to make, for time at least, extemporary policy alterations." (telegram 554, 741.90F/2–1348)

8006.50/11–2448: Telegram

The Acting United States Representative at the United Nations (Dulles) to the Secretary of State

SECRET URGENT PARIS, November 24, 1948—2 p.m.

Delga 908. For Satterthwaite¹ from Kopper,² Khanadan³ (Iraq) brought up again question of possible economic assistance to Iraq⁴ in near future along same lines indicated my memorandum to Secretary dated November 4.⁵ Khanadan reiterated view that it was essential for Iraqi Delegation have something to take home if Iraq were to acquiesce in settlement Palestine question along lines Bernadotte Plan.⁶

It was pointed out to him that US felt it first necessary to secure political settlement Palestine question. Khanadan demurred to this saying that if economic assistance were postponed it would be too late.

Khanadan's approaches have been made with the approval of the chairman of the Iraqi Delegation. His line of argument has been

¹ Joseph C. Satterthwaite, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs.
³ S. Khanadan, member of the Iraqi Delegation to the General Assembly.
⁴ The economic and financial situation of Iraq deteriorated considerably as 1948 wore on. Chargé Dorst, on October 9, expressed concurrence with the views of the British Foreign Office on the urgency of granting immediate financial assistance to Iraq (telegram 607 from Baghdad, 8006.00/10–948).
⁵ Copy not found in Department of State files.
⁶ See progress report dated September 16, signed by Count Bernadotte included in documentation on Israel, scheduled for publication in part 2 of the present volume.
similar to that expressed by Ali Jawdat* to Dorsz (re Baghdad air-
gram A-311, October 26*), although they say Iraqi Government does
not know Iraqi Delegation here is putting out new feelers on question
economic aid.

It would be helpful for us to know whether any recent prospect
of economic aid inform of loans or otherwise and likewise extent to
which we may go in giving any encouragement to Iraqi and other
Arab Delegates on this matter.

Repeated London as 1336.

Dulles

Iraqi Foreign Minister.
* Not printed.

S90G.51/12-145: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the United States Delegation at the
United Nations General Assembly, at Paris

SECRET

WASHINGTON, December 1, 1948—1 p.m.

Gadel 636. For Kopper from Satterthwaite. For your background
in discussion with Khanadan re economic assistance Iraq Dept rptg
Baghdad 662 Oct 30; Deptel 399 Nov 4 and Baghdad 639 Nov 9.2

Dept has consistently favored and encouraged Iraqi approach World
Bank, but little or no progress made due failure on part Iraq to
complete application to Bank or show initiative or energy in present-
ing case to Bank. Dept has repeatedly expressed view to Iraqis that
World Bank is logical source financial assistance and that national
development projects are appropriate subjects for such assistance
(Delage 908 Nov 24).

Dept has no knowledge Iraqi application Exim Bank credit. If and
when application made by Iraq or any Arab country, case will be con-
sidered on basis individual merit in conformity rules and legislation
governing such loans. You may know Saudi Arab Govt although
granted Exim loan* has indicated intention nonutilization.

You may explain to Khanadan that subject loan is complicated one
and this Govt in no position offer economic assistance or promises of
assistance in out-of-hand manner suggested. You may advise him
Dept would be glad discuss general subject at any time through
approach Embassy Baghdad or through Iraqi Embassy Washington.*

[Satterthwaite.]

Lovett

* Not printed; it noted recent criticism from Foreign Minister Jawdat of the
failure of the United States to offer any tangible assistance to Iraq and of
American unwillingness to divorce the question of economic and financial aid to
Iraq from the political problem of Palestine (S90G.00/10-3048).
* Neither printed.
* Documentation on this subject is included in the section on Saudi Arabia in
this volume.
* This telegram was repeated to London.