IRAQ

JANUARY-JULY 1958: THE IRAQI COUP; ASSESSMENT OF THE QASSIM GOVERNMENT; U.S. RECOGNITION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

96. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Rountree) to Secretary of State Dulles


SUBJECT

Problem of United States assistance for the Iraqi Air Force and our relations with the United Kingdom

Discussion

This problem involves three United States policy objectives: 1) Iraq's military posture; 2) the maintenance of relations with Iraq of a nature to insure Iraq's continued effective participation in the Baghdad Pact and the availability of military facilities to the United States in Iraq in case of emergency; and 3) harmonious relations with the United Kingdom, not only in the Middle East but world-wide.

The Department has been under pressure from four different sources in the matter of United States assistance to the Iraqi Air Force (RIAF): 1) from the Iraqis, to provide such aid; 2) from developments in Syria and Syria's acquisition of modern Soviet jet aircraft; 3) from the Department of Defense (prompted by the JCS) which wants to provide U.S. aircraft to Iraq and to act independently of the British military there, and, finally and most recently, 4) from the United Kingdom (January 16 letter from Selwyn Lloyd),1 which wishes to retain its traditional responsibility for the RIAF.

Of these pressures the two most difficult to reconcile are those from our Department of Defense and from the United Kingdom.

Department of Defense-JCS Position

The most direct and politically advantageous response to Iraq's need and requests for air force assistance is to provide it ourselves with

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1 Not printed. (Ibid., Presidential Correspondence: Lot 66 D 204, UK Officials to Secretary Dulles/Herter, 1954–1960)
U.S. equipment. The latter is readily available; indeed F-86's are currently in surplus; and it would be financially convenient to charge them off against the Military Assistance Program. Defense and the JCS are not convinced of the effectiveness of the British Air Force program in Iraq, and report that the Iraqis consider U.S. equipment superior to British. The fact that the U.S. has continued to concede the British primary responsibility for the RIAF, moreover, has always rankled our military authorities who believe that the much larger amount of military assistance which the U.S. has provided to Iraq over the past three years (some $44 million) in comparison to net British grant-aid of about $7.5 million, entitles the United States to the predominant military role in Iraq.

**British Position**

The RIAF has traditionally been under the British wing; and the United Kingdom clearly attaches considerable political importance to the preservation of its special military relationship to Iraq. Over the last ten months the U.K. has supplied the RIAF with 15 modern Hawker Hunter VI jet aircraft (5 as a grant, and 10 sold on terms for approximately $5 million). The British have a substantial, if somewhat dilatory, training program for the RIAF (pilots and maintenance), both in the U.K. and in Iraq. At present the RIAF has about 10 pilots checked out on Hawker Hunters, although these planes still must be maintained by British crews.

The position we took with the British during the first half of 1957 (in staff level conversations in the Department in March and May) on the subject of assistance for the RIAF was that the U.S. had no present intention of providing such aid. We expressed gratification that the U.K. was supplying the RIAF with Hawker Hunters. This subject also arose at the Bermuda meeting in March when we reitered this position, coupled with assurances by the President to Prime Minister Macmillan that the United States desired, if anything, to build up the British again in the Middle East.

With this expressed desire in mind, the Department conducted extensive discussions with Defense representatives emphasizing the commitment to a continued recognition of U.K. interest in Iraq. These resulted in an agreed State–Defense position presented to the British for the first time at the staff level on January 14. Although no indication was given that the survey mission might recommend supplying U.S. aircraft, the British representatives apparently assumed that this was our intention.

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3 The position paper was attached to a memorandum from Dorman to Rountree, January 10. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.5–MSP/1–1058)
This January 14 presentation was undertaken in accordance with British agreement, as a result of your October 15 talk with Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, to discuss modifications in our respective military assistance responsibilities in Iraq heretofore governed by the Memorandum of Understanding.4

Recommendations5

1. That you take a position along the following lines with the British:

   a) In informing the British of the U.S. plan to send a mission to survey the RIAF we had no intention of implying that we had reached any final decision regarding the specific type of assistance to be provided.
   
   b) The U.S. fully appreciates the U.K. traditional political and military relationship to Iraq. But as the British know, we have been under pressure also to assist in strengthening the RIAF. The U.S. survey mission would be in response to these Iraqi requests. It would also provide us at first-hand with the elements necessary to determine the most effective means of meeting the RIAF’s deficiencies.
   
   c) The U.S. is aware of the potential problems of supplying the RIAF with U.S. equipment, and has every intention of examining them fully with the United Kingdom. The U.S. however believes that such discussions could most fruitfully be held after the survey has been undertaken.
   
   d) In view of our common desire to work closely together in the Middle East we are however quite prepared to discuss the matter further with the British at Ankara, and meanwhile to postpone sending the survey mission and informing the Iraqis of it.

2. That the Department of Defense be informed at a high level that:

   a) We believe the U.S. survey mission should avail itself of the British offer to provide information in London concerning their program for the RIAF, not only in the interest of obtaining these British views, but because the Department of State considers cooperative relations with the British indispensable to the success of the survey.
   
   b) We believe the survey should be conducted along strictly fact-finding lines and without prejudice to the type of U.S. assistance which it may prove advisable, in the light of all the relevant factors, to render.

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5 According to Secto 34 from Ankara, January 29, Lloyd informed Dulles at the Baghdad Pact meeting that the United Kingdom welcomed increased U.S. military aid for Iraq’s Air Force and the U.S. survey but hoped to exchange views before the survey took place. Lloyd stated that it was the British understanding that all the Iraqis really desired in fighter aircraft was a squadron of Hawker Hunters in 1958 and another in 1959. The United Kingdom hoped that these British planes could be obtained by off-shore procurement. In subsequent talks with British officials, also reported in Secto 34, Irwin and Rountree generally followed guidelines outlined in this memorandum. (Department of State, Conference Files: Lot 63 D 123, CF 969)
97. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, February 12, 1958, 7:29 p.m.

2086. Embtel 1327.¹ Request you speak to King as follows:

Nuri has approached Embassy with certain suggestions of US air support which he has apparently previously discussed with King in context formation new government and possible Soviet reaction thereto.

US considers organization Iraqi Government purely internal matter to be carried out in line normal constitutional processes. US prepared continue render appropriate cooperation to Iraq Government.

US understands Iraqi concern over Soviet opposition continuance Iraq’s forthright stand against communist imperialism. Eisenhower Doctrine² designed provide concrete evidence availability US support against aggression by communist or communist-controlled state against states in ME. US believes existence Doctrine has served as effective deterrent communist military adventures in ME.

Re air assistance, US sending survey mission. Its findings will assist US to determine specific way in which US may best contribute to strengthening of Iraq’s defenses in aviation field.

Herter

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.5/2–1258. Top Secret; Priority. Drafted by Newsom and approved by Berry.

¹ In telegram 1327, February 12, Ambassador Gallman reported that Nuri Said informed him that King Faisal wanted Nuri to form a new government and that the amount of air support from the United States would be a factor in the King’s acceptance of the new government. Nuri anticipated a strong Soviet reaction to his return to office. When Gallman reminded Nuri of the U.S. air survey mission, which was on its way, Nuri stated that it would not meet the urgent problem of Iraq’s inadequate air strength. What Iraq needed was two squadrons of U.S. jet interceptors with personnel to train Iraqi pilots. Gallman observed that this looked like a “fast maneuver” to “stampede” the United States. (Ibid., 787.02/2–1258)

98. Telegram 2180 From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, February 19, 1958, 9:52 p.m.

[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.5/2–1958. Top Secret. 1-1/2 pages of source text not declassified.]

99. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, February 21, 1958, 7 p.m.

1396. Following Embassy’s view of Iraqi reaction to date towards Arab union: ¹

1. Among most responsible officials attitude seems to be one of relief that necessary step taken to protect Iraq’s future plus realization many problems lie ahead.

2. Among variety of other literate opinions, common factors include feeling that a step in right direction has been taken. There is general satisfaction too that device worked out does not require either of two countries submerge its existing institutions but there is common regret that Syria, long viewed as Iraq’s natural partner, has not been included in first step toward long cherished Arab unity. Correspondingly, there is belief that ultimate undefined “Arab unity” should and will be achieved though how is not clearly seen. Presently we are of view that few of the politically mature would wish see this done by kind of submission to foreign power that Syria has chosen.

¹On February 14 Iraq and Jordan proclaimed the federation of their two countries into the Arab Union. King Faisal II of Iraq became Chief of State and King Hussein of Jordan the Deputy Chief of State. Under the announced terms of the new federation each King would retain constitutional authority in his own kingdom and two regional councils would be established to deal with non-federal matters. According to the announcement of the union, the federal capital would rotate between Baghdad and Amman, a federal legislature would be established, and a constitution would be enacted within 3 months to implement the proclaimed federation.
Among those strongly loyal to present regime who sharply aware danger posed by Nasser's presence across oil pipelines there is belief that Iraq must seek every opportunity pry Syria away from Egypt and that there will be high potential for dissatisfaction among Syrians as they see their interests subordinated to those of Egypt.

Lack of any popular demonstrations hailing new union is ironic but reflects existing Iraq political atmosphere. Union with Jordan, while in fact undertaken by Iraq's leadership is coldly realistic move for protection national interests, is being presented to public as great step toward achievement Arab ideals. But popular dislike for present regime is sufficiently strong so that it is hard for it to do anything which will incur public approval rather than suspicion. We not inclined attach too much significance mild flurries which have so far occurred and which have involved principally students shouting slogans hostile GOI and in support of Nasser. Iraqi schoolboy organizers inclined feel they must demonstrate in connection any important ME event and such demonstrations inevitably take anti-government cast. Embassy does not believe demonstrations mean that Jordan-Iraqi union is unpopular. Union has not insofar as public response concerned affected government adversely though margin of reaction favorable to government cannot be thought of as very large.

Gallman

100. Telegram From Secretary of State Herter to the Department of State

Manila, March 11, 1958, 4 p.m.

Secto 12. Selwyn Lloyd called on me shortly after my arrival deeply disturbed as result his stopover in Baghdad en route Manila. He said he had found Iraqi leaders in very jittery state and acting as though they expected be gone in six months. Nuri,¹ and even Crown Prince, were

¹On March 5, Nuri Said formed a new coalition government following the dissolution of the Murjan Cabinet on March 3.
visibly worried. Lloyd felt impact of Nasser on Iraq had been tremendous and that association with Jordan was unpopular because people believed it meant Iraq would have to finance Jordanian deficit.

Iraq had pressed him for (1) guarantee that if pipeline cut UK would come to financial rescue; (2) immediate 5 million pounds credit to finance large-scale propaganda effort to be repaid in annual half million pound installments; (3) general long term line of credit; (4) crash program for three squadrons of fighter planes; (5) radio jamming equipment; (6) UK declaration of independence of Kuwait which thereupon to join Arab Federation.

Lloyd said with respect to:

(1) He assured Iraqis if pipeline cut UK would be helpful as they had been after Suez when they had extended 20 million pound credit of which Iraqis had drawn down only 14.
(2) He told Iraqis they could divert 50,000 pounds from 200,000 pounds UK had given Arab Committee.
(3) Lloyd had extracted about one million pounds from Treasury as birthday present for Federation. He thought morale aspect of this was important as Iraqis obviously were anxiously seeking assurances that their friends were backing them.
(4) Iraqis, particularly military and Nuri, were pressing hard for fighter planes, either Hunters or F-86’s. They have referred to their repeated requests to US and UK and pointed out they were still waiting for the aerial survey team.
(5) Lloyd had requested London to send some jamming equipment.
(6) This was clearly impractical proposition.

Lloyd thought two matters in which US could be most helpful were in extending birthday credit to Federation and supplying fighter aircraft (he thought amount not so important as gesture). Iraqis had visibly brightened when offered 50,000 pounds for propaganda project. He then handed me memorandum regarding early availability of three squadrons of Hunter 4 aircraft and observed that cost would be less than F-86’s. He said British Embassy Washington had recently raised this matter again with Department but London has been told that US worried about what Iraqis up to. He urged that we again look into possibility of early supply of fighters, preferably Hunters.

I said I fully agreed that it was important to do something to keep up Iraqi spirits. I doubted under our aid plans and procedures which operated on a project basis we could give Iraqis any open line of credit but I would look into matter. I said I would also have matter of accelerated supply of fighters looked into immediately. I had not been aware recent British approach in Washington on this subject but it was true that we had been worried by some of Nuri’s statements. At this point Lloyd observed he thought Nuri had become more cautious.
I should like before leaving Manila to be able to give Lloyd at least preliminary reply on possibility of credit and early supply of fighters for Iraq.  

Dulles

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2 In Tosec 22 to Manila, repeated to Baghdad and London, March 11, the Department of State informed Dulles that it was urgently considering the Iraqi matters raised by Lloyd. It agreed that the United States must support and strengthen the Arab Union (Jordan and Iraq). The Department would be willing to assure Iraq of the initiation of a fighter aircraft program (probably American F-86s) as promptly as possible after the initial report of the survey mission. Also it would contribute an amount equal to the British for Iraqi propaganda efforts and could promise Iraq and Jordan favorable consideration of economic assistance projects in lieu of a line of credit. In addition, the Department hoped that the British would not concentrate their efforts solely on Iraq and emphasized that the actions contemplated above should not encourage Iraq or Jordan to intervene militarily in the United Arab Republic. (Department of State, Central Files, 786.00/3–1158)

101. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, March 12, 1958, noon.

1513. Secto 12. While I have not found Iraqi leaders as jittery as Selwyn Lloyd apparently did, I agree that they are under a good deal pressure from increased tension in relations with UAR. Accordingly, I think we should take some steps to reinforce their morale. First and obvious move is of course arrange for soonest possible arrival air survey mission whose simple presence here would have immediate and considerable psychological benefit. Once mission has arrived, I believe we will have to follow through with assistance in the form of aircraft. While not wishing to pre-empt mission’s judgment of Iraqi air needs, I would suggest we begin consider now possibility token delivery of half dozen fighter aircraft (of type decided to be appropriate) to be delivered within next few weeks. This would have substantial effect on Iraqi spirits but would not, I believe, make them incautious.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/3–1258. Top Secret; Priority. Repeated to Manila.

1 Document 100.
Iraqis have not spoken to me about their need for a general long-term line of credit and I am at a loss to understand just what they would use it for at present. Certainly their reserves are sufficient to meet immediate crises but if we could assure them credit might be available from some source in case of proven need, that would help also.

We have been quietly trying for some time to assist Iraqi to improve their propaganda output and we have not always found them as full of the sense of urgency they demonstrated to British Foreign Secretary. They are handicapped by lack of qualified personnel but we will continue do everything we can here to take advantage of their present frame of mind to advance measures needed make their propaganda more effective. They may need some money but they could not effectively use 5 million pounds at present for radio or any other propaganda output.

Nuri's policy pronouncement on assuming office made hopeful mention of a reform program. Parliament here has considered some land tax legislation which, if carried through effectively, might help narrow present wide gap between people and government which gives Nasser great advantage in his efforts discredit Iraqi Government. We will continue our efforts here encourage Iraqis pursue this kind of approach to their problem, along with improvement in their propaganda as best means making long-term contribution to political stability. We would hope in this way divert them from any risky ventures outside their own borders.

A final comment on position of regime here: So far Iraqi army and police have shown no signs of disaffection and there is no well organized political leadership among Iraq's diverse and rather weak political opposition. While the Iraqis may be facing some difficult days as they undergo propaganda treatment similar to that administered to Jordan last fall, I believe Nuri and Crown Prince can be counted upon to keep their nerve.

Gallman
102. Staff Notes Prepared for President Eisenhower

No. 350


[Here follows item 1.]

2. Arab Union Facing Financial Problems.—Embassy Baghdad has agreed in discussions with the British Embassy that our two countries should do their utmost to help assure the success of the Union, and that assistance in political, military and economic fields will be required. ¹ The Union probably will find itself in acute financial difficulty in the future since US aid for Jordan will remain essentially unchanged, the Saudi Arabian subsidy will be terminated, and most of the oil revenues will continue to be allocated for development in Iraq, which cannot afford both the Union and the present development program without outside help. Since there is virtually no basic Union economic planning, as well as a general reluctance to face the economic consequences of the Union, our Embassy suggests that the US and British Governments should begin now to consider all possible avenues of assistance. For the immediate situation, the Embassy recommends an encouraging US response to Iraq’s requests for fighter aircraft and aid for propaganda and youth camp purposes. (S)

3. VOA Transmitter on Cyprus.—USIA reports that the British have agreed in principle to American construction of a VOA transmitter on the island of Cyprus, to provide improved VOA coverage of the Middle East. Known as Project Delta, the installation would broadcast on a medium wave length with 500 kilowatts of power, with provision for expansion to 1000 KW. The British are studying technical factors which may affect local broadcasting, and a favorable decision is in prospect. (S)

[Here follow items 4–6.]

¹ As reported in telegram 1669 from Baghdad, April 10. (Department of State, Central Files, 786.00/4–1058)
United States–United Kingdom consultations on Iraq’s Air Force were characterized by strong British objections to the United States supplying Iraq with F–86 jet aircraft. In a letter to Secretary Dulles, British Ambassador Caccia conveyed Foreign Secretary Lloyd’s concern that introducing F–86s into the Iraqi Air Force would complicate the operational, technical, and maintenance problems of a “small” but “quite effective” air force. Lloyd suggested that the U.S. air survey’s conclusion that the Iraqis would have no difficulty in operating F–86s was “quite unrealistic.” Lloyd also stated that political disadvantage could result from the fact that the two members of the Arab Union (Iraq and Jordan) would have different aircraft, especially since the F–86 was the inferior plane. For these reasons, Lloyd hoped Dulles would reconsider the U.S. decision. (Letter from Caccia to Dulles, April 28; Department of State, Presidential Correspondence: Lot 66 D 204, UK Officials—Sec. Dulles/Herter, 1954–1960)

Caccia and Dillon met to discuss the problem on April 29 at the Department of State. Dillon explained since there were only 18 Hawker Hunter Mark IV aircraft available for the next year, the United States had concluded that they should go to Lebanon and Jordan because of Israeli sensitivities. Therefore, the F–86 aircraft, which the United States did not consider inferior to the British plane, was the only answer for Iraq’s urgent needs. Dillon added that a F–86 jet cost one-third the price of a Hawker Hunter Mark IV obtained by offshore procurement. Caccia stated he was under instruction to raise this issue with Secretary Dulles. When Dillon assured the British Ambassador that he and Herter had been authorized to make this decision, Caccia stated that he was under instruction to reluctantly accept. (Memorandum of meeting, April 29; ibid., Central Files, 787.5622/4–2958)
104. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, April 30, 1958, 7:22 p.m.

2827. Deptel 2767.¹ Inform King and Nuri that following USAF survey RIAF and consultations with UK we have decided provide by grant-aid one squadron of 15 U.S. F-86 jet aircraft. Provision these aircraft is in response Iraqi request for assistance and is earnest our determination assist GOI meet its security requirements and contribute to strengthening Arab Union. We hope be able provide small number these aircraft in near future and deliver full number in stages thereafter as capacity to absorb and maintain established. FYI. Initial delivery of aircraft, possibly within three to four months, contingent on ability GOI make requisite space available and on prepositioning necessary support equipment and maintenance personnel. End FYI.

US military representatives will shortly be in touch with GOI regarding preparations necessary for receipt and handling these aircraft, training and other administrative aspects this matter.

We are aware desire GOI acquire additional modern aircraft; and present offer does not preclude future US aid this field.

Dulles

¹Telegram 2767, April 23, sent to London and repeated to Amman, Baghdad, and Beirut, reported that the Department had informed the British Embassy of its decision to supply jet aircraft to Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq. (Ibid., 786.5622/4–2358)
The Prime Minister opened the discussion of Iraq by stating that this country is also in great difficulty. They formed a union with Jordan\(^1\) which from an Iraqi point of view is a liability and now they also want to include Kuwait. He believed that an acute crisis is building up. Mr. Rountree added that Nuri has told our Ambassador he must have money in substantial amounts to meet the Union's budget deficit as well as obtain the inclusion of Kuwait in the Arab Union or he will resign. The Prime Minister stated that if the Arab Union should collapse it will be a terrific blow to our side. Mr. Rountree went on to say that Nuri wants about $37 million to cover the period from July 1, 1958 to May 31, 1959 which is budget support at the rate of $50 million a year. Since we gave Jordan $25 million last year this would mean an increase of $25 million in U.S. financial support. All told, he said that we would be contributing $43.7 million to Jordan this year in various forms.

The Prime Minister believed that there were two separate issues here: the money which he wants from the West and second, the inclusion of Kuwait in the Arab Union. He suggested that we ask our experts

\(^1\)The Arab Union, proclaimed on February 14, became effective on May 12 with the approval of a federal constitution. A federated cabinet headed by Nuri as Premier and Jordan's Ibrahim Hashim as Deputy Premier was inducted on May 19.

Source: Department of State, Conference Files: Lot 63 D 123, CF 102. Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by William N. Dale of EUR/BNA, cleared by Rountree and Reinhardt, and approved by the White House. The meeting was held at the White House.
to produce a paper for consideration on the financial subject tomorrow since it is a complex matter.²

He noted that Nuri had been difficult for some time and was now attempting a Nasser-type operation against Kuwait. The ruler, he said, does not want to join the Arab Union and if Nuri attempts to force him it will play right into Nasser's hands. Mr. Rountree explained that the ruler of Kuwait was in difficulties on this issue because a large majority of his subjects would favor joining the United Arab Republic in preference to the Arab Union. In reply to a question from the President, he added that although the original inhabitants of Kuwait were few, there had been many recent immigrants from other Arab countries including Egypt and Syria who agitated strongly for joining in with Egypt. Therefore, the ruler might consider that if he shows an inclination to join Iraq in the Arab Union he will become most unpopular with the population. As well, he is certainly aware that the Iraqis are greatly interested in tapping his financial resources.

The Prime Minister reiterated that it was a great shock to him to learn that Nuri has "out and out threatened" Kuwait. The Secretary said that Nuri's personality has become a liability in recent times and that he put the most extravagant demands on us when he was here with the threat of resigning, which may be a kind of blackmail. Sir Patrick Dean expressed the opinion that the situation in Iraq was still negotiable, that Nuri wants money more than he does Kuwait which he can't really expect to have by this week-end.

Mr. Dillon pointed out that although we have no FY 1958 money available for the purpose we could make a commitment to supply funds to Iraq through "1550" procedure.³

It was decided that a working group would be set up to consider means of keeping the Arab Union afloat which would report to the Secretary and Prime Minister tomorrow afternoon. The policy could then be confirmed with the President at dinner tomorrow night. Mr. Rountree said he would be getting in touch with Lord Hood to arrange a meeting for the first thing tomorrow morning.

² On June 10, Rountree sent Dulles a memorandum describing U.S.-U.K. proposals to meet the Arab Union budgetary deficit, which included an estimate of the Iraqi budgetary deficit for the next 9 months. Rountree suggested that the United States and the United Kingdom agree in principle to meet the budgetary problem and to inform Nuri of that decision to prevent his resignation. Dulles agreed. (Department of State, Central Files, 886.10/6-1058)

³ Apparent reference to NSC Action No. 1550, May 3, 1955, in which the President stated that U.S. foreign aid commitments should not be promised without consideration of the following factors: compatibility with approved policy, the funds being appropriated or authorized by Congress or a determination made by the Executive to seek such authorization, the recipient country's ability to support the contemplated aid program, and a consideration of the probable time-span for the assistance. (Ibid., S-S-NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)
106. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Rountree) to Secretary of State Dulles

Washington, June 20, 1958.

SUBJECT
Proposed Reply to Iraqi Crown Prince's Suggestion that a Revolutionary Movement be Fomented in North Syria

Discussion
We have received through Ambassador Warren in Ankara a message from Crown Prince Abdulillah of Iraq, who is currently in Istanbul, to the effect that certain Syrian refugee leaders have suggested that a revolutionary movement be fostered in north Syria to take UAR pressure off the Lebanon (Tab B). 1 Abdulillah said that he favored this suggestion but could not unilaterally approve such a move which would require supplies and support which Iraq could not provide, the implication being that US assistance would be necessary. He asked for our comments on this suggestion so that he could, as he had promised, reply to the Syrian refugees within six days.

Suggestions from the Iraqis and from Syrian refugee leaders that we assist in fomenting revolt in Syria have been made on a number of occasions in the past. We seriously question that either the Iraqis or the Syrian refugees are presently able, with or without covert assistance from other sources, to mount a successful revolt in Syria. An abortive revolt would, we believe, seriously prejudice the possibility of taking action on an appropriate occasion in the future to redress the Syrian situation itself. While a revolt in north Syria might contribute temporarily to easing UAR pressure on the Lebanon, we believe that such a revolt would in all likelihood fail to achieve anything permanent and that the long-range consequences of such failure in Syria would outweigh any advantage which might result from a temporary easing of UAR pressure on the Lebanon. A draft telegram containing a message to this effect to Abdulillah is attached (Tab A). 2

[1 paragraph (2-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

Recommendation
That you [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] send a reply to Abdulillah along the lines of the attached draft telegram.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 783.00/6–2058. Top Secret. Drafted by Waggoner.

1 Telegram 3130 from Ankara, June 18, not printed. (Ibid., 783.00/6–1858)

2 Sent as telegram 3788 to Ankara, June 20, not printed. (Ibid.)
107. Editorial Note

According to Staff Notes No. 384, prepared for the President on June 23 and initialed by Eisenhower, the first shipment of F–86 jet planes arrived in Iraq on June 17. The pertinent section of the note reads:

"3. Aircraft for Iraq.—By the June 17 deadline, as directed on June 10, Air Force had delivered to Iraq five F–86F’s and dispatched spare parts, equipment and personnel to complete the initial program. The Chief MAAG notes that Iraq was unprepared to meet the sudden demands for accommodations and landing facilities." (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)

108. Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Plans of the Central Intelligence Agency (Wisner) to the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming)


SUBJECT

An Analysis of the Effect in Iraq of Military Intervention in Lebanon by the United States and the United Kingdom

1. In view of the impact of the Lebanese crisis on other Arab States, the [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] has forwarded to [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] its appreciation of the possible effect in Iraq of various courses of action in Lebanon which might be taken by the United States and the United Kingdom. This analysis is based on the following premises:

a. the short-term consequences of intervention only;

b. the Iraqi Army would not be committed in force, either to action in Lebanon or to any Syrian adventure;

c. US/UK intervention is without international sanction. The estimate would be proportionately mitigated by the degree of international backing.

d. no account has been taken of possible French intervention, which would be disastrous.

Source: Department of State, NEA Files: Lot 59 D 582, Iraq, General, 1958. Secret; Noforn; [classification markings and dissemination indicators not declassified].
2. Iraqi reaction is estimated to be as follows:
   a. Top level officials in the Government of Iraq (GOI) would accept it as a necessity. The GOI's current propensity is for pro-Sham'un intervention; the GOI undoubtedly views the fall of Lebanon to the United Arab Republic (UAR) as a sufficient threat to its own security to warrant an unpopular overt Western intervention;
   b. The urban-based political opposition would oppose the intervention in an articulate manner and would attempt to exploit it by demonstrations, the primary aim of which would be to weaken or overthrow the GOI. The opposition would use the intervention as a medium of expression for many unformulated popular grievances against the Iraqi regime and Western "imperialism."

3. The following factors favor the GOI's ability to contain the disturbances:
   a. While articulate public opinion is preponderantly anti-GOI, the hard core of activists is small and, except for the Ba'th and Communist Parties, is badly organized. The Ba'thists and the Communists have fairly effective organizations, but they can be kept under control by firm government action. The remaining effective opposition probably comprises not more than 50 lawyers and a few hundred students. There is no evidence to date of the existence of an effective coordination between the opposition and the Army. Thus while the opposition is capable of causing disturbances, it lacks the immediate capacity to overthrow the regime;
   b. While nationalist and anti-Western concepts have penetrated quite widely, the rural population is still basically responsive to the conservative control of the shaykhs, who in the Arab and even Kurdish sectors are predominantly not anti-government;
   c. More than it may be apparent, the urban bourgeoisie and skilled workers may passively feel their own interests, in the form of an unprecedented prosperity, lie with the regime, although this is balanced against the emotional appeal of Arab Nationalism.
   d. With most Iraqis, like other Arabs, the principal motive is to be on the winning side, regardless of the political principles involved. A firm action by the government would arouse less real resentment than might be supposed;
   e. The Iraqi police are better equipped, particularly in vehicular transport, than a year ago. More important, the organization, command, tactical handling, and confidence of the Director-General of Police and the Director-General of Security have markedly improved in the last year;
   f. The crucial aspect of containing disturbances is the need to issue orders for strong police action at the outbreak of any trouble. The
command line is Chief of Police Abbas (with Chief of Security Bajhat Attiyyah), Minister of Interior Sa'id al-Qazzaz, Prime Minister Ahmad Mukhtar Baban, Arab Union (AU) Prime Minister Nuri Sa'id, all of whom will act decisively with the possible exception of Baban, who would be decisively controlled by Nuri and the Palace.

4. The principal GOI weaknesses are as follows:
   a. The lack of full conviction, even on the part of government officials (except a few at the top), in the correctness of broad GOI policies, including decisions on internal measures;
   b. The possibility of change in the GOI or the AU Government bringing in weaker personalities, such as Ayyubi, who through hesitation or vacillation would fail to act decisively when trouble starts. This in turn would give heart to the demonstrators and would furnish momentum by providing a situation where all those disgruntled with some aspect of GOI could join in pulling down the regime. (Such a group would have neither constructive nor defined goals.)

5. Based on the above analysis, it is believed that the GOI can contain any immediate internal disturbances which might arise out of a US/UK intervention in Lebanon. Once the hard core extremists are under control the best of the opposition is quickly dispersible.

6. In favor of US/UK intervention (if United Nations action proves ineffective), the following, based entirely on considerations of relevant Middle East factors, is submitted:
   a. The fall of Lebanon would add to the momentum of UAR expansion and would increase the likelihood of developments in the AU similar to those in Lebanon. In such eventuality, the US/UK would find themselves in the dilemma of either supporting the constituted government (under more difficult geographical conditions and against the rising tide of unpopularity with mass opinion) or acquiescing to Nasir.
   b. In spite of the popular hue and cry and some trappings of a constitutional government, the Middle East Arab states are basically army-based. In the short term the popular opposition to US/UK intervention of the practical moment could be disregarded and local internal security maintained.
   c. Intervention would be much more palatable if undertaken by the UN with multi-country forces and non-US/UK troops undertaking the initial operations. There is a reservoir of public respect for the UN which is not reserved for US/UK, who are viewed as participants in Lebanese struggle.

For the Deputy Director, Plans:
W. Lloyd George

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¹Printed from a copy that bears this stamped signature.
109. Editorial Note

At 8:29 a.m. Washington time, July 14, Secretary Dulles telephoned the President to inform him that a coup was taking place in Iraq. According to a transcribed memorandum of their telephone conversation:

"The Pres heard re Iraq. The Sec said now we have a call from Lebanon to come to their aid—also the Br have. The Pres said it looks now as if you have a solid Arab world against us because Jordan can't stick.... The Sec agreed and said the main problem is our relations with Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. We always felt we would lose the Arab world but did not want to under circumstances that would lose the confidence of these countries. The Sec has no ideas because it happened so fast but thinks we ought to have a meeting today. NSC is set but this is more important. He will try to accumulate info and join NSC whenever he can and then perhaps recess and have a limited meeting with Defense, CIA and JCS." (Ellipsis in the source text. Memorandum of telephone conversation by Bernau; Eisenhower Library, Dulles Papers, White House Telephone Conversations)

A joint Air, Army, Navy message from U.S. Army Attaché in Iraq, CX 39, sent at 9:05 a.m. Baghdad time, July 14, reads:

"Military coup proclaiming a republican govt of Iraq took place early morning 14 Jul. Apparently organized by a group of brigadiers and colonels, new govt has control of Baghdad and adjacent mil installations. Series republican ordinances being issued Radio Baghdad name Brig Abdul Karim Qassim Prime Min and Min of Interior, Col Abdul Salam Mohammed Arif Acting Pri Min and Min of Interior, and Staff Brigadier Ahmed Salih Ezzi Chief of Gen Staff. Balance of ministerial posts include many leftists and Nasserites [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. No info at this time re King, Nuri, Rafiq or others AU and old Iraqi govt. Troops under orders new govt now posted protect AmEmb." (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7-1458)

President Eisenhower met with his principal foreign affairs and national security advisers on July 14 at 10:50 a.m. to discuss the related crises in the Middle East. According to General Andrew Goodpaster's account of the conference, Allen Dulles opened the meeting with a summary of the situation in Iraq as follows: "According to reports received thus far (mostly from the rebel-seized Baghdad radio), the Crown Prince has been killed, and perhaps Nuri also. The King's situation is unknown. A Leftist government has taken over. Secretary Dulles commented that there has been no report regarding Iraqi forces outside of Baghdad." The discussion turned to the possibility of the United States intervening in Lebanon and the consequences of such a decision. Returning briefly to Iraq, Secretary Dulles believed that "there is a good chance, whatever we do, the Turks will move" into Iraq. "Regarding Iraq," Secretary Dulles continued, "he was not certain as to what we
should do. This is primarily a UK responsibility.” Secretary Dulles then stated that quick U.S. action in Lebanon would, in his opinion, make general war less likely. President Eisenhower agreed that “we must act, or get out of the Middle East entirely.” Secretary of the Treasury Anderson asked “what Israel would do if we were to move into Jordan and Iraq. Mr. Dulles thought that, if we go in, Israel will probably stay out.” The meeting concluded with a general consensus to meet with congressional leaders and after receiving their concurrence to intervene in Lebanon. (Memorandum by Goodpaster, July 16; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries) Goodpaster’s account is printed in volume XI, pages 211–215.

110. Briefing Notes by Director of Central Intelligence Dulles


I. Iraq and the Middle East

The pro-West government of Iraq under Prime Minister Nuri was overthrown at daybreak today, Baghdad time, by a military coup supported by pro-Nasir civilian elements. It is reported, but not confirmed, that Prime Minister Nuri and the Crown Prince have been murdered. One Baghdad radio report states that the Crown Prince was torn limb from limb and carried through the streets. The King’s Palace is reported by an American observer to be under fire. The fate of King Faisal is unknown but there is a report that he has been permitted to flee the country.

Our reports so far are based on cables from our Embassy, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] the attachés and radio broadcasts. As the Embassy itself is closely guarded by the military and tanks which limits ingress and egress, the ability for independent reporting is restricted. [2-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]

The coup action was taken by pro-Nasir elements led by young army officers and backed by the mob. A “Republican” government of

Source: Eisenhower Library, White House Office Files, Staff Secretary Records, International File, 1958, Iraqi Coup, Effects in Middle East. Secret. Dulles prepared these notes for use in a 2:30 p.m. White House meeting with congressional leaders. According to a July 18 covering letter from Allen Dulles to Goodpaster, Dulles’ presentation at the meeting followed these notes closely, although there was a question-and-answer period that is not covered in the notes. A full account of the meeting is printed in vol. XI, pp. 218–226.
Iraq has been proclaimed with a cabinet largely of junior army officers and leftist civilians. Members of the so-called Baath party, which in the area has spearheaded the pro-Nasir cause, particularly in Syria, predominate in the civilian group. A three-man committee has been set up to watch over the affairs of the Republic in the place of the King. One of these, General Rubai, has long been suspected of complicity with the Egyptians and has been under close observation for some time. Approximately 50 army officers, including Chief of Staff General Aref, who has recently been in Amman cooperating with King Hussein, and General Dagestani, great friend of the West, have reportedly been retired.

II. The City of Baghdad

Curfew has reportedly been imposed in the city and tanks are deployed. The airport is closed; Nasir placards are much in evidence and the crowds are cheering Nasir.

Radio Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad are hailing these developments.

[less than 1 line of source text not declassified] reports that machine guns and mortar fire are being directed on the Palace; that four large tanks and a civilian mob were approaching Nuri’s house.

The attitude of the army outside of Baghdad is not yet known; in particular a brigade of some 3,000 troops stationed in northern Jordan and another brigade in the desert near the Jordanian frontier.

Effect on Other Countries

The pro-Western President of Lebanon, Chamoun, summoned our Ambassador Robert McClintock this morning after receiving information of the developments in Baghdad. He stated that the developments there had proved that his estimate of the threat to the Middle East was correct. The only thing that surprised him was that Nasir had not waited until Lebanon had been gobbled up, but was starting against Iraq with Jordan next. In these circumstances, he stated he wanted U.S. military intervention in Lebanon within 48 hours. He would interpret our intentions by our deeds. He wanted the Sixth Fleet here within 48 hours, or else he would at last know where he stood so far as assurances from the West were concerned. As far as he was concerned, he was determined to go down fighting. He indicated that similar requests were made to the British and French representatives. In response to the Ambassador’s inquiry if General Shahib had been informed of these appeals and if he was in agreement, he stated Shahib had been informed and whether he agreed or not “He will carry out government orders or else”.

[1 paragraph (9-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

Latest reports from Lebanon indicate an ominous quiet over the city. The Damascus radio has appealed to Iraqis in Lebanon who are
now working with the Government to desert to the rebels. There are also reports of a possible Army coup in Lebanon which might further affect the security of American lives and property.

**Jordan**

In recent days, King Hussein in Jordan has uncovered what appeared to be a well-advanced Army plot to overthrow his Government, based largely on pro-Syrian and Egyptian elements. As a result, he had to arrest some 40 officers and put many more under house detention. It is believed that this plot has been nipped in the bud but the position of King Hussein hangs in the balance.

Today, after receiving the reports from Baghdad regarding the coup in Iraq and that the King of Iraq and the Prime Minister and Crown Prince were all eliminated, or exiled, and acting under the constitution of the Arab Union of Iraq and Jordan, King Hussein declared that he had assumed his constitutional powers as head of the Arab Union as of July 14, and had assumed as Supreme Commander, command of all of the armed forces of the government of the Arab Union. He designated a new Chief of Staff of the Arab Army in accordance with the constitution.

Whether and how long this will stick, we do not know but it is a courageous act.

**Saudi Arabia**

King Saud of Saudi Arabia sent his trusted and well-known emissary to our Ambassador in Jidda and demanded that the Baghdad powers intervene or "What is the use of all these pacts?" [3-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]

[3 paragraphs (6 lines of source text) not declassified]

He added that [1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified] if the U.S. and U.K. do not do anything about Iraq and Jordan, they are finished as powers in the Middle East. He requested an urgent answer to his message.

**Israel**

There is no doubt that Israel will be alarmed at the prospect of being surrounded by Arab states under Nasir influence, and if Jordan falls to Nasir, might move to take over West Jordan to the Jordan River. Israeli mobilization is probable.

One of the disturbing features from Israel viewpoint is the fact that Iraq has never signed an armistice with Israel.

**Other Countries**

**Kuwait**—The position of Kuwait as the largest single oil producer today in the Middle East will be immediately threatened by these
events. The British may be shortly faced with an occupation of Kuwait or the loss of these oil resources, jointly owned by British and American interests.

Iran—Turkey—Pakistan—The Moslem members of the Baghdad Pact were scheduled to meet today in Istanbul to consider the Lebanon and other related problems. The Shah of Iran and Mirza, the President of Pakistan, were to meet there with Prime Minister Menderes of Turkey and Prime Minister Nuri of Iraq. This meeting, which may now be moved to Ankara, may take place in the coming hours. We may expect an appeal of some nature from these countries to the U.S. and Great Britain to take steps to save the Baghdad Pact and to meet the threat which they will undoubtedly see to themselves in events in Lebanon and Iraq. There will be some pressure on Turkey to take action, but in view of their position vis-à-vis the USSR, they are unlikely to move without “guarantees” from the U.S.A.

Egypt—The hand of Nasir has been clearly apparent [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] at least in the earlier phases of the subversive attempts against Lebanon.

Likewise, he has been plotting throughout against Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

The elements who have taken over in Iraq are led by persons some of whom have been clearly identified with the pro-Egyptian campaign.

There is some question, however, as to whether the methods and timing of the present coup in Iraq were dictated from Egypt. The timing seems a little out of gear with what might have been expected, as well as the manner and brutality of carrying out the coup. Nasir is still absent, completing his visit to Yugoslavia.

General Summary

If the Iraq coup succeeds it seems almost inevitable that it will set up a chain reaction which will doom the pro-West governments of Lebanon and Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and raise grave problems for Turkey and Iran.

The Soviet Union will undoubtedly welcome these developments and do what it feels it safely can without direct involvement in overt hostilities to support this chain reaction.

The USSR would undoubtedly react strongly to direct military action by Turkey or Iran, but it would probably hesitate over action which it felt contained grave risk of general war.
111. Telegram From the Embassy in Jordan to the Department of State

Amman, July 14, 1958, 3 p.m.

79. Palace telephoned 10 a.m. this morning saying King Hussein/Rifai wished see me immediately. Following are highlights meeting at which Bahjat Talhuni, Rais Diwan, Prime Minister Rifai present although King did most talking:

(1) Hussein asked I inform my Government he counting on US stand by Jordan as "our good and trusted friend." Expressed hope we would demonstrate our friendship in every respect through public statements and actions.

(2) King said he believes fate has placed responsibility on him defend freedom Arab States. Under circumstances wherein King Faisal as head AU is incapacitated he (Hussein) intends assume authority as President AU acting under provisions constitution which establishes him as legal "chief of state" in absence Faisal. Proclamation to this effect made 2:30 local time.

(3) Prime Minister Rifai has been directed take charge all AU Foreign Affairs for temporary AU cabinet.

(4) In view crucial role petroleum products Jordan army has seized control all POL in country. Hussein asked that I urgently request my Government supply necessary tankers, emergency (army field type) pipelines permit importation via Aqaba. He stressed urgency situation adding it might be necessary inaugurate airlift insure sufficient supplies meet needs security forces.

(5) King Hussein has assumed titular leadership Jordanian army which together such Iraqi units still loyal will constitute AU defense forces. Appointed General Habis Majali COS. Reply my question as to just how he intends deal with Iraqi revolt he replied Jordanian army will establish contact loyal Iraqi units then intervene in force, crush rebellion.

(6) I asked what action HKJ would take if Turkey should intervene militarily in Iraq. King replied (after talking with Rifai in Arabic) that HKJ would protest such intervention since it would be an excursion of Turks into Arab world. However from practical standpoint if Turks able attack rebels, help put down revolt would be helpful providing they promptly withdrew when order restored.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7–1458. Top Secret; Niact; Limited Distribution. Transmitted in two sections and repeated niact to Baghdad, and priority to Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, and London. Received at 5:51 p.m.
(7) Re intervention by UAR across Syrian-Iraqi border both Hussein/Rifai said they would appeal UN but added had little faith action would be rapid enough deal with problem. Therefore were prepared invoke Article 5 UN Charter make appeal US/other friendly powers for direct military intervention. At this point Hussein/Talhuni/Rifai engaged in spirited conversation in Arabic after which Hussein said "on advice my Prime Minister, in view serious situation AU I ask that USG give me assurances it prepared come to our side insure independence/integrity Jordan." I replied I would convey request my Government soonest.¹

(8) Rifai commented in view situation Iraq [and] likelihood considerable instability some time to come HKJ would have to review membership all AU Cabinet posts, proposed diplomatic assignments, designation army commanders, et cetera. He pointed out this would be necessary whether or not revolt put down. I asked what effect Iraqi revolt likely have on security situation within Jordan and whether Iraqi army coup connected Radi Abdullah case. King replied he received this morning personal pledge loyalty troop commanders; he confident no serious disturbances will take place. Army now on alert, maximum security measures already enforced. Re Colonel Abdullah he said too early determine if similar revolt planned Jordan Army. However this academic since plot already discovered, ring leaders [brought to?] his attention.

(9) Hussein expressed great concern Lebanon situation which he thinks may rapidly deteriorate as opposition takes cognizance events Iraq. He urged USG intervene militarily if necessary, keep Chamoun/pro-western government in power on theory if it falls effect throughout Middle East catastrophic.

Comment:

King seems much more calm than either Rifai/Talhuni although he showed strain events last few days, climaxed by Iraqi coup. Prompt importation petroleum products particularly gasoline, kerosene, black oil

¹ In telegram 100 to Amman, July 15, 7:25 p.m., the Department instructed Wright to "inform Hussein US appreciates King's forthright stand in face tragic events Iraq and serious developments in area. US stands by previous pledges assist HKJ to insure its independence and integrity. Our action Lebanon indicative our concern.

"We now studying means assist HKJ with POL and will advise soonest." (Ibid.)

In telegram 107 from Amman, July 15, Wright reported that King Hussein asked him to come to the palace that evening and complained that the British had failed to take decisive action in conjunction with their Baghdad Pact partners, Turkey and Iran, to crush the rebellion in Iraq. Hussein also expressed disappointment that his request for support from the United States had not been answered. When Wright asked why he was summoned to hear a complaint against the British, Hussein replied that he wished his disappointment to be known in Washington. (Ibid., 787.00/7-1558)
(electric power station) most urgent requirement. Hussein decision take
over control AU rather than withdraw behind geographic boundaries
Jordan significant; although my opinion if Iraqi military goes over en
bloc to rebels practical implementation his idea highly improbable. De-
spite fact British Embassy has put out official warning to British stay off
streets I do not propose follow suit believing now is time demonstrate
confidence Hussein/Rifai government which would be undermined if
word circulated Americans “taking cover”. I strongly recommend we
meet Hussein’s request for emergency petroleum requirements as well
as give him assurances we stand by his side should it appear Jordan in-
dependence in jeopardy. To do less would destroy our influence in the
Middle East. Re our proposed withdrawal $7.5 million budgetary sup-
port HKJ I am convinced such action would have devastating effect
present pro-western government which very likely would fall as result
cut-back government projects being financed these funds we have al-
ready promised.

Wright

112. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of
State

Baghdad, July 14, 1958, 11 p.m.

117. Following is Embassy’s assessment of situation produced by
today’s coup d’état. It should be considered in light of fact that, although
we have had some telephone contact with eye-witnesses to events of
day, our elements have been restricted by curfew, and rebel-controlled
radio has put out very little news.

1. Movement still appears to be localized and essentially military
in character. Air Force appears to be backing rebels. No sign yet of
counter-move spearheaded by any loyalist forces.

2. Local enthusiasm for coup is considerable, and there is every
likelihood that it will prove no less popular in provincial areas.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7–1458. Secret; Niat. Repeated
niact to Amman, London, Beirut, Ankara and repeated to Tehran, Damascus, Cairo, Tel
Aviv, and Jerusalem. Received at 6:58 p.m.
3. Character of coup is strongly anti-western, pro-Nasser. (Crowds have been shouting pro-Nasser slogans and carrying Nasser's pictures.)

4. Although two Americans, according to present reports, killed in fracas, there is no sign of any strong anti-American feeling as yet. Of course any US intervention in Lebanon with Sixth Fleet or otherwise would produce among populace strong hostility toward US.

5. Curfew has been relaxed somewhat in center of city but there has been no activity in Embassy vicinity, where quiet prevails.

6. It is interesting and perhaps significant that thus far no responsible civilian in new regime has addressed public on radio or otherwise. This could perhaps reflect a measure of reluctance on part of civilian element in government. A possible indication of this attitude is virtually total lack of information guidance for local press.

Gallman

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1 According to telegram 116 from Baghdad, July 14, midnight, Iraqi military forces arrested ten foreigners at the New Baghdad Hotel, but a mob grabbed them from the soldiers. Included in the group were Eugene Burns of Sausalito, California, and George Colley, Jr., of San Francisco, the President of the Overseas Division of Bechtel, both of whom were believed dead. A third American, Jose Carobia, was taken from the hotel and was beaten up. In addition, this telegram stated that there were no reliable reports about the fate of Nuri Said or King Faisal. (Ibid.) Later another American, Robert W. Alcock, was reported missing and presumed dead.

113. Memorandum of Conversation

Washington, July 14, 1958, 8:30 p.m.

[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7–1458. Secret. 1-1/2 pages of source text not declassified.]
114. Telegram From the Embassy in Israel to the Department of State

Tel Aviv, July 15, 1958, 1 a.m.

41. In response to his urgent request I called upon the Prime Minister at his home in Jerusalem at 10 o'clock this evening. A serious group, including Golda Meir, who has not yet resumed her duties as Foreign Minister, Shiloah, Comay and Avner, awaited.

In calm but decisive words Ben-Gurion reviewed the day's events, stating they showed clearly who had engineered the whole thing, and had shed much light on the Lebanon situation. It was not Lebanon alone at stake, but Jordan, Saudi, Sudan, Libya, Kuwait, and possibly Ethiopia.

He believed it is not too late to remedy the situation if action is taken at once with regard to Iraq. Turkey and Iran could crush the Iraq rebellion in a couple of days if the US is behind them. If this is not done, the whole Middle East is lost. According to GOI information, there remain in Iraq elements opposed to the current rebellion. There is Hussein, who today proclaimed himself Acting King of the Arab Union in Faisal's absence. Hussein has a legal right to call upon Turkey and Iran as Baghdad Pact allies to assist Iraq, and these countries have a legal right to so intervene, but they cannot take action alone without knowing the US is behind such a move. This is no time for delay, no time for the UN, but a question of the Baghdad Pact with immediate support by US now.

Ben-Gurion was clearly convinced loss of the Middle East would be the worst blow to the West since World War II. If the ME goes, Sudan goes and perhaps Ethiopia. He did not want Israel to remain only democracy in ME. Must be action combined with timeliness.

If all these countries fall to Nasser, Israel will be virtually surrounded in mortal danger. Ben-Gurion said in recent years he had held back on arms requests from the US because they would have been futile and because of the loss of Israel's self-respect involved in US refusal. Now there is a deadly serious situation, and Israel is prepared to ask for arms, planes, and anti-submarine weapons.

He reiterated several times his thesis that Turkey and Iran can put out the fire if they are backed up by the US but imperative US take lead.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 780.00/7–1558. Secret; Niact. Repeated priority to Amman, Ankara, Tehran, Baghdad, London, and Paris. Received at 3:07 a.m.

1 Reuven Shiloah, special representative of President Ben Gurion with the rank of Ambassador; Michael S. Comay, Assistant Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry; and Yehuda Avner, an official of the Foreign Ministry.
Comment: Ben-Gurion's attitude was deadly serious and it was obvious his remarks had been carefully considered. In my opinion he is utterly sincere in his belief that there remains enough uncommitted elements in Iraq to warrant action he suggests but only through prompt intervention with US approval can the situation and the Middle East be retrieved. He made no reference to what he undoubtedly considers to have been past errors in US policy, although there was a passing reference to Hammarskjold's gullibility where Nasser concerned.

Lawson

115. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles

Washington, July 15, 1958, 8:40 a.m.

The Secretary of State called the President—8:40 a.m. The Secretary said that he had had quite a little talk with Lord Hood last night on messages from the Prime Minister. The British are greatly concerned that we should commit ourselves to act with them in Jordan and possibly Iraq. The Secretary last night told Hood that he could not possibly give him an answer on that last night and that, further, the President would not want to give any answer without careful check with the military and area advisers. The Secretary said that the British were particularly concerned with the Iraq business because they have tremendous investment in oil there and in nearby Kuwait.

The Secretary went on to say that as far as Lebanon was concerned, we were on pretty solid ground—that there was a large segment of the population on our side there. In the other countries the thing might blow up—for instance, what would you do with the refugees in Jordan? The Secretary finally told Lord Hood that he could not possibly give them an answer until the latter part of the day. ¹

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¹ Dulles called the President at 6 p.m. on July 15. A transcription of the conversation reads:

"The Secretary called the President. Said that in all the messages from Britain today they had been asking for a blank check, which of course the President cannot give and will not give. The President said they just didn't understand our parliamentary system. The Secretary said one suggestion was that Selwyn Lloyd come over here; the President said he was agreeable to that. So the invitation is to be issued." (Ibid.)
The Secretary reiterated that Lord Hood wants a commitment that we (the British and the Americans) will stand together on this situation. The Secretary says we cannot given them a blank check. He said that if the British were worried about the oil situation, if the Iraq pipeline is destroyed, that we would of course help them meet their shortages.

To intervene militarily would introduce problems that we have not even considered.

Dulles said that King Hussein had asked if we (and the British) would be willing to intervene if we were called on. The British think he should be asked to call on us right away. The President said he did not think so. Dulles said the British do not want the situation to drift. The President said we all agreed what we should do in Lebanon—we have studied that carefully.

Dulles said he had sent over a statement to be issued as soon as the planes reach Lebanon (which should be within 15 minutes). Dulles asked if the President had given thought to whether he would go before Congress and the President replied he was going to talk to the staff this morning. Dulles said it was very hard to tell how to play it—there are some advantages and some disadvantages in going before the Congress. The latter makes a much greater affair of the action, looks like a declaration of war.

116. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, July 15, 1958, 7 p.m.

139. Called on Prime Minister, Brigadier Abdul Karim Qasim, by appointment, this afternoon. Was escorted to and from Ministry of Defense by Colonel Damandji, former assistant Iraqi Military Attaché, Washington, and now liaison officer with diplomatic missions, Baghdad. Damandji, whose wife is American and a former State Department and foreign service employee, is friendly to US as our Service Attachés here have learned. I found him affable and obviously anxious to get
revolutionary regime off to as good a start as possible with US. Brigadier Qasim received me in friendly but somewhat diffident manner. He’s quite fluent in English. We had our exchange without benefit of interpreter.

I told Qasim that I was anxious to establish contact with him as we would, I felt, have many matters to discuss over coming weeks. He replied that I should feel free to call on him at any time. “We Iraqis”, he continued, “want to be friends with the US.”

I told him I was glad to hear that from him. I had now to ask him for certain assurances. First of all, I wanted assurances that American lives and property were safe. That, he said, he would give on the spot. I went on to say that there were further assurances I had come to get. They were that if it became necessary, in our view, evacuate American citizens, assurances would be given for safe conduct and convoy if evacuation took place overland, and assurances that planes could come and go if evacuation by air seemed preferable. He hesitated for a moment and then said that, to his mind, assurances concerning life and property made assurances covering evacuation unnecessary. He would, however, give such assurances as well. I did not stay beyond these exchanges.¹

On my way to Defense Ministry I found crowds quiet and orderly. Atmosphere along streets markedly calm. Half way back to Embassy however, we ran into crowds running down street yelling. At one place soldiers on tank were firing into air. Colonel Damandji immediately gave chauffeur orders to turn into side street and we made our way back to Embassy in round about fashion. I asked Colonel what was going on. He replied that shots were intended to disperse crowd. Yells were “Nuru”.

Learned on my return to Embassy that hanging of Nuri has just been announced over radio. It seems that mobs had learned that his body was being transported to royal hospital.

How tragically ironic that on very day landings made from Sixth Fleet, which Nuri had so long pleaded for, Nuri was put to death.

Gallman

¹ In telegram 142 to Baghdad, July 15, 8:53 p.m., the Department of State instructed Gallman to “take no action vis-à-vis new Iraqi authorities which could reasonably be interpreted as implying recognition of new regime.” (Ibid., 787.02/7–1558)

The following day Gallman reported that he discussed the deaths of the two Americans during the early stages of the revolution with the new Foreign Minister, Jabar Jomard, and Minister of News and Guidance, Siddiz Shanshal. Jomard expressed “deepest regret” over the deaths and assured Gallman that every effort would be made to clear up the circumstances and locate the bodies. Shanshal asked why American troops were in Lebanon and if they would go into Jordan. When Gallman said that U.S. troops would not go into Jordan, Shanshal replied he was glad to hear that. (Ibid., 787.00/7–1658)
117. Memorandum of Conversation


SUBJECT
Jordan and Iraq

PARTICIPANTS
United States
The Secretary of State
Frederick Reinhardt

United Kingdom
Lord Hood, British Minister

The Secretary said that it was not clear to him from the British messages we had seen how the British thought the problem of Jordan and Iraq should be played and what were their concepts and plans. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd had indicated he might be able to come to Washington. If there were time, the Secretary thought this would be a good idea and he said that the President was agreeable. Lord Hood replied he believed the messages passed to us did not look very far forward but reflected London’s belief that unless something were done quickly in Jordan and Iraq, it would be too late. To this the Secretary agreed and added that there was a great absence of information. It was clear the landing in Lebanon today had had a good effect but the big question was Iraq. Whoever came over from London should come over if and when he was ready to discuss this problem seriously and perhaps he should bring some technical people with him. We had thought about many contingencies but the Iraq development was a new one. We had sent a brief holding message to King Hussein ¹ but had no clear idea as yet on the desirability of putting troops into Jordan. We were studying these problems and would try to be ready by Thursday. ² The Secretary said we might probably want to have a working party on this subject, which perhaps should be set up in London, but first the top people should determine what was to be done. The Secretary said that he could probably make all day Thursday available and part of Friday morning for meetings with Mr. Lloyd. Friday afternoon he would be taken up by Mutual Security hearings on the hill.

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¹ See footnote 1, Document 111.
² July 17.
118. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Dulles and Vice President Nixon

Washington, July 15, 1958, 6:49 p.m.

[Here follows discussion unrelated to Iraq.]

N hopes there is no hesitation on our part on the Jordan–Iraqi thing in the event similar circumstances could work it out for us to support the Br or do it ourselves. He thinks now that finding some proper cover is not too important now that we have made the initial step—the main thing is to make it work all over that area and he trusts we don’t vacillate. The Sec said it is a problem because we don’t want to get bogged down like the Br in Suez and have to pull out. We have assets in Lebanon we don’t have in other places. N said the point is Lebanon is not too important and the Sec agreed. The Sec said Jordan is unimportant. Iraq is the big thing. Maybe Lloyd will come over Thursday to talk re Iraq because that is the important thing. The military are reluctant—they did not want to do this. All they think about is dropping nuclear bombs and they don’t like it when we get off that. They say Lebanon exhausts their possibilities. N agreed and said we better build them up. When, the Sec said, you put them to the issue of limited warfare it is a shocking thing. The Br have gone into nuclear weapons. They have not much either. N said we are prepared for the war we probably will never fight and not for the one which will be lost.

N is all for what the Sec did.


119. Telegram 207 From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State

Ankara, July 16, 1958, 1 a.m.

[Source: Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, International File. Top Secret; Presidential Treatment. 2-1/2 pages of source text not declassified.]
120. Memorandum From Harold W. Glidden of the Division of Research and Analysis for Near East, South Asia, and Africa to the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming)


SUBJECT

Intelligence Indications of Coup in Iraq

No significant indication of the impending action in Iraq appeared in any sources available to DRN, despite the fact that a very close watch was being kept for precisely this development. Interestingly enough, informal contacts with individuals who have just returned, having left Iraq only a few days or hours before the coup confirm the impression that there was no outward sign that the eruption was imminent.

The following considerations have some bearing on this dearth of critical data:

1. The Iraqi political climate was frequently assessed, formally and informally, among the intelligence community. It was generally known for some years that the regime had little popular base: this is, however, characteristic of Arab governments. There was also general awareness that public resentment and tension had risen somewhat in the aftermath of a bitter and sustained propaganda campaign directed from the UAR capitals at Jordan, Iraq and the Arab Union. In view of the former government’s excellent security system and demonstrated capacity for containing such tensions, it was unanimously felt that these symptoms could be disregarded, unless some organized base developed in the armed forces, since there was no organized political vehicle of any importance. Such was indeed the case.

2. Circumstantial evidence now begins to appear that the lines of this plot were laid outside Iraq itself, among dissident expatriates in Cairo and Damascus. Movements of the more important expatriates were known routinely, but no particular significance attached to them, since their following within Iraq was small, unorganized and under continuous governmental surveillance.

3. For some time it has been evident that the drive for change by violent means in Middle Eastern countries was most likely to take effective form from intermediate officer grades in the armies. Especially since the Egyptian revolution, DRN has constantly directed the atten-

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7–165. Unclassified. Drafted by Charlotte M. Morehouse of the Division of Research and Analysis for Near East, South Asia, and Africa (DRN) and sent via Richard H. Sanger, Chief of DRN.
tion of all reporting agencies to the median officer group and the possibility of Egyptian manipulation of their known nationalist sentiments. This grade-range comprises several hundred officers: it is not surprising that contact could not be established with every one of them. The former Iraqi government maintained a very complete intelligence net within the Army itself which did not discern any questionable contacts on the part of Col. Qasim, even though the Iraqi government was itself aware (as were we) that Col. Qasim had been exposed to Syrian subversive efforts while stationed in Jordan in late 1956.

4. The type of operation (based on a round of assassinations) was one requiring few participants and hence more easily concealed. The essential problem was outlined in a memo from this office, May 5, 1958,¹ specifying requirements for the intelligence community in reporting on the UAR, where it was anticipated that such a plan might be generated:

“...policy and high-level decision making are concentrated in the hands of a very small circle... at best, important projected steps are known only to Nasir and a small group of intimates around him. Hence, unless they [are] divulged by some member of this coterie, or until they become apparent, we are not likely to have much advance notice of important planned actions... In addition, this inner circle of government has surrounded itself by a tight security system.”²

5. Several false indicators were apparently employed as a deliberate smokescreen. They were correctly assessed at the time as having little trouble-making potential, but their significance as a cover was not apparent until after the event. Iraqi security forces were also apparently deceived, believing that the plot would start with uprisings generated among certain minority groups in outlying areas.

¹Not found.
²Ellipses in the source text.
121. Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to the Under Secretary of State (Herter)


SUBJECT

Intelligence Note: The Insurgent Regime In Iraq

The nature of the new Iraqi regime is probably not fully revealed in the figures now holding Cabinet posts and prominent positions. There is some evidence that several of the civilian appointees did not know of their allotted roles until the military coup was complete. Moreover, it is likely that—on the pattern of the Egyptian revolution—the true center of power has not yet revealed itself. The civilian members of the government, with two exceptions, are thus far largely silent partners and the officer members are the more vocal spokesmen. Qasim, himself, like Muhammad Najib in Egypt, may be a figurehead.

There is no common denominator among the governing group thus far identified except a common hostility to the former regime. Older members have long histories of political resistance: two were identified with the pro-Nazi, anti-British coup attempt of 1941. The younger members, both officer and civilian, are of the "young intellectual," nationalist-neutralist-reformist group of which Nasir is hero and prototype. They are superficially Westernized and several have European or American educational experience. Several are earnest reformers whose political resistance represented real indignation at the graft, corruption and inefficiency of the old regime. They have leadership potential and some political integrity. An effort has been made to include representatives of the major ethnic and religious groups after the custom of traditional Iraqi cabinets.

Of the fourteen Cabinet members, four have long histories of marked leftist tendencies, including witling cooperation with the Communist Party toward nationalist aims: one is a close Party-line follower and steady fellow-traveller; one is an active sympathizer and possibly a Party member.

This mixed assortment is unlikely to stay together long once the impetus of initial success wears off. In any case, it is likely that the Egyp-

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7-1758. Confidential. Herter's initials appear on the source text.
tian-directed hard core of the movement intends to jettison them once power is consolidated.¹

On first evidence, the regimen can be expected to follow much of the pattern of Egypt's new order: to press, initially at least, for social reform, to work a definite improvement in governmental efficiency and some in honesty, and to be as repressive toward potential political opposition as the former regime. It is likely to associate formally with the UAR at an early stage, and to profess a posture of nationalism, neutralism, and within this context, display a distinct willingness to establish diplomatic relations with the Bloc and to accept aid from it.

This group is now believed to be in control of all of Iraq except possibly the north, including the Kirkuk oilfield region.

A similar memorandum has been addressed to the Secretary.²

¹ On a covering note, July 18, attached to a copy of this memorandum, Assistant Secretary for Policy Planning Gerard Smith noted that it was his impression from "reading and briefings" that "there was no evidence to indicate whether or not the movement was Egyptian dominated and that alternative suppositions were equally reasonable." If there was no evidence, Smith thought it should be made clear to the Secretary "in view of the importance of the question." (Ibid., S/P Files: Lot 67 D 548, Iraq)
² On the memorandum to the Secretary is indication that Dulles saw it. (Ibid.)

122. Memorandum of Conversation

Washington, July 17, 1958, 5 p.m.

SUBJECT
Iraq

PARTICIPANTS

UK
Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd
Admiral Denny, NATO Standing Group
Marshal of the RAF Dickson
Sir William Hayter, Foreign Office

US
Secretary of State
Secretary of Defense
General Nathan Twining
Mr. Allen Dulles
General W. Wisenand

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7-1758. Top Secret; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Newsom on July 18. Lloyd was in Washington for consultations on the Middle East crises July 16–19.
Mr. Lloyd expressed the view that if the new Government of Iraq obtains effective control of the country it would be out of the question to consider reconquering the country from the military standpoint. Marshal Dickson agreed that it would take a major military operation requiring a line of communications through Syria.

It was formally agreed that there were few possibilities or figures around whom resistance in Iraq might be rallied. Mr. Lloyd [1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified] commented that if there should be any spark of resistance in Iraq the British landings in Jordan would bring it out.

The Secretary commented that it appeared to be premature to make any decision on the matter since the information received to date from Iraq was very sketchy.

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1 In telegram 181 from Baghdad, July 17, 10 a.m., received at 3:51 a.m., Ambassador Gallman sent the following assessment reached jointly with the British Ambassador as of 9 a.m. Baghdad time:

"It is our considered opinion that allied landings in Iraq, unless swiftly executed in overwhelming force, would very likely lead to indiscriminate killing and looting among Americans and Europeans (some 5,000, of whom 2,000 British and 2,000 Americans) by mobs whom army would be totally unable, even if willing, to control. Allied landings in Jordan would also entail risk that this might happen." (Ibid.)

123. Memorandum of Conversation

Washington, July 18, 1958, 10:30 a.m.

[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7-1858. Top Secret; Limit Distribution. 1-1/2 pages of source text not declassified.]
124. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, July 19, 1958, 5 p.m.

251. Department might find helpful brief summary existing conditions and some tentative analysis character new regime:

(1) Certainly in Baghdad takeover has been remarkably rapid and successful. After first day no serious incidents involving foreign persons or property which discouraged by repeated radio injunctions including one put out today against painting slogans on buildings or stringing incendiary banners. ([less than 1 line of source text not declassified] believes latter may be directed at bringing Baathists and Communists under control.) While our communications from rest Iraq largely cut off we know revolution equally successfully Mosul, Kirkuk. Limited reports from Basra indicate no opposition there. New regime, dominated by military figures, has thus successfully seized army, police and is now trying encourage normal functioning civilian departments. These will not be fully normal, of course, until removal various restrictions aimed controlling commercial transactions and travel.

(2) It is too early determine reach character popular reaction in spite exuberance witnessed Baghdad streets first few days. Minority groups scared. Mobs in Baghdad made up largely riff raff adolescents who always easily stimulated. Still new regime has, we believe, successfully capitalized dislike for Nuri–Abdulillah regime which closely intermingled anti-western grievances and antipathies. With Cairo’s widespread use of radio whip emotions ever higher on these issues preoccupation with them at all levels society has constantly increased pro-Nasser character regime reflected by immediate widespread appearance his picture with those of rebel government leaders. Any possible substitute government imposed from outside would not have possession these emotional assets and would be severely handicapped.

(3) Since coup was carried out by army military has upper hand though some signs civilian ministries influence gradually moving to fore. Minister Foreign Affairs during my talk with him yesterday indicated he giving serious thought formulation policy towards outside world particularly with western countries. During both my interviews with Foreign Minister, Minister Guidance Shanshai present and entered conversation freely. His primary concern seems retain western technical aid. His forceful action in having banner removed from in front Em-

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7–1958. Secret; Priority. Repeated to Cairo, Beirut, Ankara, London, Tehran, Amman, Damascus, and Tel Aviv. Received at 8:32 p.m.
bassy yesterday revealed his authority is respected by military. However much jockeying for influence by individuals and groups can be expected unless some dominant figure soon emerges. Internal weakness will heighten Nasser's attraction compared to little known and inexperienced Iraqi leaders. Individual communications re oil policy, adherence international agreements, private reassurances of friendship indicate, at least, desire regime not antagonize western powers at outset and anxiety retain US aid and technical assistance. (This of considerable help to us these days when we so preoccupied getting dependents out.)

While brutal manner regime seized power cannot be condoned we should, in working out over period of time our relations with this regime keep in mind that deterioration in relations which would follow such actions as departure US technicians Dora refinery or peremptory withdrawal various forms US assistance would very likely impel regime leaders look toward USSR. If we are cautious and find in course of time that regime's declarations of friendship are real, we may well be able gradually to develop bases of cooperation.

Gallman

125. Editorial Note

On July 19 the Department responded to telegram 171 from Ambassador Wright in Jordan, which requested U.S. assistance to allow the Arab Union Government to destroy the insurrection and restore the legitimate status in Iraq. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7-1958) The Department responded in telegram 203, July 19, printed in volume XI, pages 344-345.
126. Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to the Counselor (Reinhardt)


The best available evidence now indicates that the Baghdad branch of the Hashemite family has been almost completely wiped out. Furthermore, most of the important Iraqi supporters of the former regime in Baghdad including leading politicians, military figures and some large landowners and industrialists are dead, in jail, or under strict house arrest. There is thus almost nothing left of the Royal regime in Iraq around which opponents of the new Republic could rally. Reports of a loyalist radio being heard, and of a resistance movement centering around Amir Zeid (the 65-year old half brother of King Faisal I of Iraq) who is now in Turkey are unconfirmed.

Under these circumstances, in our opinion any move by force from the outside into Iraq would meet with very little Iraqi support and its success would be highly unlikely. Furthermore, since the signing of the Mutual Defense Agreement yesterday, Nasser and the Syrians would promptly come to the aid of the Republic of Iraq.

Lastly, Soviet or Bloc reaction which at present is confined to protests and propaganda would undoubtedly take more concrete form depending upon the type of the invasion. Although avoiding the serious risk of a general war, the results of this would be of the utmost seriousness in the Near East, and might well spread elsewhere.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7-2058. Secret. Initialed by Reinhardt.
127. Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to the Counselor (Reinhardt)


Reports reaching us from Baghdad indicate that the new regime in Iraq (1) desires friendly relations with the West, (2) will maintain existing international agreements, (3) at least for the time being will retain membership in the Baghdad Pact, (4) will not nationalize the production of oil, and (5) recognizes the UAR but is not joining.

Although the new government came into power in an extremely bloody and completely illegal way, there can be no doubt but that its popular support is far broader than that behind King Faisal. Furthermore, although the Republic of Iraq has indicated it plans to establish relations with the Soviet Union and other Communist countries, Communist influence in the government appears so far to be limited.¹

Informal approaches to the new government requesting assurances regarding the first four points mentioned above would therefore seem justified. They would tend to give support to moderate and secretly pro-Western elements in the new government and might aid in stabilizing the situation in Iraq in a pattern not entirely unfavorable to us.

¹ In a third memorandum to Reinhardt, also July 20, Cumming provided INR’s assessment of the “composition and leanings of the Iraqi Revolutionary Cabinet.” INR characterized the cabinet as representing “a complete spectrum from the extreme-right xenophobes” and former Nazi collaborators to “far-leftists, including a few consistent fellow travellers” and perhaps a Communist party member. The cabinet also contained “many sincere reform-minded, even pro-United States personalities.” (Ibid., 787.13/7–2058)

128. Letter From the Deputy Director for Plans of the Central Intelligence Agency (Wisner) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration (Henderson)


[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7-2258. Secret. 1-1/2 pages of source text not declassified.]
129. Editorial Note

In a personal and confidential letter to George Humphrey, July 22, in which the President was apparently thinking aloud on a number of domestic and international issues, Eisenhower described events in Iraq as follows:

"So far Iraq has not taken some of the mob-like actions that normally we could expect. They have not destroyed any of the pipelines or attempted to interfere with production of oil in the region. There is some slight indication that they may want to remain on good business relationships with the West, even though I suppose they will want to negotiate somewhat better contracts, probably in the pattern of the Standard of Indiana contract." (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)

The reference to the "Standard of Indiana contract" is to the agreement for exploration of offshore oil in the Persian Gulf signed by Standard Oil of Indiana and ratified by the Iranian Government on June 1, 1958. By the terms of the agreement Iran received 75 percent of the net profits and Standard of Indiana received 25 percent. Standard Oil of Indiana also paid Iran a $25 million cash bonus for signing the agreement and made other less significant concessions to Iran, which made the agreement the most advantageous to a producing country signed to that date.

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130. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Rountree) to Secretary of State Dulles


SUBJECT

Recognition of New Iraqi Government

Discussion:

With the consolidation of the revolutionary regime in Iraq and the ruling out of any attempt to overturn it by force or otherwise, we seem to

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.02/7-2358. Secret. Drafted by Lakeland and Rockwell and cleared by Mathews and Reinhardt. Legal Adviser Loftus Becker noted that he had no objection, but wrote an accompanying memorandum that concluded that the new Iraqi government satisfied traditional U.S. requirements for recognition—de facto control, consent of the people, willingness to fulfill its international obligations under treaties—with one exception. Iraq had not indicated its willingness to fulfill international obligations under international law, especially in the case of compensation for the heirs of the American citizens killed during the coup. (Ibid.)
be faced with the question not of whether but of when and under what circumstances we should recognize the new government.

Despite the initial bloody excesses, the regime has quickly demonstrated its determination and ability to restore order. Extremist slogans and banners have been removed and some leaders seek to create the impression of desiring to prevent Ba'athist or Communist exploitation of the situation. The new government has given assurances of its intent to honor international and contractual commitments, to maintain the flow of oil, to protect foreigners and to seek friendly relations with all countries. Although anxious to avoid an exodus of Western nationals, and particularly of vital technicians, they have permitted the scheduling of evacuation flights for U.S. and U.K. citizens.

Leaders of the new regime met recently with Nasser in Damascus and signed an agreement which reaffirmed the Arab League collective security arrangements and called for closer economic and cultural ties between Iraq and the UAR. Both sides, however, have been careful to avoid giving any impression that Nasser dominates the Iraqi revolutionary regime and we do not anticipate that the new regime will join the UAR.

There is a danger that prolonged delay in reciprocating the friendly overtures of the new government, at least to the extent of extending recognition and indicating a willingness to consider the continuation of our aid programs, may prejudice the situation in Iraq as far as we are concerned, and give further advantage to the Communists and Nasser, both inside and outside Iraq. A dignified but friendly stance, designed to lead to early but not precipitate de jure recognition, would therefore seem to be called for on our part.

Recognition of the Iraqi regime by us would probably be opposed strongly by the Muslim Baghdad Pact countries as well as by Lebanon and Jordan. However, the need to protect our interests in Iraq and the importance of encouraging the moderate posture assumed by the new regime should, we believe, outweigh this opposition.

It is interesting that Bourguiba is reported to believe that our policy goal should be not only to prevent Iraq from falling into the Soviet-Egyptian orbit, but perhaps even to use Iraq as a lever with which in a year or two it may be possible to pry Syria out of the UAR, now that the obstacle of the Iraqi monarchy has been removed. Whether in fact this development will materialize is not possible to predict but it is certain that a hostile policy toward Iraq at this time would hamper our being able to encourage such a trend.

Given on the one hand the important considerations prompting early recognition of the new Iraqi government and on the other the opposition which such action is bound to meet with from a number of our
friends and allies, it would seem advisable to take every opportunity to lay the groundwork for acceptance by those friends of the necessity for prompt recognition. The forthcoming meeting of the Baghdad Pact Council appears to offer the best opportunity for intimating our intentions to the Muslim member countries. We can presumably count on support from the British who appear to share our assessment of the situation.

As regards Lebanon and Jordan a special effort will be required. If we can reach agreement with the Muslim Pact members, it would be useful if Mr. Murphy could undertake to explain our views both in Beirut and Amman.

Recommendation:¹

1.) That you agree in principle to the extension of formal recognition to the Iraq Government if we can obtain agreement or acquiescence from the Muslim Pact members during the London meeting, and after Mr. Murphy has attempted to obtain the same from the Governments of Lebanon and Jordan.

¹ Dulles initialed his approval and apparently changed the recommendation to read: “That you agree in principle to the extension of formal recognition to the Iraq Government after consultations (?) and talks with Muslim Pact members [etc.]”

131. Editorial Note

In a telephone conversation on July 25 at 8:43 a.m., Allen Dulles and Secretary Dulles discussed whether the former should testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Iraq. According to the transcribed memorandum, the discussion on Iraq was as follows:

“AWD is being pressured hard to go before the FRC re Iraq—there is great pressure for early recognition. He called Russell and he would not give him support not to go. He thought AWD should go. AWD does not like to go but does not know what to do about it. The Sec asked what do they know about what bears on it and AWD said nothing—that is why they want him to come up. The Sec said if it is in our interest we recognize it. AWD is not arguing for it. The Sec is suggesting considerations which are not particularly in his competence. Do they want us to recognize Iraq if that is regarded by our allies as a disloyal act? We intend to work to recognition as rapidly as we can without giving serious offense to our allies. AWD said the intelligence side would support
what the Sec says. He would not rush into it.” (Eisenhower Library, Dulles Papers, General Telephone Conversations)

In a July 30 memorandum to the President Secretary Dulles stated that he believed the United States should shortly recognize the new government in Iraq. Although the United States deplored the brutality of the coup, the new regime had quickly restored order, was in full control of the country, and apparently faced no organized opposition. The new Iraqi officials had privately asserted that they wished to continue “close friendly relations as well as economic cooperation, particularly in oil matters” with the West. Dulles noted that he had discussed the issue with officials of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey who indicated their understanding of the advisability of U.S. recognition “without delay so as to be in the best position to protect United States interests in Iraq and exert constructive influence upon the new regime.” Lebanon and Jordan expressed similar appreciation privately. Other Arab states, such as Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, had already extended recognition. Eisenhower gave his approval to U.S. recognition. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.02/8–258)
132. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, August 4, 1958, 8:12 p.m.

593. Embts 593\(^1\) and 594.\(^2\) Dept has received with interest reports of talks which you and Murphy have had with Iraqi leaders over past weekend. We believe it would be advantageous take prompt opportunity give GOI some idea of our attitude toward Iraqi Republic. You should seek early interview with FonMin and after expressing to him Department’s pleasure at tenor and content conversations with Murphy, orally outline to him the following:

1) That US fully reciprocates GOI desire for friendly relations and looks forward to close cooperation with new Iraqi Govt on matters mutual interest.

2) That US has received with pleasure statements of desire GOI to maintain flow of oil to West.

3) US prepared continue technical assistance programs subject desires Iraqi Govt and has noted harmonious working relationships developing between USOM/Baghdad and various Ministries.

4) As regards future of military aid programs US assumes this will need to be subject of consideration and discussion by two governments. US does not in any way preclude possibility of continuing existing programs but considers that there are both practical details and matters of policy to be worked out. In latter connection, for example, US assistance has been based on force goals predicated on Iraq’s willingness as

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Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/8–358. Secret; Priority. Drafted by Rockwell, cleared by McClelland and Bell (in draft), and approved by Rountree. Repeated to Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Jidda, London, Paris, and USUN.

\(^1\) In telegram 593 from Baghdad, August 3, Under Secretary Murphy, who had been dispatched by Eisenhower to the Middle East to make an assessment of the situation, reported on his August 2 conversation with Minister of Guidance and Information Shanshal. (Ibid.)

\(^2\) In telegram 594, also August 3, Murphy reported on his conversation on the morning of August 3 with Prime Minister Qassim, Foreign Minister Jamard, Finance Minister Hadid, and President of the Council Rubayi. The discussion covered much of the same ground as the one with Shanshal. In addition, Murphy raised the issue of Iraq’s future role in the Baghdad Pact and added a general defense of the concept of collective security. Murphy concluded the telegram with the observation that he was struck by the “earnestness” of these Iraqi leaders and their eagerness to demonstrate a friendly and cooperative attitude to the United States. (Ibid.)
member BP to resist Soviet aggression against ME. (FYI—Assume you will coordinate this with Gen. Henry—End FYI.)

5) US hopes that US-Iraqi relations can be established on basis mutual trust and confidence, and that from them will flow benefits to people of Iraq and strength to security and well-being of ME. US is confident that reasonableness, frankness and sincerity on both sides are best means achieving this.

Herter

133. Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to Secretary of State Dulles


SUBJECT

Intelligence Note: Attitude of New Iraqi Leaders, Press and Radio toward the US and pro-Western Arab Regimes

Assurances of the Iraqi regime's friendly feelings toward the West, desire to cooperate on an independent basis, and intention to honor prior commitments and contracts are reiterated daily by Prime Minister Qasim in his contacts with US representatives and in press statements. Nevertheless, a steady anti-American trend is gathering momentum. It has thus far included minor acts of harassment and non-cooperation, a growing atmosphere of public hostility, and a spate of external and internal propaganda that is increasingly directed specifically against the US, as well as against the openly Western-aligned Arab governments of Lebanon and Jordan. There is no evidence that Qasim has taken any action to prevent or mitigate this trend, or even that he sincerely wishes to do so. In view of the growing split within his own government, however, Qasim is probably no longer in a position to make a strong defense either of US interests or of Iraqi independence of action vis-à-vis Egypt, whatever his personal preferences may be.

In the field of propaganda, the press of the new order has been somewhat more moderate than the radio, although never free from

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 786.00/8-2258. Secret.
anti-imperialist bias with certain anti-US overtones. The first newspaper
to appear after the revolution was al-Yaqdha, long suspended under the
former regime, which was formerly published by Siddiq Shanshal (Min-
ister of Guidance in the new Iraqi Cabinet) under aegis of the Istiqlal
Party. Always fanatically nationalist, anti-Jewish (as distinct from anti-
Zionist), and highly critical of the US, the paper in its reincarnation has
followed these lines as well as eulogizing Nasir and the Egyptian and
Iraqi revolutions. Shortly afterward al-Jumhuriya made its first appear-
ce, in obvious imitation of the Egyptian government’s press vehicle,
and immediately became the quasi-official mouthpiece of the new gov-
ernment. It has printed all official statements, including those of reass-
surance to the West, but the tone and content of the news are very close
to that of its Cairo counterpart.

Baghdad radio has been oriented to the UAR line since an August 4
broadcast attacking the government of Jordan. Beginning about two
weeks after the revolt, FBIS monitors identified two voices announcing
on the station as an Egyptian and a Syrian. Condemnations of the Nuri
regime have gradually identified it more and more with the US, as well
as “imperialism” generally. A scare-line of impending plots against the
new Republic is also being developed: an accidental petroleum tank fire
and the show-trial of ex-Chief of Staff Daghestani are being so played as
to enhance this line. Rabble-rousing speeches of Deputy Prime Minister
Abd al-Salam Arif also have been featured. Representative excerpts are
attached as an annex.¹

A similar memorandum has been addressed to the Under Secre-
tary.

¹ Attached but not printed.

134. Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research
(Cumming) to Secretary of State Dulles


SUBJECT

Intelligence Note: The Nature and Consequences of Factional Splits Within the Iraqi
Government

Infighting is developing within the revolutionary government of
Iraq somewhat earlier than expected, but along anticipated lines. It is in

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 786.00/8-2258. Secret.
no sense a conflict between anti-Western elements and those sympathetic to the US: the latter, in fact, have no articulate spokesman at the present time. Since anti-imperialism is the stock-in-trade of all of the protagonists, and given the demagogic character of Arab politics, the present struggle is bound to develop into a contest in anti-Western name-calling.

Initially, the National Democrats (primarily a radical nationalist group, but heavily Communist infiltrated) and the Communist Party of Iraq, now operating openly, are ranged against a faction headed by Deputy Prime Minister Arif. The situation presents a close parallel to that of Syria in late 1957. Arif, who from the first has been closely aligned with Nasir and has sought Egyptian support for his personal position, is now openly pressing for full union with the UAR. The Communists and their allies, mindful of Nasir’s stern repression of the Egyptian Communist Party but unwilling to adopt an unpopular posture of seeming to dissent from Nasir’s leadership, are advocating a federation or other loose association short of actual union. The far-left coalition is being steadily reinforced as exiles deported under the previous government’s anti-Communist program return to Iraq. According to some reports Prime Minister Qasim is himself protecting this group in return for its support against Arif. Where other principal governmental figures and the Army stand is not known, but it is almost certain that the Army will fragment and align behind the contesting personalities, probably on the basis of leadership preference rather than policy line or ideology. The Ba’th Party, earlier reported wary of the UAR because of the disbanding of its parent party in Syria, is, for the moment, supporting the assimilation movement.

The public attitude is not fully defined, but a pro-union groundswell is reportedly beginning under the constant prodding of pro-UAR propaganda.

Nasir’s position in the context of these developments is not clear. Since the Nasirite faction has held nearly all the key power-positions (Interior Department, propaganda, control of the street organization) in the Iraqi regime from the start, he can hardly be seriously worried about a Communist takeover in Iraq. It is conceivable that he has allowed a full display of Communist-leftist strength in order to generate local pressure for union and to reconcile Western powers to its accomplishment, on the Syrian precedent. Conversely, it may be that he is being overtaken by forces of unforeseen intensity. Certainly considerable pressures are developing toward Iraqi entry into the UAR that may prove irresistible.

A similar memorandum has been addressed to the Under Secretary.
135. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, September 10, 1958, 11:13 p.m.

960. Joint State—Defense. Embtels 966 and 1010. You authorized approach Prime Minister along following lines:

1. Indicate that in absence any F–86 training activity or any apparent Iraqi interest to date in resumption thereof US is withdrawing training personnel. (If this should provoke request for resumption F–86 training or question re US willingness consider resumption, you may reply that US remains ready meet its obligations under outstanding agreements with Iraq and if GOI prepared reaffirm and implement its responsibilities under said agreements training mission can be reconstituted. Remind Prime Minister however that training stopped by Iraqis and indicate US unable hold idle any longer in Iraq personnel which needed elsewhere. You should also make it clear that US considers remaining F–86 aircraft as being included among “major items military equipment” referred to in Para 2 below which spells out considerations bearing on any decision re resumption shipments.)

2. You should refer to message from DMO (Embtel 1010) and point out that US has demonstrated its good intentions with regard programmed military aid by completing delivery items which were on high seas at time of revolution and by indicating shortly following recognition (Deptel 593 and Embtel 640) our willingness discuss matter of military aid on frank basis with GOI. In order reach common under-

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.5—MSP/9–458. Secret. Drafted by Rockwell and Lakeland, cleared by McClelland, Dillon, Sprague, and Barnes; and approved by Rountree. The text of this telegram was discussed at a September 5 State–JCS meeting during which General Lemnitzer expressed concern that continuation of U.S. military aid to Iraq would adversely affect relations with U.S. friends and allies. (Ibid., State–JCS Meetings: Lot 61 D 417)

1 In telegram 966, August 30, Gallman observed that it was “highly unlikely” that the Iraqis would request resumption of F–86 training in the near future. He recommended that he be authorized to discuss with Prime Minister Qassim three related topics: 1) immediate resumption of F–86 training or a withdrawal of U.S. training personnel, 2) immediate resumption of shipments of programmed aid, and 3) determination by Iraq regarding future U.S. military aid. (Ibid., Central Files, 787.5–MSP/8–3058)

2 In telegram 1010, September 4, Gallman reported that a “secret and urgent letter” from the Iraqi Director of Military Operations to MAAG requested information about MAP and asked if items programmed prior to July 1958 would be delivered. (Ibid., 787.5–MSP/9–458)

3 Document 132.

4 In telegram 640, August 6, Gallman reported that he conveyed orally the substance of telegram 593 to Foreign Minister Jomard on August 4, and that the Foreign Minister reiterated Iraq’s “wish and determination to have really close, friendly relations with US.” (Department of State, Central Files, 611.87/8–658)
standing regarding existing military aid agreement including question of further deliveries of major items military equipment, USG would appreciate clarification of Iraqi Government’s attitude with regard to relationships spelled out in existing bi-lateral agreements and indication its general views regarding future US–Iraq military relations. You should add that present atmosphere created by such acts as interrogation Embassy officers, opening of diplomatic pouches, restrictions on movement US military personnel, extraordinary boarding and searching of US and US owned vessels in Shatt al-Arab, gratuitous attempts implicate US in current trials and lack of action re three missing Americans is such as to raise question re degree of cooperation with US desired by GOI. For this reason US, in determining its attitude re military shipments, would appreciate clarification of Iraqi positions re above matters and US–Iraq military relations in general.

3. You should not raise subject future aid (FY 59 and subsequent). (If Prime Minister raises subject you should point out this question obviously related matters outlined above and could not fruitfully be dealt with until current problems and relationships satisfactorily worked out. You may indicate that this does not rule out possibility future US military aid and that GOI should feel free raise matter again at such time it considers appropriate.)

4. MAAG should address brief reply to DMO indicating Ambassador discussing matter with Prime Minister.

5. Would appreciate elaboration your views re point (b), Para 1, Deptel 798.5

6. For your information only. Current status of Army and Air Force MAAG personnel in Baghdad cannot be accepted indefinitely. While the continued presence of these personnel in Baghdad relates to the decision to resume or not to resume MAP, the Department and Defense would appreciate the country team’s assessment as to whether or not some reduction in MAAG personnel is possible now.6

Dulles

5 In this paragraph of telegram 798, August 22, the Department requested the Country Team’s assessment of the desirability of the United States acceding to a request from Iraq to resume MAP deliveries and F–86 training programs. (Ibid., 787.5–MSP/8–1358)  
6 Staff Notes No. 423, prepared for the President, September 15, summarized telegram 960 to Baghdad. There is no indication that Eisenhower saw the note. (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)
The United States received increasingly frequent reports of factional struggles within the new Iraqi Government. As part of the briefing on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security,” Deputy Director of Central Intelligence Cabell informed the participants at the 379th Meeting of the National Security Council on September 18 of recent developments in Iraq. According to Gleason’s memorandum of the meeting, September 18, Cabell stated that “Cairo and Nasser were manifesting great concern over factional struggles among the leaders in the new regime in Iraq.” (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

At the next National Security Council meeting, September 25, also as part of the “Significant World Developments” briefing, Cabell noted that “the internal maneuvering for power” in Iraq “continued.” Cabell stated that, “despite factional differences on the political level, however, there was still obvious military cooperation between Egypt and Iraq despite the opposition of the Prime Minister and the cabinet to the union of Iraq with the United Arab Republic.” (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason of the 380th Meeting of the National Security Council, September 25; ibid.)

On October 1, Goodpaster prepared a synopsis of Intelligence and State Department items reported to the President. Included was the following information on Iraq: “In Iraq, Qasim has dismissed Arif as well as two more pro-UAR Cabinet members. Cairo seems to be trying to force Iraq into making an arms deal directly with the USSR.” (Ibid., Eisenhower Diaries)

The next day during the 381st Meeting of the National Security Council, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles, as part of the “Significant World Developments” briefing, provided additional information on Arif’s dismissal and pressure by the United Arab Republic on Iraq. According to Gleason’s memorandum of October 3, Dulles reported: “In Baghdad Prime Minister Qasim had strengthened his own position by depriving former Deputy Prime Minister Arif of all his cabinet prerogatives and banishing him to West Germany as Ambassador of Iraq to Bonn. However, in all probability, said Mr. Dulles, we have not heard the last of Arif. Meanwhile Prime Minister Qasim did not favor a union of Iraq and UAR and his government seemed to be trying to move into a more independent foreign policy.” (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, October 3; ibid., NSC Records)
137. Memorandum of Conversation

New York, October 11, 1958, 11:30 a.m.

SUBJECT
US-Iraqi Relations

PARTICIPANTS
Foreign Minister of Iraq, Mr. Jomard
Mr. Jawad, Iraqi Permanent Representative to the United Nations
Mr. William M. Rountree, NEA

I called on the Foreign Minister at my request, having made the arrangements previously through the Iraqi Chargé d’Affaires in Washington. I was cordially received. I spoke at some length concerning our desire to maintain good relations with Iraq, reviewing generally the history of our relationship since the coup d’état on July 14. I expressed concern that American policies and motivations had been misrepresented by our enemies and this might have created misapprehension on the part of some Iraqi leaders. I therefore reviewed generally our attitude toward the Iraqi regime. I mentioned that a prominent Arab statesman had recently commented to the effect that the US and the Soviet Union were working for the same objective in Iraq; i.e. to prevent union between Iraq and the United Arab Republic. I said that our attitude in this regard was that the future relationship between these two countries should be left entirely for decision by the governments and peoples concerned; that as far as the US was concerned if Iraq and the United Arab Republic wished union, or preferred some other kind of association, we would certainly not interfere. We had, for example, fully accepted the decision of Egypt and Syria to unite. In the course of the two and one-half hour conversation I reviewed various complaints which we had concerning Iraqi treatment of the American Embassy and nationals in Iraq and placed special emphasis upon the desirability of clearing up the question of the disappearance of three Americans.¹

The Foreign Minister spoke with frankness. He said that the present government desired good relations with the US and indeed would have embarked upon a much more friendly policy at the outset had it not been for its deep concern regarding the possible reaction of the US to the coup d’état. They had “learned” of large numbers of American agents going into Iran and elsewhere in the area to work toward a counter-revolution in Iraq. Reports of these activities appeared to have been

¹See footnote 1, Document 111.
given substance by the fact that the US “long delayed” its recognition of the regime and, together with the British, dispatched forces to the area. The Iraqi authorities felt it necessary to take strong measures for protection against possible hostile acts. Thus, foreigners were placed under surveillance and the operations of foreign embassies and offices were placed under careful scrutiny. Other measures were taken to control the number of personnel and goods, and communications. While this was governmental policy at that time, some officers at lower echelons became over-zealous and took actions which were perhaps excessive. Most of the difficulties of this nature had ended, however, and it was the desire of the government to re-establish as soon as possible good relations with the US and its representatives.

Regarding the three Americans missing in Iraq, the Foreign Minister listened attentively to what I had to say about the possible adverse reaction in Congress and among the American public if the Iraqi authorities should treat the matter lightly and not live up to their responsibilities under international law. He asked specifically for my suggestions. I told him I thought the first thing to be done was to disinter the remains of the several victims of the events of July 14 who had been buried in a common grave and permit an examination of the remains by specialists, including one designated by us, in order to see if they could be identified. Secondly, I thought that a serious investigation should be undertaken which would include interrogation of witnesses and others who might throw light upon what happened to the three Americans. I emphasized that not only was it necessary to establish the facts in connection with the discharge of Iraqi obligations in the matter, but also to permit the families of the deceased to collect insurance and settle estates. The Foreign Minister said that he would go into this matter immediately upon his return to Baghdad and would do all he could to clear up the affair. He invited me to send any further suggestions which I might have to him through the American Ambassador. He said that he could understand the particularly delicate problems involved in this affair. He thought it would be wise if the American Ambassador in Baghdad could play an even more personal role than that heretofore. While he was not clear in this regard, I gathered that his suggestion was that the Ambassador might have personal conversations with appropriate Iraqi officials similar to that which I had had with the Foreign Minister.

Regarding Iraqi relations with the United Arab Republic, the Foreign Minister said Iraq did not desire union. It wished to have close relations with the United Arab Republic and to achieve these in the framework of the Arab League.
138. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, October 14, 1958, 7 a.m.

1312. Three months have now passed since coup which brought Brigadier Qassim to power. It might at this stage prove helpful to depict and assess some aspects of present scene and to attempt some forecast, hazardous though it be, of what coming months probably hold in store.

1. Troops are still camped in Embassy compound and stand guard at other foreign missions, though perhaps in lesser force. Diplomatic and private visitors are still challenged at Embassy gates, as are American officials. I myself was denied entrance a few days ago, until identified, although in official car with flag displayed. Administration of Embassy, though perhaps a shade easier than during July, August and September, is still hampered by petty and unreasonable restrictions. GOI has still not yet permitted us free access USIS offices.

2. Press and radio keep up steady attacks on US, its posture in past and its current official policies. Our actions are sweepingly damned as "imperialistic" and usually linked with "British imperialism". Terminology of these attacks is increasingly "Made-in-Moscow". Public added to this fire of hatred almost nightly by the trials of officials, military and civilian, of former governments, these trials being widely publicized by radio, television and press. It is for us in the Embassy a sickening sight to see our former firm friends and active supporters of the free world pilloried by a petty military "judge" who also conceives of himself as a prosecutor.

3. We have confirmation from a number of sources that grumblings among shopkeepers and particularly among workmen is steadily growing. Promises made so loudly and widely in early days following coup of a fuller and freer life are in no way materializing. That is immediate basis of growing discontent.

4. What of the government? In last analysis no government in western conception of that term exists in Iraq today, three months after coup. Individual cabinet ministers manage now and then to issue regulations. In few instances cabinet as a whole has approved "Laws" but up to now they are on paper only. Content of these laws, many of which are ill-conceived and hastily drafted, has in several cases required repeated clarification (e.g., laws on rent control, labor and cropsharing). There is

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/10-1458. Confidential. Transmitted in two sections and repeated to Amman, Ankara, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Jidda, Karachi, London, Tehran, and Tel Aviv.
widespread paralysis of even routine in first weeks following coup of top layer of trained men comparable, in a measure, to our civil service. Their replacements have been found, are of low caliber indeed. In spite of daily cabinet meetings, there is as yet no coordinated government program in any field, and how could there be? Although cabinet includes handful of men with previous experience this level, this government is woefully lacking in men experienced in the challenging task of governing. This lack is particularly noticeable in the economic development field. The individuals holding cabinet positions have right up to today still nothing more to guide them than the oft-repeated general policy statement of the Prime Minister that Iraq is to be independent; Iraq wants to raise the living standards of the people; Iraq wants to be friends with all nations, east and west, that want to be friends with her; and above all Iraq wants to cooperate closely with other Arab states.

5. Economy of country is stagnant chiefly because development program which was main pump primer in past has been allowed to grind to halt. Government’s fumbling efforts to manage economy have caused a lack of confidence among the business community which no number of highly publicized but in substantial trade agreements with Soviet Union and Soviet bloc countries can dispel.

6. Inevitably, even though coup was carried out most effectively by a very small group of conspirators, differences as to the courses to be followed developed early among them. Tensions, primarily among the military but also among certain civilian members of regime, soon came to surface. Momentarily Qassim is on top. Arif, second in July 14 plot, has been deprived of military and political power positions and left October 12 to become Iraqi Ambassador in Bonn. The known Baathist members of the cabinet were removed or demoted at same time as Arif fell from grace. Thus most important elements working toward union with UAR, or at the least toward very close collaboration with Nasser, have been removed from center of government. The group that seems to influence Qassim most at present is made up of members of the National Democratic Party led by Kamal Chaderchi and Mohammed Hadid. This group, unfortunately, is naive to the extreme concerning danger which communism holds for Iraq. Qassim, we believe, is anti-Communist, and may be making a sincere effort to hold Communists in check. We do not think, on basis of reports we have received from diplomatic colleagues and reports emanating from Iraqi sources, that Communists played a major role in having Arif and Baathist Ministers removed from power. Communists do not today have that much influence with the regime. By weakening of Baathist influence, however, Communists undoubtedly gain much more room for maneuver. Communists also have potential for attack on another point through returned Kurdish leader Mulla Mustafa Barzani. He has spent last eleven years in exile in Soviet Union.
His appeal to a majority of Iraqi Kurds is strong and his ability disrupt stability almost endless. Thus we believe that today greatest potential threat to stability and even existence of Qassim’s regime lies in hands of Communists.

7. As of today, three months after coup, Qassim’s regime is by no means firmly entrenched. There exist strong pressures on it from without and within regime; there is no solid unanimity and tensions are rampant. We are in for weeks, perhaps even months, of uncertainty. Certainly weeks just ahead are critical. Future stability is dependent on Qassim’s ability to withstand the various pressures being brought to bear on him and to lead country back to normal existence.

8. Up to now Qassim’s regime, whether deliberately or not, has in the main been carrying out a predominately wrecking operation. We think some of those around him are finally beginning to realize that it is much simpler to effect a coup and tear down government than it is to govern.

9. From my personal experience and observation covering these past four years in Iraq, I would say that with the murder of Nuri, illiberal as he may at times have been in dealing with domestic issues, Iraq sacrificed her best leader toward an eventual life of dignity and decency and her strongest bulwark against recurrent chaos, if not savagery. A number of well placed and knowledgeable Iraqis have been quoted to me within the past few days as having said, in effect, that within ten years at most a monument would be erected in Baghdad to Nuri.

I hope, in fact I believe, they are right.

Gallman

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139. Memorandum of Conversation


SUBJECT
Iraq, United Arab Republic

PARTICIPANTS
Mr. Yaakov Herzog, Minister, Embassy of Israel
Mr. Yohanan Meroz, Counselor, Embassy of Israel
NEA—Mr. William M. Rountree
NE—Mr. Theodore A. Wahl

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/10–1358. Confidential. Drafted by Wahl on October 14.
Mr. Rountree opened the conversation with a reference to his talk in New York over the week end with Iraqi Foreign Minister Jomard. He commented that Jomard is personally very pleasant and apparently very intelligent. One thing that emerged from this conversation, he said, was an impression that immediately after the July 14 coup the Iraqis had genuinely feared a U.S. plot to overthrow the new regime. Mr. Jomard indicated that Iraqi relations with the UAR should be close, through the Arab league; he appeared not to favor a union of Iraq with the UAR.

Mr. Herzog commented that according to information available to the Israelis, Prime Minister Qassim has the senior officers of the Army with him and is now directing his attention toward obtaining the support of the Kurds. Both Nasser and the Soviets, he added, also seem to be concentrating their efforts on the Kurds. He said the Egyptians seemed to have precipitated the recent crisis in Iraq before the time was ripe, probably because they wished to head off a move toward closer association between Syria and Iraq. Qassim appears to have been stronger than Nasser expected.

One thing which bears close watching, Mr. Herzog continued, is Soviet penetration in Iraq. The new Soviet ambassador in Baghdad is reported to have been the mastermind of Soviet policy in the Middle East since the Czech-Egyptian arms deal. Mr. Rountree agreed that the swift Soviet moves toward closer relations with Iraq are disturbing.

Mr. Rountree commented that Nasser is always careful to base a major political action on some previous Western action. In other words, many of his more dramatic moves have been reactions to Western actions. In this connection, the Egyptians appear to be considering some move as a reaction to the United Kingdom's sale of submarines to Israel. We think that there will be a substantial reaction. There is speculation that Marshal Amer's visit to Czechoslovakia may be related to such a reaction.

Mr. Herzog said that the Embassy had received a cablegram from London indicating that the Foreign Office did not take Amer's visit too seriously. He added that the Israel Embassy in London had been instructed not to involve the U.S. in any way in speculation regarding the supply of arms to Israel.

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1 See Document 137.
140. Editorial Note

At the 383d Meeting of the National Security Council on October 16 Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles included in his briefing on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security,” the following on Iraq:

"Mr. Dulles reported that the new Iraqi regime had just concluded a trade agreement with the Soviet Union, trade with which country had been cut off since 1955. The new regime was also beginning to implement its recent arms agreement with the Soviet Union. Mr. Dulles predicted that the Iraqi regime would need all the talents available to it in order to meet the manifold problems facing it, including particularly the possibility of a separatist movement among the Kurdish population of Iraq. [6 lines of source text not declassified]" (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, October 17; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

141. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Murphy)


SUBJECT
Situation with Respect to Shipment of Arms to Iraq

This memorandum, outlining the current status of our program of arms aid to Iraq, has been prepared in NE at the request of Mr. Donhauser of your staff.

In Deptel 593 (Tab A) to Baghdad of August 4, 1958 we took the position with regard to future military aid programs that we assumed the matter would be the subject of consideration and discussion by our two governments; that we did not in any way preclude the possibility of continuing the existing programs but considered that there were both practical details and matters of policy to be worked out. Ambassador Gallman conveyed these views orally to the Foreign Minister on August 6.

Subsequently, there were a number of approaches by Iraqi military authorities to MAAG officers regarding delivery of MAP items un-
delivered from previous fiscal year programs. The decision was taken to effect delivery of a number of shipments of spare parts and minor items which were on the high seas at the time of the revolution and which arrived in Iraq after our recognition. There were also several working level inquiries directed to MAAG officers regarding the prospect of delivery of the balance of outstanding items. The major undelivered items are:

10  F-86 aircraft
39  Saladin armored cars (OSP items from UK production) which carry one 76 mm gun each and two 30 caliber machine guns
54  40 mm (L-70) anti-aircraft guns (latest US version of the 40 mm)
93  4.2” mortars

In an effort to clarify the situation and facilitate decisions with respect to the disposition of Air Force training personnel and the delivery of MAP pipeline items, Deptl 798 of August 22 was sent to Baghdad (Tab B).²

In Embtel 966 (Tab C)³ replying to Deptl 798 (Tab B) Ambassador Gallman indicated that he considered it highly unlikely that the Iraqis would request resumption of F-86 training in the near future. He recommended that he be authorized to discuss with the Prime Minister (1) immediate resumption of the F-86 training program or withdrawal of training personnel from Iraq; (2) resumption of shipment of programmed aid items; (3) determination of Iraqi wishes regarding future aid.

Baghdad’s 1010 September 4 (Tab D)⁴ transmitted a secret and urgent letter to the MAAG from the Director of Military Operations which raised the specific question whether we intended to deliver outstanding items programmed prior to July 1958.

In response to Embtels 966 and 1010 a joint State Defense message, Deptl 960 (Tab E)⁵ authorized Ambassador Gallman to approach the Prime Minister along the following lines:

1) Indicate that in the absence of any F-86 training activity or any apparent Iraqi interest in the resumption thereof, the US was withdrawing its Air Force training personnel.

2) With reference to the message from the Director of Military Operations, refer to our completing delivery of military items which were on the high seas at the time of the revolution and indicate that, in order

² See footnote 5, Document 135.
³ See footnote 1, Document 135.
⁴ See footnote 2, Document 135.
⁵ Document 135.
to reach common understanding regarding existing military aid agreements and the question of future deliveries of major items of military equipment, the US would appreciate clarification of the Iraqi Government's attitude with regard to said agreements and an expression of its general views regarding future US-Iraqi military relations. In this context, the Ambassador was to point out that the atmosphere created by certain actions of the Iraqi Government (customs hindrances, surveillance and harassment of US personnel, etc.) was such as to raise questions regarding the degree of cooperation desired by the Government of Iraq.

3) The subject of future military aid was not to be raised by the Ambassador but if raised by the Prime Minister was to be dealt with by pointing out that the question could not fruitfully be pursued until current problems and relationships were satisfactorily worked out.

In Embtel 1113 (Tab F) Ambassador Gallman reported his talk with the Prime Minister in accordance with his instructions cited above. Professing unfamiliarity with the existing bi-lateral agreements, the Prime Minister promised to study the agreements and look into the list of current unresolved problems listed by the Ambassador. The Prime Minister commented that he hoped agreement could be reached for continued effective arms aid and said that we would be hearing from him later. Baghdad's 1120 (Tab G), containing Ambassador Gallman's general comments on the question of further military assistance was dispatched the day following the meeting with the Prime Minister but does not appear to have been motivated by any specific new development.

Nothing further having been heard from the Iraqi Government on the subject to date, we are instructing Ambassador Gallman to approach the Prime Minister again to seek his promised reaction to their previous talk. We have, however, recently received a note from the Iraqi Embassy requesting facilities for the purchase of 200 modern mine detectors. NE is recommending approval of this request.

6 Dated September 16. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.5-MSP/9-1658)
7 Dated September 17. (Ibid., 787.5-MSP/9-1758)
8 In telegram 1203 to Baghdad, October 17. (Ibid., 787.5-MSP/9-1658) In telegram 1377 from Baghdad, October 21, Gallman reported that the feeling among Qassim and his colleagues was that they would be politically vulnerable if they were too closely associated with military agreements negotiated by the previous Iraqi Government. Gallman hoped that a formula could be worked out for receiving U.S. aid short of specific endorsement of existing U.S.-Iraqi military agreements. (Ibid., 787.5-MSP/10-2158)

In telegram 1247 to Baghdad, October 25, the Department informed Gallman that its primary concern was that the MAAG in Iraq "continue receive necessary facilities and cooperation" to carry out its duties. (Ibid.)

9 In a memorandum to Rountree, November 26, Rockwell recommended that the United States allow Iraq to purchase 200 mine detectors and $1 million in spare parts, signal equipment, and aircraft items. (Ibid., NEA Files: Lot 59 D 582, Iraq, General, 1958)
Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to Secretary of State Dulles


SUBJECT

Intelligence Note: Significance of the Return to Iraq and Arrest of Col. Arif

The arrest of Col. Arif upon his return to Iraq and the harsh and uncompromising character of the public statement announcing his arrest has put in sharp relief the cleavage in the Iraqi regime. This event has not only precipitated the showdown stage in the power struggle within Iraq itself but has also created an open challenge to President Nasir.

Neither within Iraq nor in the UAR has there been any immediate public reaction to Arif’s arrest. It is likely that events moved so fast Arif’s followers in Iraq as well as Nasir have not had time to prepare and execute a countermove. On the propaganda front the Iraqi Government apparently is trying to keep the initiative by broadcasting cables of support for Premier Qasim and may be preparing the ground for charges against Arif by broadcasting slogans against “imperialist plots.” Even if Qasim should succeed in stalling any violent reaction to his move for the moment, factionalizing of the army is likely to result and profound internal unrest is the outlook for some time.

The most important factor however, will be Nasir’s reaction. Since Arif has been the chief protagonist and symbol for the pro-UAR faction in Iraq his arrest is a public slap at Nasir which the latter can hardly overlook without serious consequences for his leadership role in the Arab World. He will be virtually forced to take a hand, and whether he does so openly or covertly, the outcome will be labelled his success or failure. This new and pressing affair may distract Nasir’s attention from

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/11-558. Confidential. A note on the source text indicates that Dulles saw this memorandum.

1 On November 4, Radio Baghdad announced that “Col Abdul Salaam Arif the Iraqi Ambassador to Bonn arrived in Baghdad without proper authorization or permission. In view of the public interest and his repeated attempts to jeopardize public security he has been arrested today and will be tried for plotting against the security of the State.” (USARMA Baghdad telegram CX 134, November 6; ibid., 787.00/11-658)

2 On November 3 and 5, John S.D. Eisenhower and L.A. Minnich, Jr., included in synopses of State and Intelligence material reported to the President accounts of demonstrations in Iraq. On November 3 John Eisenhower’s synopsis included the statement: “Anti-UAR demonstrations are occurring in Iraq with security forces making no apparent effort to interfere until violence is threatened.” On November 5, Minnich’s synopsis stated: “Popular demonstrations supporting Qasim reflected pro-Communist agitation and suggests some reliance by Qasim on Communists for popular demonstrations in his support.” (Both, Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)
other problems facing him in inter-Arab affairs, such as relations with Tunisia or developments in Yemen. He may also postpone any move he may have contemplated regarding Jordan—or on the other hand feel compelled to move prematurely as a diversionary maneuver. Syrian affairs may also demand more of Nasir’s attention as a result of the events in Iraq, since any success on Qasim’s part would strengthen those Syrians who would prefer looser ties with Egypt and possibly closer relations with Iraq.

From a propaganda point of view Nasir may well find himself in a quandary. It would be embarrassing to call Qasim an imperialist tool so soon after extolling him and the new republic. Reliance upon the USSR for arms and economic aid would most probably keep Nasir from openly charging Soviet interference in Iraq.

It is too early to assess to what extent the Soviets and the local Communists are likely to profit from the most recent events in Iraq. One result may be an increase in Kurdish restiveness, which the Soviets have been able to stimulate and exploit in the past, in the face of disunity among the Arabs in the country.

A similar memorandum has been addressed to the Under Secretary.

143. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Dulles and the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree)

November 11, 1958, 4:01 p.m.  

TELEPHONE CALL TO MR. ROUNTREE

The Sec said he really feels terribly about the sentence of Jamali.\(^2\) He realizes probably to speak out would do more harm than good. On the

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Source: Eisenhower Library, Dulles Papers, General Telephone Conversations. Transcribed by Phyllis D. Bernau. The Secretary was attending the consultative meeting of the Colombo Plan held in Seattle, November 10-13; Rountree was in Washington.

\(^1\) Pacific time.

\(^2\) On November 10 the Iraqi Special High Military Court sentenced Fadhil Jamali, a former Iraqi Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, to death. In addition, the court passed death sentences on Major General Ghazi Al-Daghestani, former Commanding General of the Third Division and Deputy Chief of Staff, and Lieutenant General Mohammed Rafiq Arif, former Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Armed Forces. The Embassy reported there was speculation that the sentences might be commuted by Qasim to life imprisonment, but that “crowds demonstrating approval of death sentence began to form in city’s usual demonstration districts by mid-morning.” (Telegram 1547 from Baghdad, November 11; Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/11-1158)
other hand there are times when you feel such a strong sense of moral indignation it is very difficult to keep quiet. And he feels that way about this. He suggested saying something—or would it be too much of a challenge? The Sec wanted to let R know how he feels and having told him that handle it the best way he can. He gathers this Hussein thing is quieting down—he has postponed his vacation—the Syrians did it for us.

3 In telegram 1358 to Baghdad, November 11, the Department instructed Chargé Fritzlan to make an informal, oral, and nonpublic approach to Qassim and inform him that the death sentences would reflect unfavorably on his government. Although the United States had no desire to interfere in Iraqi affairs, nor comment on the merits of the trials and sentencing, it hoped that for humanitarian reasons the death sentences could be commuted. (Ibid., 787.00/11-1258)

In telegram 1612 from Baghdad, November 17, Chargé Fritzlan reported that he made the informal démarche with Qassim as instructed. Although the Iraqi Prime Minister did not consider the request for clemency an intervention in Iraq’s internal affairs, he was noncommittal on leniency for the three Iraqis under death sentences. (Ibid., 787.00/11-1758) On March 27, 1959, after intercession by the King of Morocco, Qassim commuted these death sentences.

144. Memorandum From the Director of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to Secretary of State Dulles


SUBJECT

Intelligence Note: The Communist Threat in Iraq

The present situation in Iraq is largely an outgrowth of the lack of solid groundwork for the coup of July 14, 1958. The sole uniting force among the disparate groups and individuals involved in the coup was hatred of the old regime, and there was little agreement on the policies to be followed once the coup had succeeded. The main issue in Iraq at present is the relationship to Nasir and the UAR. Istiqlal and Ba’thist attempts, led by such figures as Colonel ‘Arif, Rashid ‘Ali al-Gaylani, and Fa’iq al-Samarr’a’i to promote association with the UAR, prompted a vigorous counter campaign on the part of the Communists and of Kamil al-Chadirchi, leader of the leftist National Democratic Party.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.001/11-2558. Secret. A note on the memorandum indicates that the Secretary saw it.

1 Commenting on a CIA working paper entitled “The Communist Threat to Iraq,” Sanger of INR wrote that although the Communist threat to Iraq was grave, the CIA paper “exaggerates” it, [1-1/2 lines of text not declassified] and that the new Iraqi cabinet contains Communists or Communist-sympathizers. (Memorandum from Sanger to Arneson, November 25; Ibid., INR Files: Lot 58 D 776, Iraq) The CIA paper has not been found.
Increasing tension between Qasim and the pro-Nasir faction have induced him to lean more heavily on the support of Chadirchi and the Communists. This has increased the alarm of the non-Communist groups, including the senior army officers who have pressured Qasim to disassociate himself from the Communists. However, the Communists have emerged from years of illegal existence as a well-organized force while their opponents are largely disorganized, with only the Ba’th Party and the army having some capabilities for organized political action.

Qasim, while probably not a Communist, leans heavily on Chadirchi’s advice. Both men are politically naive and seem to feel that they can exploit the Communists as long as they are useful and then oust them. In the meantime the Communists have succeeded in establishing themselves in various strong positions in government and, among other things, are in control of the propaganda apparatus. While Communist infiltration probably has not yet got out of control, the point of no return may be reached in a few months should the Qasim regime continue on its present course.

The political situation in Iraq definitely points to an early showdown which, however, is unlikely to lead quickly to a clear-cut result and which, unless some new force or personality emerges, is equally unlikely to yield any appreciable gain for the West. The most likely focus of a coup against Qasim at this time is pro-UAR Rashid ‘Ali al-Gaylani. However, the most important element in any coup remains the army which may join in an anti-Qasim coup but is likely to split over the question of union with the UAR. Tribal elements likewise might support such a coup, but not necessarily union with the UAR. Thus even in the case of a successful coup the struggle probably will not have ended the governmental instability and plotting is likely to continue. Should Qasim win over his opponents, his debt to the Communists will have increased and his chances of ridding himself of Communist influence will have become smaller.

A similar memorandum has been addressed to the Under Secretary.

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2 In a November 28 memorandum to Murphy, to which was attached an NE study with accompanying appendices, Rountree summarized NE’s assessment of Communist influence in Iraq: “In brief, we believe there is considerable evidence that Communist elements enjoy a favorable position in Iraq today and that their activities are being tolerated by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Qasim. Communist elements are clearly providing Qasim with ‘street’ support which he needs in his struggle with political factions opposed to him, notably pro-UAR groups. We do not believe Qasim is a Communist but believe that there is a real danger that he will become overly dependent on the Communist support he is now receiving.” Murphy wrote on the source text: “Very good presentation.” (Ibid., Central Files, 787.001/11-2858)
145. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, December 4, 1958, 5:36 p.m.

1505. Embtls 1753, 1754. Embassy should treat [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] approach with extreme caution and reserve. Without having any specific evidence that this is so, we believe chances are very good that approach is provocation. If it is bona fide it is very likely that authorities already aware of group's activities. If authorities are not so apprised, it is likely that before long they would become aware of group's activities and of any US steps in support of [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] associates.

At Friday meeting with [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] you should take following line:

1. US concern over and opposition to menace of international Communism well known.
2. US concerned over reports it has received of growing Communist strength and activities in Iraq which it considers direct threat to integrity and independence of Iraq.
3. Determination of whether this threat must be met, and if so how and when, is matter which must be decided by Iraqis themselves. Would not be appropriate nor desirable for outside power such as US to intervene in internal affairs of Iraq. US is therefore unable to provide funds as requested.
4. US cannot state in advance what its attitude would be toward any new government which might come to power in Iraq. US however has traditionally had close and friendly relations with Iraq and naturally wishes these to be continued.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/12–358. Top Secret; Niact; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Rockwell and approved by Rountree.

1 In telegrams 1753 and 1754, December 3, the Embassy reported that an Embassy official had been contacted by a former [text not declassified] who claimed to represent a "free officers movement" that proposed to overthrow the Qassim government. [Text not declassified] sought support for a coup, which he outlined in detail. Although Embassy officials were aware that [text not declassified] could be a provocateur, they were impressed by his sincerity and proposed to check him out. If [text not declassified] story was essentially correct, the Embassy thought that the coup could prove a crucial turning point in Iraq's history and perhaps a watershed in stopping Communist advances in the Arab world. Should [text not declassified] prove out, the Embassy recommended giving him and his colleagues limited support. If the coup was successful, it recommended providing the new government generous assistance. (Both ibid.)

2 According to telegram 1781 from Baghdad, December 5, an Embassy official met with [text not declassified] and presented these points as instructed. [text not declassified] responded that the coup depended on U.S. financial assistance, which caused the Embassy to wonder if [text not declassified] statements that the coup plotters were motivated by anti-communism were entirely true. (Ibid., 787.00/12–558)
Following development, which occurred subsequent to drafting this message, reinforces our belief that provocation may be involved and our conviction that Embassy must be extremely cautious re [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. British Embassy has just informed us of message to Foreign Office from Michael Wright describing meeting which Wright had with Qassim November 30 with no other persons present. Qassim stated he had absolute knowledge that very short while ago Americans arranged journey of three individuals from place called Pishti (British surmise this may be Push) across border into Iran to work there against Iraq regime, and that there was similar activity on part of American agents in south of Iraq. Wright said this was impossible to believe and if true must be work of others who, to cover their tracks, were seeking to involve Americans. According to Wright, Qassim refused to be convinced.

We have in mind taking above allegation up with Qassim and have asked British Embassy to find out whether Foreign Office has any objection. Meanwhile you should not discuss with Wright unless he brings matter up. Can Embassy shed any light on Qassim's reported remarks?

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3 As reported in a memorandum of conversation, December 4. (Ibid., 787.00/12-558)
4 Telegram 1777 from Baghdad, December 5, reported that the Embassy could shed little light on Qassim's remarks. Although there were general rumors that the United States was working against the Iraq Government, Qassim and Jonard discounted them. Neither man mentioned the specific alleged operations as described to Sir Michael Wright, British Ambassador to Iraq. (Ibid.)

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146. Editorial Note

[1 paragraph from the Memorandum of Discussion at the 390th Meeting of the National Security Council on December 11 not declassified. (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)]
147. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, December 11, 1958, 3 p.m.

1845. Cairo for Rountree. Deptels 1536, December 8 and 1557, December 10. 2 Called on Prime Minister Qassim this morning. I met with him alone as Wright had done also. We found in previous contacts with Qassim that his English is quite adequate.

1. I presented to him slowly and with emphasis points appearing in Deptel 1536. He followed my words most attentively. With reference to mendacious news report, I made special mention of Department’s categorical denial of any connection with recently discovered plot. Qassim gave no indication of explicit knowledge of [less than 1 line of source not declassified].

2. After a moment’s serious reflection, Qassim responded to effect that he was convinced that I knew nothing about reports of American activities to undermine his government. I pressed him then for details other than those he had reported to Wright. He went no further, though, than to say that Kurds in the Sulimaniyah area were being incited against his government. There had been movements of individuals back and forth across the frontier with Iran. Here I interjected a question: Did he mean to say that there were Americans among these individuals? His reply was that Americans and other nationalities, according to his information, were involved. I maintained firmly that, as I was fully informed and aware of activities of all Americans in Iraq in an official capacity, I could assure him that none was involved in such activity. He gave me the impression of accepting that, but he said nothing to indicate that he believed no Americans in private capacity were involved. As I saw that I could get no further response, I said I hoped that with the arrival of

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/12-1158. Top Secret; Priority; Limit Distribution. Repeated to Cairo.

1 Telegram 1536 to Baghdad, December 8, instructed Gallman to convince Qassim that there was no truth to the allegations that the United States was encouraging or supporting dissension in Iraq. Gallman was instructed to state categorically to Qassim that there were no official Americans in Iraq engaged in plots against the regime or in agent recruiting and that sources unfriendly to Washington were obviously seeking to prejudice him against the United States. (Ibid., 787.00/12-858)

2 Telegram 1557, December 10, further instructed Gallman to protest and deny certain Baghdad newspaper reports that Rountree’s trip to the Middle East was designed to foment plots against Iraq. If Qassim brought up the [text not declassified] approach, Gallman was to provide the following justification: the United States knew that Qassim was aware of the plot and already had the situation fully under control, the previous warning passed to Qassim about the December 10 coup attempt resulted in the official who gave the message being required to leave Iraq, and, in keeping with its policy of non-interference in Iraq, [text not declassified] request had been rebuffed. (Ibid., 787.00/12-1058)
Rountree, with his thorough knowledge of the Washington scene, the atmosphere could be completely cleared. To this he commented that he was looking forward to seeing Rountree.

3. Qassim was most cordial throughout talk and although he looked very tired, he remained calm and self-possessed throughout.

Gallman

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148. Telegram From the Embassy in Egypt to the Department of State

Cairo, December 12, 1958, midnight.

1770. From Rountree. After reading latest series Baghdad telegrams subsequent Ambassador Gallman’s estimate of situation and consulting with Ambassador Hare, I have grave doubts wisdom proceeding with visit to Iraq. Widespread campaign against US and me personally obviously would not be possible without government acquiescence. It seems most unlikely that in present atmosphere any positive results could be achieved in discussion with government, but on contrary it seems assured that press and Communist-inspired demonstrators would have field day in anti-Americanism. Even relatively friendly officials in Foreign Office expect demonstrations which again would be taken justifiably as government-supported disturbances directed at visitor from nation with which Iraq presumably maintains good relations. Such activity could even endanger lives and property of American citizens, particularly since there are no assurances government capable controlling situation.

Another factor is that my visits to Lebanon and Jordan have received publicity far beyond that expected with considerably more beneficial results than at first seemed likely. Atmosphere for my Cairo visit is relatively good, and while it is hazardous to predict ultimate short-term and long-term effects, it now seems reasonable to expect modestly good results. To follow these three visits with one to Baghdad filled with acrimony would mitigate to large extent advantages which have somewhat unexpectedly accrued.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 110.15-RO/12-1258. Secret; Niact. Repeated to Baghdad.
Finally, we must recognize that current anti-government activities in Iraq have by no means ended, and it is quite possible that there will be further developments along these lines in next few days. [1 line of source text not declassified] Situation would be immeasurably complicated if these developments should occur either just before, during, or after my presence there.

I therefore propose that Embassy Baghdad inform GOI that Department has decided in view unpropitious atmosphere brought about by widespread campaign which appears to have been condoned by government censors that I will not proceed Iraq at this time. It is earnestly hoped that visit may take place at later time in more favorable circumstances.

We had thought and continue to think that it would be to our mutual advantage to seek such opportunities to exchange views on matter of common interest.

What will be said to press presents a problem. On the one hand failure give reasons for not going can provide good opening for unfriendly propaganda. On other hand, elaboration of reasons might jeopardize to some extent at least whatever chance we may have of working out better relations with regime. On balance I believe we should simply say that situation does not appear at moment propitious for visit of general character planned. We hope that suitable opportunity will present itself in near future for visit to Iraq and other countries in area which Rountree could not visit at present time.

Department please advise urgently its reaction to foregoing and telegraph appropriate instructions to Baghdad if Department concurs.  

Hare

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1 Telegram 1581 to Cairo, also sent to Baghdad as 1746, instructed Gallman to see Qassim and seek a clear understanding whether Iraq still desired Rountree to visit Baghdad. If so then Gallman should seek assurance for Rountree's personal safety and inquire what steps had been taken to curb unfriendly disturbances. If the trip was cancelled, it should be done at Iraq's request to avoid the impression of a U.S. retreat in the face of Communist threats and to diminish charges of U.S. involvement in the December 10 abortive Baghdad coup. (Ibid.)

In telegram 1867 from Baghdad, Gallman reported that at a dinner given by the Government of Iraq in his honor marking the end of his tour as Ambassador, Qassim had given him informal, personal assurances that he wanted Rountree to come to Baghdad and that proper security measures would be taken. Although Gallman was not satisfied with the informal nature of these assurances, he thought Rountree should come lest the Iraqi Communists claim credit for cancellation of the visit. (Ibid.)
149. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Herter to President Eisenhower


SUBJECT
Call by Ambassador John D. Jernegan

Mr. John D. Jernegan was appointed Ambassador to Iraq on December 11, replacing Waldemar J. Gallman. He would appreciate the opportunity of paying a brief call on you before his departure for Baghdad on December 22.

The political situation in Iraq is as critical at present as that of any country in the Middle East. Since the revolution on July 14, there has been much political tension within Iraq which the Communists have exploited so successfully that they currently exercise unprecedented influence in that country and particularly on Prime Minister Qassim. Moreover, Soviet bloc diplomats are extremely active in Iraq as evidenced by a recently concluded Soviet-Iraqi arms deal.

Our relations with the new Government of Iraq have been most delicate and tenuous and we wish to do everything possible to assist Mr. Jernegan in what will be a very difficult and important mission. We believe that his effectiveness in attempting to counter Communist influence in Iraq would be enhanced if he were to call on you prior to his departure and were able to convey your personal greetings to Prime Minister Qassim. The fact that he had consulted with you would have a favorable effect upon Iraqi political leaders and might well cause them to accord added respect to Mr. Jernegan’s endeavors.

I therefore recommend that you receive Mr. Jernegan between December 18 and December 22, if this is convenient to you.¹

A biographic sketch of Mr. Jernegan is enclosed.²

Christian A. Herter³

¹ According to a note on the source text, Jernegan saw Eisenhower on December 18 at 11 a.m. No record of their discussion has been found.
² Attached but not printed.
³ Printed from a copy that bears this stamped signature.
Baghdad, December 16, 1958, 8 p.m.

1887. From Rountree. I called, accompanied by Fritzlan and Symmes at noon December 16 on Prime Minister Qassim who received me in his Defense Ministry office with Foreign Minister Jomard and Finance Minister Hadid. In arranging call this morning Embassy had urged appropriate security precautions be taken. It was probably in response this urging that although no demonstrations observed in Baghdad, government escort transported me to and from call in military vehicle.

Meeting was held in cordial atmosphere. After explaining purpose of my visit Baghdad and other ME capitals I said I had been encouraged include Iraq in itinerary both as result Foreign Minister’s reaction to mention of the possibility in my talks with him in New York and Prime Minister and Foreign Minister’s reaction in extending welcome at time Ambassador Gallman discussed my coming. Normal visit of diplomatic official of one country to another between which friendly relations maintained had taken on entirely different coloration because of Iraqi press campaign and unfriendly crowds which met me yesterday. I observed result of publicity would have unfortunate effect on public opinion outside Iraq. I considered security precautions had been inadequate and hoped Prime Minister would be able to carry out expression

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 110.15–RO/12–1658. Secret; Priority. Transmitted in two sections.

1 A more detailed memorandum of conversation of this meeting is *ibid*. John Eisenhowe r included an account of Rountree’s discussion with the Iraqis in his synopsis of State and Intelligence material reported to the President, December 17, as follows:

“Qassim, Foreign Minister Jomard and Finance Minister Hadid received Rountree at Baghdad yesterday. Rountree made comments on his welcome to the city to which Qas sim replied that they had been much aroused by the recent revelation of a plot against the government. Rountree denied all allegations of U.S. implication and emphasized that those who did not desire good relations between the U.S. and Iraq would use all devices to create suspicion. Qassim appeared unconvincing and tense but seemed sincere in desiring good relations with the U.S.” (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)

2 See Document 137.

3 Rountree was met by an assistant protocol officer and escorted from the airport by four military vehicles with armed soldiers, two motorcycle outriders, a Foreign Office car, and two Embassy cars. Hostile crowds, including about 100 airport employees inside the airport fence, shouted anti-American slogans. Rountree’s limousine flying the American flag crawled through swarms of demonstrators who pelted it with mud, rocks, eggs, and garbage and passed “Rountree go home” stickers on it. The only major damage inflicted to the car on the trip to the Embassy was a shattered windshield. (Telegram 180 from Baghdad, December 15; Department of State, Central Files, 110.15–RO/12–1558)
of intention to maintain order he expressed to Gallman. From there, however, I went on to constructive aspects of visit and outlined in general terms situation as I saw it with respect to our relations. I sought first hand knowledge on matters of common interest as GOI saw them and would appreciate the Prime Minister’s frank views.

Qassim expressed regret for yesterday’s demonstrations but then stated Iraqi people had been much aroused by recent revelation of plot against government and implications some foreign power involved. Although identity of power not yet revealed, many Iraqi people believed it to be US. He reviewed at length facts affecting Iraqi public opinion and stated on many occasions Iraq wished maintain good relations with US, as with all other countries. His main theme was that Iraqi public extremely vigilant, determined maintain independence, and looked with keen suspicion upon activities of any government which would seem to impair their independence. In this connection he recited a number of allegations against activities of Americans in Iraq and in Iran which had led Iraqi public to believe US unfriendly. His main concern in this regard was alleged stirring up of trouble among Iraqi Kurds with American support in Iraq to some extent but primarily in Iran. I, of course, denied all allegations US engaged in activity against interests of Iraq and endeavored to reassure him of our friendly attitude toward government. I said US public understandably was shocked as result certain aspects methods of take-over but that with recognition of GOI we had every intention of working for good relations. I made strong point of fact those who did not desire to see good relations between USG and GOI would use every conceivable device to create suspicion and doubt. I earnestly hoped that Prime Minister fully aware of this and that he would not believe ridiculous allegations, at least without looking into their origins and discussing them frankly with us. At one point Qassim admitted that he, himself did not believe one of the charges which he had mentioned to me (that Consulate Kirkuk had been involved in demonstrations) but said simply that “Many Iraqis did believe it”. He said now that Iraq was completely free, public must be permitted to express itself.

I did not gain impression that Qassim substantially reassured by my statements USG not engaged in activities inimical to regime. Indeed one of his last remarks was to effect good relations would follow automatically in view many common interests of two countries, if Iraqi public not given reasons to suppose US hostile to government. I repeated that every assurance could be given that we were not hostile but that no one could assure that unfriendly elements would not maintain that we were and develop fictitious proof of that allegation. It was thus important to build confidence.

At end of conversation I said that there had been considerable adverse reaction to my visit as though it had been imposed upon the
government of Iraq and I hoped that the Prime Minister considered it appropriate to make it clear that my visit had been welcomed. While he did not respond directly to this, he did state that he could assure me that there would be "no trouble" attendant to my departure. Throughout conversation Qassim seemed tense. If he felt any sense of shame over hostile reception, he was successful in concealing it. Throughout conversation we were both frank and I believe Qassim appreciated my efforts to be cordial, sympathetic and frank at the same time. I am confident he was sincere in making his oft repeated assertions that he wants friendly relations with US. What constructive measures he might take in this regard did not emerge.

Fritzlan

151. Memorandum of Discussion at the 391st Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1 and 2.]

3. *Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security*

   [Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

   Mr. Dulles reported that the situation in Iraq was uncertain. It was questionable whether Kassem, who is in the hands of the Communist mob, can retain power. The Army commanders are uneasy and a nationalist coup is not impossible. Thus far Kassem has not been able to establish a strong government or end Iraq’s economic difficulties. His talks with Rountree have been cool.

   Secretary Herter said that Kassem was still reserved and suspicious; he was not apologetic for the bad reception of Rountree. He appears to believe the U.S. was behind the latest plot against him. The President said it might be good policy to help the UAR take over in Iraq. Nasser does not want to be dominated by the Kremlin. We should be

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apprehensive of Communist control of Iraq. Secretary Herter observed
that a Communist Iraq, working through Syria, might bring about the
breakup of the UAR. Nasser probably had this in mind when he told
Rountree that the U.S. and the UAR had a common intent in Iraq. The
President felt that we might be able to work closely with the UAR if it
were not for the Israeli problem.

Mr. Quarles thought the critical question was, what should your
policy in Iraq be? At one time we had seemed to favor Kassem; were we
now changing our appraisal of him and leaning to other personalities?
Mr. Dulles said there were no important civil political figures in Iraq. If
Kassem were replaced, some division commander in the Iraq Army
would probably be the replacement. We had felt that Kassem was pref-
erable to Col. Orif [Arif], who was not controllable.

The President said that since the Kremlin was our principal enemy,
he would propose cooperating with Nasser if we think he is restive at
the prospect of Kremlin domination. Mr. Dulles thought Nasser might
work with us in Iraq, but elsewhere, e.g., Africa, he is adopting the
Communist Party line. Secretary Herter believed Nasser would work with us
in Iran [Iraq]. He added that one school of thought believed Kassem was
not a Communist but a leader who feels he can control both the left and
the right.

Mr. Gray recalled that our policy toward Iraq as stated in the Near
East paper assumed that the Government of Iraq was one we could sup-
port. Perhaps the Planning Board should review the Iraq portion of the
paper.

[Here follows discussion of an unrelated matter.]

*The National Security Council:*¹

a. Noted and discussed an oral briefing by the Director of Central
   Intelligence on the subject, with specific reference to the Soviet request
   for Deputy Premier Mikoyan to visit the United States, and the situ-
   ations in Cuba, Communist China and Iraq.

b. Agreed that the NSC Planning Board should review the existing
   policy on Iraq, contained in NSC 5820/1.²

[Here follow agenda items 4–6.]

Marion W. Boggs

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¹ Paragraphs a and b constitute NSC Action No. 2021, approved by the President on
December 24. (Department of State, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records
of Action by the National Security Council)
² Document 51.
152. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, December 22, 1958, 2 p.m.

1921. Rome for Jernegan. Deptel 1605. I called on Prime Minister Qassim this morning in order to attempt to clear his mind of any suspicion US either officially or privately working against him.

I opened conversation by referring to statements he made to Rountree on this subject (Embtel 1885) and stated Prime Minister had appeared to be particularly concerned about reports of American activity along Iraq–Iran border and among Kurds. I recalled that Rountree had emphatically denied US working in any way against present Government of Iraq and that he had said there were elements in Iraq who would resort to every conceivable device to create trouble between US and Iraq. I went on to say that Prime Minister’s conversation with Rountree had been fully reported to USG and that complete and thorough investigation had been made of reports of alleged US activity against Iraqi Government. I said I was now in a position to state categorically that there never had been and are not now any activities within or outside Iraq being conducted by any American, official or private, against the GOI.

Prime Minister said he was glad to hear this and wanted US–Iraqi relations to become increasingly strong and he would work to that end. We could be confident he would be on his guard against any elements desiring to make trouble between our two countries. He said perhaps some activities he had in mind had been undertaken by “private American groups” but in any event now that we had renewed assurances on subject he was confident any activity which had been carried on against his government would cease.

I returned to charge and said USG had thoroughly investigated reports and was completely satisfied no such activities had been carried out or are now in process. With that Qassim dropped matter and made further general remarks about his wish to consolidate relations with Iraq’s old friends and particularly US.

Fritzlan

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 611.87/12–2258. Top Secret; Limit Distribution. Repeated to Rome. Jernegan was en route to Iraq.

1 In telegram 1605, December 16, the Department informed Rountree that it had made a thorough check [text not declassified] in Washington and had been assured that “no activities inimical Qassim regime have been or are being undertaken at the direction of any American, official or private.” (Ibid., 611.87/12–1658)

2 Presumably the reference is to Document 150. Telegram 1885 from Baghdad, December 16, does not contain an account of Rountree’s discussion with Qassim. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.56/12–1658)


U.S. POLICY TOWARD IRAQ (NSC 5820/1)¹

I. Major Factors in the Situation

A. Available intelligence indicates the Kassem regime in Iraq may be (1) in danger of falling under early Communist domination or (2) that an effort may be made to take over control through possible action by Army elements having a possible pro-UAR orientation. Either development would have serious implications for U.S. policy toward Iraq and toward the Near East generally as stated in NSC 5820/1.

B. If the Communists succeed in taking over, such a development would negate (1) one of our two primary objectives—"denial of the area to Soviet domination" (Para. 5-a) and (2) two of our secondary objectives—"promotion of stable governments, popularly supported and resistant to Communist influence and subversion" and "the countering and reduction of Communist influence" in the area. (Para. 6-c and e)

C. It is, therefore, appropriate to ask whether the situation is moving beyond that envisaged in Para. 39-a, c and d wherein we envisaged a normalization of relations with the Iraqi Government established by the July 14 coup?

II. Possible Policy Questions

A. Should the U.S. seek an area of mutual accommodation with Nasser regarding Iraq as authorized by Para. 36-b? If this were done, the inconsistencies with Para. 36-c relating to taking discreet advantage of trends in the area which might render less likely further expansion of Nasser's position should be recognized. Has the situation in Iraq reached the point where this should be discussed with Nasser? If so, how could U.S.-UAR influence best be brought to bear in the present situation? Are there military or political leaders available in Iraq who could work with the U.S. and UAR in such a situation? What degree of UAR-Iraqi cooperation would ultimately be envisaged? Would the ultimate results of such U.S.-UAR cooperation be favorable to long-term U.S. interests in the Near East?

¹Source: Department of State, S/P–NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Iraq, The Situation, NSC Action No. 2068. Top Secret. Boggs transmitted this paper to the Planning Board under cover of a memorandum to the Board, December 19. Prepared by the NSC Staff and discussed and revised at the NSC Planning Board meeting of December 19.

¹Document 51.
B. Is there an identifiable source of strength in Iraq which is not pro-UAR and not pro-Communist with which the U.S. could work? What are the chances that military elements and others such as the non-Communist nationalists, landowners and merchants might be able to band together to control the situation in Iraq's national interest, as opposed to seeing the country delivered either to the Communists or to Nasser?

C. Having moved to crush the pro-Nasser elements, is it possible that Kassem may now turn on the Communists? If so, what elements can he look to for support, short of the UAR?

D. If it is not feasible to work with Nasser or with non-Communist elements in Iraq, should we as a last resort consider other moves, [1 line of source text not declassified]? What role should the U.S. and UK play in such a case? What are the dangers of active Soviet involvement?

III. Subsidiary Questions

A. Given sufficient time, what should our attitude be toward extension of technical assistance and military aid to Iraq? (Para. 39-a and c) Have events shown that the presence of U.S. technicians only incites trouble and is such aid more likely to accelerate a Communist take-over? Should we, nevertheless, continue such aid "in a low key" pending developments rather than precipitate possible unfavorable repercussions through abrupt termination?

B. How should we respond to any future request for military grant aid or for the purchase of military equipment? (We are currently processing pre-coup purchase requests for approximately $750,000 worth of spare parts and a recent request to purchase 200 mine detectors. Delivery action has been suspended on approximately nine million dollars worth of previously programmed military grant aid.) Could such aid be used to obtain a favorable orientation by Army leaders?

C. Should our policy toward Iraq's membership in the Baghdad Pact (Para. 39-b) (1) remain unchanged; (2) should we now do what we can to actively encourage Iraq's withdrawal from the Pact; or, (3) should we encourage Iraq to resume active exercise of its membership?
154. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree) to Acting Secretary of State Dillon


SUBJECT

NSC Consideration of United States Policy Toward Iraq

Discussion of this subject at the December 23 meeting\(^1\) will be directed toward the question of whether the situation in Iraq is moving beyond that envisaged in paragraph 39 of our current policy paper (NSC 5820/1).\(^2\) The information currently available to us indicates that the growth of Communist influence in the Qassim government has been of such rapidity and extensiveness as to cause serious alarm both to non-Communist nationalists in Iraq and to the United Arab Republic. Apart from the formal question of whether or not the language of paragraph 39 as it now stands is sufficiently comprehensive and flexible or should be amended to reflect more explicitly the developing situation in Iraq, there are also substantive questions of the first magnitude to be explored in the immediate future. The basic question is whether the situation in Iraq, both in itself and in its possible implications for the Near East as a whole, is such as to make it advisable to seek an area of mutual accommodation with Nasser regarding Iraq. Related questions are (1) whether there are elements in Iraq which are neither pro-Communist nor pro-United Arab Republic with which the United States could work; (2) whether it is still possible that Qassim may turn on the Communists, and [2-1/2 lines of source text not declassified].

The Prospect in Iraq

It is the Department’s view, on the basis of the admittedly incomplete information now at our disposal, that the Communists in Iraq with Soviet advice and assistance have reached a serious position of strength. Qassim, however, has shown no inclination to move against the Communists. His open reliance upon Communist support strongly suggests either (1) that he is the dupe or willing tool of the Communists or (2) that he is fearful that he will be forced to share or ultimately relinquish power if he calls upon the army and/or other nationalist

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Source: Department of State, S/S–NSC Files: Lot 63 D 351, NSC 5820 Memoranda.
Top Secret. Drafted by Lakeland.
\(^1\) See Document 155.
\(^2\) Document 51.
elements for help in suppressing the Communists. Qassim appears also
to be convinced that the United States is working against him with the
Kurds, primarily through Iran. Furthermore, his knowledge that the
United Arab Republic has been intriguing against him has probably so
emittered him toward the United Arab Republic that he may be un-
willing to move against the Communists as long as they continue to
maintain their anti-UAR line. In short, even assuming he is not a Com-
unist or dupe of the Communists, we see little prospect of Qassim’s
moving effectively to stem the growth of Communist strength.

Given Qassim’s apparent willingness to lend his prestige as a na-
tionalist hero to the Communist game in Iraq, any opposition elements
which might be tempted to seek Western support or assistance would
immediately be discredited as “imperialist agents.” Under the circum-
stances and despite the apparent defeat of Abd-al-Salaam Arif and the
Ba’thist proponents of immediate union with the United Arab Republic,
Nasser is the only acceptable source of outside support left to Iraqi Na-
tionalist elements who may wish to move against the present regime.
Even his capabilities in Iraq appear circumscribed, however, and the re-
cent discovery by Qassim of a plot in which the United Arab Republic
obviously has a hand will clearly make any future attempts at a counter-
coup more difficult. If Nasser were to exert a decisive influence on
events in Iraq, it would point up the divergence of purpose between
Communism and Arab nationalism.

Any intervention by Turkey, Iran, or even Jordan would be re-
sented and opposed by a majority of the Iraqi people and would be
viewed as Western-instigated aggression. Even if it did not provoke So-
viet counter-action, such a move could bring no more than a short-lived
check to the course of events in Iraq and would probably have the long-
range effect of strengthening Communism in the Arab world and per-
manently alienating Arab nationalist sentiment from the West. Any
move to intervene forcibly in Iraq would, moreover, be bound to pro-
voke sharp condemnation by the UN.

Implications of a pro-Nasser Coup in Iraq

The implications of a successful coup against Qassim’s government
in Iraq would, of course, depend to a considerable extent on the degree
of influence which Nasser was able to exert on the successor regime. We
consider it inevitable that any such regime will be more pro-UAR than
the present one. On the other hand, there is little reason to believe that
the Iraqis would throw themselves into Nasser’s arms completely as the
Syrians did. One possible result would be a loose federal tie, perhaps on
the model of the United Arab Republic [States] (UAR plus Yemen). An-
other distinct possibility is that nothing more than close cooperation and
alignment of policy without any formal tie would ensue.
The principal Western interest in Iraq (apart from denying the area to the USSR) is oil. Enhanced influence in Iraq would probably enable Nasser to obtain the diversion of some Iraqi oil revenue to development outside the country, but he would not be likely to press for measures which would result in cutting off the income from oil. Gaining a position of increased influence in Iraq, would, however, enhance Nasser’s prospects of squeezing development capital out of Kuwait and the Gulf shaikhdoms and would bring added pressure on Saudi Arabia. (The British are particularly worried by this danger, although there are those including some Britishers who maintain that only through the establishment of at least a loose UAR hegemony is there any hope of achieving a more rational use of oil revenues in the area.) Against this likelihood must be weighed the longer-range implications of the possibility of the achievement by political subversion of the long-cherished Soviet goal of domination of the Persian Gulf area if Communist influence in Iraq is not arrested.

*The Outlook for and Probable Consequences of Cooperation with Nasser in Iraq*

There has been mounting evidence that Nasser’s concern over the trend of events in Iraq is leading him to seek an understanding with us that would enable him to risk a confrontation with the Soviets in the issue of communism versus Arab nationalism. Nasser’s recent conversation with Assistant Secretary Rountree had all the earmarks of a scarcely-veiled invitation to collaborate on Iraq. He is currently purchasing PL 480 wheat from us and has just concluded a contract with Caltex for the supply of all of Egypt’s petroleum imports during the coming year. The UAR and pro-Nasser press have begun to write openly of the dangers of communism for the Arab world. There is clearly an awareness on Nasser’s part of a shift in Soviet policy toward the Near East—a decision to pursue Soviet ends through other means than working with Nasser. It is evident that the ground has been laid for exploration of the possibilities with Nasser if we wish to take that step.

In considering the feasibility and desirability of seeking an accommodation with Nasser on Iraq, we must not lose sight of the fact that there are a great many difficulties inherent in such a course—e.g., public attitudes in this country; reactions of allied and friendly governments; unresolved problems such as the Palestine issue, the future of Jordan and the role of Lebanon; US-UAR differences in Africa, etc. It is not possible either for us or for Nasser to tackle the whole range of problems at once in order to clear the way for an understanding on Iraq. Any accommodation regarding Iraq would, therefore, have to be in the nature of a

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3 Telegram 1797 from Cairo, December 15, reported on Rountree’s and Nasser’s conversation on the night of December 14. For text, see vol. XIII, pp. 505–509.
limited experiment, the success or failure of which would probably have a profound effect upon the future course of our relations with Nasser and our relationship with the phenomenon known as Arab Nationalism.

**Recommended Position**

It is recommended that you take a position along the following lines at the NSC meeting of December 23:

1. The questions which have been put to the NSC are of extreme gravity and bear, of course, most directly upon the implementation of the new policy toward the area. We believe they should certainly be the key considerations in our continuing close observations of the Iraq situation and of actions which it may be possible for the United States to take.

2. We believe this is a period which requires a maximum degree of flexibility to explore the situation in Iraq with other interested parties, including the United Arab Republic. Nasser is undoubtedly worried about the situation, and while our general reservations concerning any direct relationship with him on such a problem remain, we believe we should, without making any commitments, explore his views and those of his immediate entourage on the Iraqi situation. In view of Nasser's obvious concern over the domestic Communist activities in Iraq, we believe discussions of the matter with him to be thoroughly consistent with our objective of denying the area to Soviet domination. We would prefer to reserve for the present any recommendations on whether action by Nasser or in concert with him should be encouraged.

3. We hope to explore the Iraq situation on an urgent basis with the Secretary upon his return. We will also wish to keep in touch with the UK, with Hussein in Jordan, with the Turks and Iranians and the Saudi Arabs.

4. The impression of the Department is that the situation in Iraq at the moment is one of extreme delicacy in which the die has not been cast definitely in any single direction. At such a period, we believe the utmost of caution should be exercised in suggesting any moves by outside powers, by the West and the Western-oriented nations in the area as well as by the UAR.

5. We are keeping constantly under consideration such matters as our existing and future technical assistance to Iraq and Iraq’s likely future under the Baghdad Pact. For the present, we believe any abrupt change in our present direction would not be helpful to our position in Iraq.
Memorandum of Discussion at the 392d Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1–4.]

5. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security

[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

Turning to the Middle East, Mr. Dulles reported that Kassem was increasingly dependent on the local Communists, even though other Iraqi officials assert that strong measures against the Communists are imminent. The Army commanders in the south may move against Kassem if he permits the Communists to acquire greater power.

[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

6. U.S. Policy Toward Iraq (NSC 5820/1, par. 39;¹ NSC Action No. 2021–b²)

Mr. Gray briefed the Council on this subject. (A copy of Mr. Gray’s Briefing Note is filed in the Minutes of the Meeting and another copy is attached to this Memorandum).³ At the conclusion of his briefing, Mr. Gray called on Secretary Herter for an oral report by the Department of State on the situation in Iraq. Secretary Herter said that Mr. William Rountree, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, who had just returned from a trip to Iraq and the Near East, would give the report.

Mr. Rountree said that, preparatory to his trip to the Near East, he had made two trips to New York for talks with Iraqi and UAR officials to determine their views on his proposed trip, which they welcomed. The trip was actually a routine one but was highly publicized over the Soviet radio, and in Iraq, where the Iraqi Communist Party issued pamphlets charging a plot. Mr. Rountree found the atmosphere in Lebanon good, possibly because Lebanon had just been given $10 million in aid. His talks with Lebanese officials were frank and friendly and the Eisenhower Doctrine was not mentioned. There appeared to be some sense of relief that we were not trying to sell a new policy of open alignment with the West. Progress is being made in Lebanon, Mr. Rountree believed. The behavior of the U.S. forces in Lebanon had made a great impression.

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¹ Document 51.
² See footnote 1, Document 151.
³ Attached but not printed.
From Lebanon Mr. Rountree had journeyed to Jordan. He had been very much impressed with the Prime Minister and found the King and the Prime Minister deeply troubled about the future of Jordan. Jordan may take unwise action in associating with neighbor states. [3 lines of source text not declassified] Jordan is burdened with heavy military expenditures, [2 lines of source text not declassified]. Communist propaganda at this time was directed against a Kassem–Nasser rapprochement and against a Kassem–U.S. rapprochement. The build-up of propaganda against him (Mr. Rountree) as a plotter reached new heights just before he entered the country and cast considerable doubt on the wisdom of his going on to Iraq. The safety of U.S. citizens in Iraq is precarious.

In Cairo, talks with officials were critical but friendly. Cairo is worried about Communism in Iraq and Syria. While there has been public recognition in the press of the dangers of Communism, this is the first time there had been apparent official recognition of it. Mr. Rountree had taken the line that the U.S. wanted to establish confidence and good relations with the UAR. The Caltex and Shell Oil agreements were also discussed. There is an indication that Cairo is at last prepared to do something about Communism in the UAR. There is a conflict of interest in Iraq between the UAR and the Soviet Union.

In Iraq, Mr. Rountree had received a violent reception and the army had to take over. Outside the entrance to the airport demonstrators plastered his car and there were crowds of demonstrators all along the road. These demonstrations were violent; not the work of schoolboys. The Embassy is well-guarded, however. After the first demonstrations, there was no more trouble. The meeting with Kassem was ruined by a previous meeting of the Soviet Ambassador with Kassem. Mr. Rountree found the building filled with machine guns, all pointed in his direction. Kassem was tense and worried and apologized for Mr. Rountree’s reception. He attributed it to the Iraqis’ belief that the U.S. was plotting against Iraqi interests. Kassem believed some stories against the U.S. but not all of them. He was particularly concerned about a U.S. plot with the Kurds and despite all protests by Mr. Rountree, continued to believe there is such a plot. Three battalions were assigned to police Mr. Rountree’s departure and there was no trouble. Mr. Rountree believed the Communists over-extended themselves in these demonstrations and had created concern in Iraq over Communist activities. Mr. Rountree in his talks with cabinet officials had found them gloomy but aware of the Communist problem. However, Kassem must accept some Communist support or stand alone against Nasser. The Communists were worried about the reaction of the Near East to these demonstrations. The Arabs are becoming aroused to the real danger, i.e., to the fact that it is not colonialism but Communism.
The President thanked Mr. Rountree for a good account of the situation in Iraq and thought the trip must have been an exciting one. He said that when he was at SHAPE, demonstrations had been threatened against him while he was in Rome and Paris but military protection had been too good.

The Vice President said he had been impressed by Mr. Rountree’s account of the behavior of U.S. troops in Lebanon and thought a fine story could and should be written about this, in Readers’ Digest or The Saturday Evening Post perhaps.

Mr. Gray said that in view of the lateness of the hour, he would like to invite Mr. Rountree to a subsequent Planning Board Meeting, where the situation could be further discussed in connection with the Planning Board’s review of U.S. policy toward Iraq.

The National Security Council:  

a. Noted and discussed an oral report by the Department of State on recent developments in the Near East with particular reference to the situation in Iraq.

b. Noted that the NSC Planning Board would consult with Assistant Secretary of State Rountree in its review of existing policy on Iraq, pursuant to Council action at its last meeting.

[Here follows agenda item 7.]

Marion W. Boggs

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4 Paragraphs a and b constitute NSC Action No. 2030, approved by the President on December 30. (Department of State, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)

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156. Editorial Note

On December 23 at 11:10 a.m., President Eisenhower met with Vice President Nixon, Acting Secretary Herter, and Assistant Secretary Rountree. Rountree briefed the President on his discussions with Nasser in Cairo, especially Nasser’s concern over Communist influence with Qassim and Nasser’s belief that the United States and the United Arab Republic could cooperate in curbing Communist influence in Iraq. Rountree suggested sending Nasser a message recounting Rountree’s visit to Iraq and indicating that the question of cooperation in Iraq had been raised with the President in an “off-the-record” meeting. A message along these lines was sent to Cairo as telegram 1858, December 23. (Department of State, Central Files, 611.86B/12–1558) John Eisenhower’s account of this meeting is printed in volume XIII, pages 509–511.
157. Memorandum of Discussion at the 393d Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda item 1.]

2. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security

[Here follows discussion of an unrelated matter.]

Turning to the situation in Iraq, Mr. Allen Dulles pointed out that a new conspiracy might be underway there to overthrow Qasim and his pro-Communist supporters. This conspiracy was probably influenced by Nasser [4 lines of source text not declassified]. Mr. Dulles said that we are inclined rather to doubt the possibility that this coup would actually be carried out. Meanwhile, however, some cabinet members have expressed concern about Qasim’s heavy reliance on Communist support. [3-1/2 lines of source text not declassified] however, had been lifted somewhat by Qasim’s speech on January 14 which warned pro-Communist elements in Iraq to curb their actions.

Secretary Dulles confirmed that the most recent U.K. estimates on developments in Iraq were somewhat less pessimistic.¹

Secretary Dulles then indicated that President Nasser was continuing to round up leading Communists and pro-Communists within the borders of the United Arab Republic. Nasser seemed confident that he could carry out these moves because even though the Communists had been curbed in the UAR, the Soviet Union had proceeded to sign the agreement with the UAR on the building of the Aswan high dam. Nevertheless, the most aggressive anti-Communist steps that Nasser had taken had been taken since the signature of this agreement. Mr. Dulles promised later to brief the Council in detail on the whole picture on developments respecting the Aswan high dam.

Secretary Anderson noted that back in October of this [last] year Erhard had discussed with him a proposal by the Japanese to join the West Germans in putting up money to start the Aswan high dam. Anderson had told Erhard in answer to a question that we ourselves had carefully studied the costs of building the Aswan high dam and that the total outlay was very high indeed. Erhard doubted that his government would participate at all in a project for building the Aswan high dam and would certainly not agree to do so with the Japanese.

¹Reported in telegram 3618 from London, January 13. (Department of State, Central Files, 767.00/1-1359)
Secretary Dulles said that he wished to comment on Mr. Allen Dulles's statements about Iraq. He said that he was aware of Mr. Gray's concern about the situation in that country, a concern which all of us of course shared. The situation in Iraq, he said, was very complicated indeed. In the early stages the U.K. had actually warned Prime Minister Qasim of a plot against him under the influence of Nasser. This U.K. move did not ingratiate the British with Nasser. We had had the same information about the plot that the British had but we did not pass this information to Iraq. Consequently, we stand at the moment in a better position than the U.K. in Nasser's eyes. Nevertheless, at the moment we felt that it is essential to keep our hands off Iraq. We were simply not sufficiently sophisticated to mix into this complicated situation as yet but we were watching the situation almost daily. Secretary Dulles added that he did not think that any NSC action was called for at present or that there was any need to review existing U.S. policy on Iraq as of now. Nevertheless, he felt that the NSC should know of the complications of the situation in Iraq and should be aware that we are following the situation very closely. Obviously the potentialities would be extremely serious if the Communists did secure control over Iraq especially as regards the position of Iran.

Mr. Gray pointed out that the NSC Planning Board, in its concern about Iraq, merely wanted to be sure that if events moved very quickly in that country, we would not prevent Nasser from moving promptly to counter Communist gains. Secretary Dulles added that certainly Nasser was the lesser of two evils from the point of view of the U.S.

The President said that we should presently have to decide just how far we wanted to play along with Nasser. Secretary Dulles replied that after all we had moved considerably of late in the direction of playing with Nasser. While relations had thus improved between the U.S. and the UAR, we could not of course give carte blanche approval to everything that Nasser does and everything that he wanted. The President agreed but expressed anxiety about a Kurdish uprising and a Communist move thereafter to take over control of Iraq. If this were to occur, the result would be to outflank both Iran and Turkey and to provide the Soviets with their long-desired land bridge to the Middle East.

Secretary Dulles pointed out that after the fall of the government of Nuri Said, the U.S. had relatively few remaining assets in Iraq. Secretary Dulles contended that at the moment there was nothing much we could do but that we must carefully avoid appearing to meddle in the situation in Iraq, an action which was sure to be counter-productive at this stage. The President replied that what he had
meant was what encouragement or what money we might be able to
give Nasser back in Cairo and not intervention by ourselves in Iraq.

Mr. Allen Dulles pointed out that President Nasser was a kind of
conspiratorial fellow. Accordingly, it might be useful to send a lower
level envoy to talk over matters with him frankly. The President con-
cluded the discussion by stating his view that this seemed to be a case of
whether we decided to support a baby-faced Dillinger or an Al Capone.
Certainly, said the President, he could not think of anything concrete
that sounded useful at the moment.

The National Security Council: 2

a. Noted and discussed an oral briefing by the Director of Central
Intelligence on the subject, with specific reference to recent develop-
ments in Cambodia, Laos and Iraq, and the continuing anti-Communist
measures by Nasser in the United Arab Republic.
b. Discussed the implications for U.S. Policy Toward the Near East
(NSC 5820/1) 3 of increasing Communist influence in the Iraqi Govern-
ment; and agreed that all responsible departments and agencies should
explore all feasible measures, including possible actions under para-
graph 36 [39] of NSC 5820/1, to prevent Communist control of Iraq.

Note: The action in b above, as approved by the President, subse-
sequently circulated to all holders of NSC 5820/1 for information and
guidance.
[Here follow agenda items 3–5.]

S. Everett Gleason

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2 Paragraphs a and b and the Note that follows constitute NSC Action No. 2033, ap-
proved by the President on January 19. (Ibid., S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95,
Records of Action by the National Security Council)
3 Document 51.

158. Editorial Note

At the 395th Meeting of the National Security Council, January 29,
Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles briefed the Council on
“Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security.” Dulles’
briefing included the following information and comment by Secretary
Dulles:

"Turning to the Middle East, Mr. Dulles stated that the Iraqi Prime
Minister had asked the United Kingdom for a very substantial quantity
of modern armaments—aircraft, tanks, anti-aircraft artillery, and howitzers. The U.K. authorities were not sure that this request was serious and if it were how they should respond to it. They might well ask our advice and may expect us to pay the bill.

"At this point Secretary Dulles interrupted to point out that there was an organized campaign from Israel in this country whose object was to check any rapprochement between Nasser and the U.S. Apparently supporters of this campaign would rather see Iraq taken over by the Communists than controlled by Nasser." (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, January 29; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

159. Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Rockwell) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree)


SUBJECT
Iraqi Cabinet Reorganization

Observations

1. Nationalist Defeat. The six Ministers who resigned were either nationalists or independents.¹ They were all anti-Communist. For several months they have been wanting to resign. One month ago they took new courage, however, when they got Qassim to issue the decree curbing the PRF.² This brief rejuvenation of spirits terminated abruptly last week, possibly when the Cabinet became aware of a "vast" Soviet technical aid program, the details of which have still not been made public. The six Ministers undoubtedly opposed the deal with the Soviets.

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¹ The six ministers who submitted their resignations on February 7 were Foreign Minister Jomard, Communications Minister Ali Baba Ali, Social Affairs Minister Naji Talib, Health Minister Mahmoud, Guidance Minister Shanshal, and Minister of State Rikabi. (Telegram 2267 from Baghdad, February 7; ibid., 787.00/2-759)

² On January 14, Qassim officially assigned maintenance of security, order, and safety to the army and security forces and specifically restricted the activities of the Popular Resistance Force and student unions in these areas. The PRF had been a principal political weapon of the Communist Party of Iraq and Communist influence was dominant in Iraq's student union. (Principal Officer's Daily Summary, PODST 44; ibid., 700.00-CSM/1-1559)
2. Chaderchi’s Key Role. The six Ministers probably hoped that their resignation “en masse” would produce a “show-down” and in some way force Qassim to alter Iraq’s pro-Soviet policy. They even may have hoped the Qassim Government would fall. Had the National Democratic Party, headed by Kamel Chaderchi, joined the nationalist revolt, Qassim would have been left with scarcely any civilian support and he might have been in real trouble. Chaderchi after discussions with Qassim continued his support of Qassim. NDP Ministers, including Mohammed Hadid, remained in the Cabinet and the new civilian members of the Cabinet are political friends of Chaderchi. The NDP is not Communist but until the present it has seen little harm in collaborating with the Communists.

3. New Ministers. As with Qassim’s first Cabinet, little is known about the new individuals. Some impressions:

a. Hashim Jawad, new Foreign Minister, is a former ILO veteran. His recall by Nuri as Iraq’s UN representative in 1957 for supporting Soviet-backed Syria against Turkey was followed by his being named UN representative by Qassim last July. He left UN after UNGA last fall a very unhappy man. Apparently, he had differences with Foreign Minister Jomard. He also was very bitter against the United States, charging that the UN was completely dominated by the U.S. He has recently drawn closer to Chaderchi. He will be more influential and aggressive than was Jomard.

b. Hussein Jamil, new Guidance Minister, was formerly a nationalist but more recently has been aligned with Chaderchi and the NDP. He served for several years as President of the Baghdad Lawyers Association which usually follows the Commie line.

c. Talaat Sheibani, Development Minister, is probably a bad actor from our standpoint. He reportedly went to college in California and apparently is one of those foreign students who turned very sour in our country. He is young, left here only three years ago or so. It is interesting that he holds the Development portfolio. Thus he and Ibrahim Kubba, the Economics Minister still in the Cabinet, are in a position to swing more economic and technical aid deals to the Soviets.

d. Hussein Talabani, new Public Works Minister, is a Baghdad Law College graduate of about 15 years ago. He is a Kurd and obviously the replacement for disgruntled Baba Ali.

e. Military Members. The new military officer Ministers are for the most part unknown quantities, although Adnan Pachachi has indicated Abdul Wahhab Amin is pro-Communist.

Highly Tentative Conclusions

1. Unfavorable Turn. The Iraqi Cabinet reshuffle is a serious development. Strongly anti-Communist Ministers have been eliminated and the way seems cleared for further increases of Communist influence in Iraq.
2. Possible Restraints. Hopes for restraining the Communist trend in Iraq have received a serious set-back. Any resistance to increasing Communist influence would probably have to come from:

a. Nationalists. Even though last week’s “show-down” failed, it can be assumed that Iraqi nationalist elements will be seeking an opportunity to precipitate the downfall of the Qassim Government. Shanshal, Jomard, Rikabi and Samara\u0101 (who probably will lose his job as Ambassador in Cairo) will undoubtedly try to organize an opposition movement, based largely on the Istiq\u011fl and Baathist parties. They can be expected to submerge their differences re Iraq’s relations with the UAR. Their task is now more difficult than ever.

b. The Army. It is still believed that a majority of senior army officers are anti-Communist nationalists. Some of them certainly would be willing to collaborate with civilian nationalists to remove Qassim, although thus far they have not come forward.

c. National Democratic Party. While liberal, socialistic and extremely naïve vis-à-vis Communism, the NDP as the only remaining civilian faction represented in the Cabinet may exercise some restraint on the Communists. There has been some indication recently that Finance Minister Hadid (a capitalist himself) and other NDP members have had some doubts about Iraq’s increasingly close relationship with the Soviet Bloc and they may find it expedient to be responsive to the anti-Communist sentiments, not only of their chief rivals, the nationalists, who will now be in open opposition, but also of much of Iraq’s populace.

d. Qassim himself. It is still not proven that Qassim is pro-Communist. His close advisors, however, have been and Qassim appears to be captive to them. These include Abdul Qadir Ismail who may well be the Khalid Bagdah of Iraq.

3. UAR Attitude. The Iraqi Cabinet change was also a serious blow to Nasser in that his friends, the nationalists, were defeated and Arab Communists, increasingly identified as his enemies, have succeeded. Thus it is entirely likely that the UAR may more aggressively intervene in Iraq against the Qassim regime: a) by propaganda attacks, and b) by material subversive assistance to the nationalists.

160. Editorial Note

At the 396th Meeting of the National Security Council on February 12, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles briefed the Council on “Significant Developments Affecting U.S. Security.” Included in that report was the following assessment of the new cabinet in Iraq:

“Turning to the situation in Iraq, Mr. Dulles said that the recent changes in the make-up of the Cabinet in that country had not come as a
surprise despite the selection of ten new Cabinet ministers. There were, he said, differing views as to the significance of the change among ourselves, between ourselves and the British, and perhaps even between the intelligence community and the U.S. Ambassador in Iraq. Was this or was it not a move in the direction of the Left or in the direction of Communist control of Iraq? There were in any case many Iraqis who feel that the point has now been reached when they must make a choice between Nasserism and Communism. On the other hand, as individuals the new ministers themselves were not so bad. In the intelligence community, however, we do think that the trend represented by these Cabinet changes was slightly in the Communist direction. As for Nasser, he did not really seem to know what to do about what was happening in Iraq.” (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

161. Special National Intelligence Estimate


THE COMMUNIST THREAT TO IRAQ

The Problem

To estimate prospective developments in Iraq over the next few months and their implications for Western interests in the Middle East.

Conclusions

1. Iraq is the scene of a determined and so far effective Communist drive toward power. Prime Minister Kassim may be a Communist, though we think it more likely that he is an Iraqi nationalist who believes he needs Communist support to protect himself against the designs of the UAR and the Western Powers. Whatever his desires, we doubt his ability to stem the movement toward a Communist takeover of his regime, and we believe that his area for maneuver is shrinking rapidly. (Paras. 6–11)

Source: Department of State, OCB Files: Lot 61 D 385, Iraq Documents, Secret. A note on the cover sheet indicates that this special estimate, submitted by the CIA, was prepared by the CIA, INR, the intelligence organizations of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Joint Staff, and the Director of the National Security Agency. All members of the USIB concurred with this estimate on February 17 except the representatives of the AEC and FBI and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, who abstained on the grounds that the subject was outside their jurisdiction.
2. Many politically conscious Iraqis are beginning to see that Kassim’s policy of co-operation with the Communists involves threats to Iraqi independence and to their own interests. Only the army has the capability for effective action against the Kassim regime. However, potential opposition—both civilian and military—to the present trend is unorganized, leaderless, and unlikely to take action unless given stimulus by Nasser, who wields considerable influence as the symbol of Arab nationalism. (Paras. 11–13, 16)

3. We believe that Nasser will seek by all means at his disposal to bring about a counterrevolutionary move in Iraq, even if it involves serious risk of damaging his relations with the Soviets, and that he will be prepared to accept at least provisionally an independent Iraqi nationalist regime. (Paras. 17–18)

4. We do not believe that the Soviets, at present, consider their interests or prestige so heavily involved in the Iraqi situation that they would accept the risks and disadvantages involved in any overt intervention to block a nationalist counterrevolution against Kassim. If they saw such a move coming, however, they would be likely to step up their efforts and their timetable. If as time goes on, growing Communist power in Iraq should involve heavier Soviet commitments to the Iraqi regime, the Bloc would become increasingly disposed to accept the risks of responding to requests for assistance in maintaining a pro-Communist regime in power. (Para. 27)

5. Communist initiatives in Iraq, whether or not they succeed in consolidating control there, are likely to increase Arab suspicions of the Soviets and might bring about a more genuine neutrality. A successful counterrevolutionary move, however, would probably not change basic Pan-Arab nationalist policies toward the West. (Paras. 21, 28)

Discussion

I. The Present Situation

6. Iraq is the scene of a determined and so far effective Communist drive toward power. This drive threatens important US interests: the maintenance of assured Western access to Middle East oil, the denial of the area to Soviet control, and the security and stability of non-Communist governments in the area as a whole. The Iraqi situation has already reshaped many of the issues which dominate the Middle East scene, for it poses new and critical problems not only for the West, but for Iran and other states in the area.

7. After seven months in power, Prime Minister Kassim remains something of an enigma even to a number of Iraqis who have been associated with him in the revolutionary government. There is no conclusive evidence that Kassim is himself a Communist or disposed to turn Iraq
over to Soviet domination, and he continues to profess a philosophy of ardent Arab nationalism, opposition to foreign influence, and dedication to the ideas of Iraqi independence and of "positive neutralism." He has made a few anti-Communist gestures, and has left certain key internal security posts, e.g., the Ministry of the Interior, in the hands of anti-Communists.

8. At the same time, Kassim has shown himself unwilling or unable to take effective action against the steady drive of the Iraqi Communists and their Soviet backers to consolidate a growing position of power within the country and the government. He has resisted repeated demands by senior army officers for a crackdown on local Communists. He continues to countenance the presence in a number of key positions of men who are probably Communists, for example his own chief aide and the Director of Broadcasting. Some important ministries have been infiltrated by known Communists. Iraqi representatives at inter-Arab and Afro-Asian conferences have consistently advocated actions beneficial to the USSR and opposed to the interests of both Pan-Arabism and the West. Kassim has done little about the manifest ability of the Communists to use "the street" in organized mob demonstrations and mass pressure tactics. And when confronted in early February with the group resignation of six anti-Communist civilian cabinet ministers—some of them recognized opposition figures of long standing—he replaced them with men less friendly toward Nasser and no more likely than their predecessors to pose effective resistance to the Communists.

9. Although Kassim may be a Communist moving deliberately to advance Soviet control of Iraq without risking the adverse repercussions of a sudden takeover, we think it more likely that his course of action has been dictated by other motives and circumstances. There is evidence that he is a neurotic and unstable individual; that he is lacking in qualities of decisiveness and leadership; and that he is prey to fears for his regime and his own position in it. In particular, Kassim has probably been genuinely concerned about the dangers of UAR and US interference in Iraq. Iraqi Communists, working through such channels as the Communist-infiltrated National Democratic Party, have assiduously exploited Kassim's fears and his need for support and assurance.

10. Whatever Kassim's private attitude toward the Communists and their sympathizers, the net effect of his conduct has been to increase their power and opportunities until they are now the most effective and unified political organization in the country. We believe it likely that Kassim still feels that he is in control and is using the Communists for his own purposes, but we have little confidence in his ability to free himself from dependence upon them even if he should elect to try.

11. Non-Communist nationalist elements are still far more numerous in Iraq than the Communists and their sympathizers, but they are on
the defensive and their prevailing mood appears to be one of uncertainty and growing frustration. Many prominent civilian and military figures have been jailed. The recent mass resignation of anti-Communist cabinet ministers may have been undertaken in the hope of forcing Kassim to take action to reverse present trends, but it is equally possible that the move was made out of sheer despair. An increasing number of groups in Iraq are beginning to perceive the threat that the Communists pose to their particular interests. This includes both secular nationalist and religious groups. There is a beginning awareness of Kassim’s growing dependence upon the Communists and the threat this poses to Iraqi independence. Even the hitherto Communist-collaborating National Democratic Party—the last civilian backers of Kassim—shows signs of fearing the Communist thrust for power and may part company with the Iraqi Communist Party. We believe, however, that the civilian opposition lacks the organization and leadership necessary to take any effective initiative against Kassim and his Communist allies.

12. The Iraqi public—generally favorable to the revolution and still strongly influenced by Nasser—is divided and uncertain, reflecting the conflicting forces at play in the country. The Pan-Arab Baath Party retains some ability to call out demonstrators, but the Communists are showing increasing superiority in influencing “the street.” Much will depend upon whether Iraqi nationalists can muster public support before the Communists succeed in discrediting them, by accusing them of playing into the hands of Nasser and the “imperialists.”

13. Although we have only limited information about the political orientation of the army, we believe that it constitutes the chief potential source of resistance to the trends prevailing under Kassim’s government. Most of the officer corps is almost certainly nationalist in sympathy, and while some Communist penetration of the armed forces has probably taken place—attracting at least a certain number of opportunists—the great majority of officers remain non-Communist or anti-Communist. However, Kassim’s regime has bid for the sympathy of the officer corps by supplying the armed forces with impressive amounts of Soviet equipment and by liberal pay and promotion policies. Like the civilian nationalists, however, the army leaders will probably move, if at all, only if given some stimulus to action, some guidance and some assurance of outside support. In the meantime, the army’s capability for action against the Kassim government and the Communists is being steadily undermined by Kassim’s systematic reshuffling of assignments and by his creation of a new division of selected units presumably designed for the protection of the government.
II. Prospective Developments

14. We do not believe that the Communists plan a sudden coup or a forceful seizure of power. In our opinion they would prefer to move gradually toward actual control of Iraq, seeking to take over strategic positions and groups one by one, but leaving an ostensibly independent regime. In particular, we believe that they would not attempt a final consolidation of power until they have successfully penetrated or neutralized the army. We believe that it will be some months before they can accomplish this.

15. As Communist power grows, it is possible that Kassim will become concerned over the threat from this quarter, and he might attempt to remove the Communists from positions of influence and to limit the activities of Soviet representatives in Iraq. To date, however, we have seen no evidence that Kassim is thinking in these terms. Particularly while suspicions of the West and of the UAR remain uppermost in his mind, we believe that any significant change of course on his part is unlikely.

16. We have already mentioned the apparent lack of will and leadership among potential anti-Communist and anti-Kassim forces—both military and in the public at large. If these forces are to be moved to action, some assurance of support will probably have to come from Nasser, since any counterrevolutionary movement in Iraq which appeared to be Western-inspired would have little chance of success. Nasser has made one serious attempt to overthrow the Kassim government and is seeking to build assets for another. ¹ He will almost certainly continue to work assiduously to develop and exploit every possible lead to a counterrevolution in Iraq. He has important resources at his disposal. In addition to his own network of agents and friends, he has the authority and influence that stem from his widespread acceptance as a successful leader of Arab nationalism. As Communist power increases in Iraq, non-Communist Iraqi groups—military and civilian—are likely to become increasingly conscious of this threat and ready to compromise with Nasser as the only effective source of help. In the right

¹ On February 28, John S.D. Eisenhower included the following information on Iraq in his "Synopsis of State and Intelligence Material reported to the President":

"An Iraqi official has reported an attempt to assassinate Qasim on February 22. Fifteen arrests reportedly ensued.

"A late item on February 28 indicates that a coup by Iraqi army elements backed by Nasir is scheduled between 2–5 March. Plotters plan to assassinate Qasim. It is estimated that unless army units in Baghdad join the conspiracy, a successful coup would be dubious.

"The President also read SNIE 36.2–59 which pertains to the situation in Iraq." (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)
situation Nasser’s propaganda machine could be used to exert a formidable influence upon the Iraqi people and army to turn them against the Kassim regime and their Communist allies.

17. Nasser is almost certainly aware of the risks to himself attendant on a fight with the Communists in Iraq. He would become subject to charges by the Communists and some Iraqi nationalists that he is doing the dirty work for Western imperialists. More importantly, he would be inviting a direct clash with the USSR, at the risk of losing the extensive military and economic support he has been receiving from that source. Finally, he almost certainly retains grave suspicions that the West—and his enemies in the area—might seize the opportunity to undermine him while he was embroiled with the Communists in Iraq and clashing with the Soviets. Nevertheless, we believe that Nasser views the Communist threat in Iraq as a critical challenge to his whole position and aspirations in the area, and is almost certainly determined to muster his resources to combat it. He appears to believe that his efforts will not cost him Soviet assistance, but he might be willing to accept serious risks of such a loss in a final showdown on Iraq.

18. Nasser’s hostility to the trend in Iraq will probably serve to make Kassim even more suspicious of nationalist elements in his own country and more prone to depend on the local Communists and the USSR for support and assistance. Kassim’s suspicions would be compounded should he believe that a Nasser-Western rapprochement were in the making. Kassim will be alert to UAR-inspired plots and will attempt to neutralize or destroy Nasser’s assets in Iraq. Even so, Kassim’s policies might stimulate a counterrevolutionary effort in Iraq while there is still a chance of success. Even though such a counterrevolutionary effort might be in part the creation of Nasser, and its leaders might accept some loose affiliation with the UAR, they would almost certainly insist on a considerable degree of independence for Iraq. We believe that Nasser would regard this as preferable to an Iraq under Communist domination.

19. In the event of an outright clash between the Kassim regime and a counterrevolutionary effort, there is some chance that neither side would win a clear victory. The resulting period of disorder might lead to the factioning of the army, and a period of chaos with any or all of the contending factions calling for outside intervention.

III. Implications of a Communist Takeover in Iraq

20. If and when it became apparent that a Communist-controlled regime had actually come to power in Iraq, this would almost certainly provoke an acute crisis in the Middle East. Friends of the West and neutrals in the area would both feel acutely this threat to their security. There would be insistent pressures on the US to “do something.” At the
same time, the USSR would issue a series of ominous warnings and threats to stave off intervention.

21. Communist control of Iraq would establish the USSR in the heart of the Middle East—contiguous to Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Kuwait, and flanking two US allies, Turkey and Iran. Such an extension of Soviet power into the area would serve to strip the Soviets of their former immunity from charges of “imperialist” motives in the area. It might also lead to the moderation of Arab hostility toward the West and make Arab neutralism more genuine. Nevertheless, it would amount to an impressive Soviet victory which would influence the leanings of area opportunists.

22. A Communist-controlled Iraq would also threaten Western access to Middle East oil. Although we estimate that such a government might initially prove fairly reasonable with respect to permitting continued Western access to Iraqi oil—in the interests of receiving continued revenue and of avoiding drastic Western response—it would at a minimum insist on substantial modifications in the terms and conditions under which Iraqi oil flows to the West. In any case the future of the Iraq Petroleum Company would be unpromising indeed—with ultimate nationalization likely. And while such a move would not constitute an irreparable blow to the UK—so long as it had Kuwait oil available—it would be serious in itself and additionally so because it would weaken Britain’s hold in Kuwait and throughout the oil-producing areas of the Persian Gulf.

23. The UK is far from oblivious to this danger. At the same time, continuing British hostility to Nasser has prompted the UK to hope that Kassim might provide a feasible alternative between a Nasser-dominated and a Communist-dominated regime in Iraq and an effective rival to Nasser for influence in the Arab world at large. The UK has been the more inclined to indulge in these hopes because it has received somewhat better treatment from the Kassim regime than has the US. There are now indications that at some levels and in some parts of the British Government it has been concluded that these are futile hopes. Further rapid consolidation of leftist forces in Iraq would probably increase UK sentiment in favor of a Nasser effort to stop the Iraqi Communists.

24. The Turks, Iranians, Israelis, and French have hitherto shown more concern over the disadvantages to them of a pro-Nasser takeover in Iraq than over the Communist threat there. However, there is already evidence of some change in the attitude of the Turks and especially of the Iranians. Both will press insistent for increased US support and commitments to meet the danger. A Communist Iraq would increase the potential of the Tudeh Party in Iran considerably. Iran would be particularly sensitive about any Iraqi attempt to interfere with access to Iranian oil ports. Turkey and Iran would be tempted to take further steps to
influence events in Iraq, but would take no significant action without requesting US support.

25. Of all area states, Israel is most concerned lest the Communist threat in Iraq bring Nasser and the West closer together, or lest a successful pro-Nasser countermove in Iraq should confirm Nasser as undisputed leader of a united Arab world. Growing tension between the USSR and Nasser may lead to an improvement in Soviet-Israeli relations. At the same time, Israel's policy will be conditioned by its knowledge of the importance of its ties with the West.

26. Nasser's past policies of doing business with the USSR would be discredited and his claims as leader of the Pan-Arab unity movement contested as a result of the establishment of a Communist government in Iraq. He would moreover be faced with greatly increased problems of subversion within his own UAR, particularly in Syria. However, if he continues to challenge the Soviet-Communist role in Iraq, his relations with and his influence in the other Arab states are likely to improve.

IV. Implications of an Arab Nationalist Counteraction in Iraq

27. We do not believe that the Soviets, at present, consider their interests or prestige so heavily involved in the Iraqi situation that they would accept the risks and disadvantages involved in any overt intervention to block a nationalist counterrevolution against Kassim. If they saw such a move coming, however, they would be likely to step up their efforts and their timetable. If as time goes on, growing Communist power in Iraq should involve heavier Soviet commitments to the Iraqi regime, the Bloc would become increasingly disposed to accept the risks of responding to requests for assistance in maintaining a pro-Communist regime in power.

28. If a non-Communist nationalist government is re-established in Iraq, the Pan-Arab nationalists in the several Arab states led by Nasser are likely to continue a policy and a posture like that of the past. Their position regarding Israel and Algeria will remain much the same. They will hope to upset the regime in Jordan, to eject the UK from its privileged position in the Arabian Peninsula, and to move toward the imposition of Arab controls over Arab oil.
162. Paper Prepared by the Operations Coordinating Board


OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE CONCERNING IRAQ

I. Objectives

1. This paper deals with programs for Iraq which are operationally feasible at the present time, keeping in mind that the agreed primary objectives of national policy for the Near East are the following:

a. Denial of the area to Soviet domination;

b. Continued availability of sufficient Near Eastern oil to meet vital Western European requirements on reasonable terms.

2. The following are agreed secondary objectives of national policy for the Near East which are to be achieved to the extent compatible with the two primary objectives:

a. Peaceful resolution as early as possible, in whole or in part, of the Arab-Israel dispute;

b. Continued availability to the United States and its allies of rights of peaceful passage through and intercourse with the area in accordance with international law and customs and existing international agreements;

c. Political evolution and economic and social development in the area to promote stable governments, popularly supported and resistant to Communist influence and subversion;

d. Continued availability to the United States and its allies of important strategic positions, including military overflight, staging and base rights in the area;

e. The expansion of the United States, and, where appropriate, Free World influence in the area, and the countering and reduction of Communist influence.

II. Introduction

3. We are confronted in Iraq with a post-revolutionary situation in which further violent or non-violent changes are likely and the future is still uncertain. Under these circumstances, guidance to U.S. agencies is necessarily interim in nature and more than usually subject to reconsideration and change in the light of developments.

III. Pertinent Background

4. Iraq-U.S. Relations. The establishment of mutually satisfactory and friendly relations with the present government of Iraq has been
made very difficult by official and private suspicion and distrust of the United States. The initial cause of this attitude was our close identification with the old regime together with anti-Western attitudes arising out of the Palestine question and the Arab nationalist movement. A contributing cause has been an apparently widespread belief in Iraq that the United States was cool if not hostile toward the new regime, particularly during its early days. Elements unfriendly to the U.S. have undoubtedly capitalized on these factors further to disturb Iraqi-U.S. relations. The Soviets in particular have been making an effort through propaganda and false intelligence to poison the Iraqis against us. U.S. agencies operating in Iraq have encountered severe restrictions and, on occasion, harassment since the revolution. Iraqi military guards at the Embassy have at times been overly-zealous in their searching of visitors. Diplomatic travelers entering Iraq were for some time thoroughly questioned and searched. The MAAG offices and USIS offices were closed and remain virtually inaccessible to U.S. personnel. USIS operations have been sharply curtailed. Although requests for USOM technicians were never formally withdrawn, a large number have been given little to do and few are being effectively utilized.

5. **Iraq-Soviet Relations.** In contrast to the treatment accorded the U.S. and UK diplomatic missions in Baghdad, Soviet Bloc missions have been welcomed and encouraged. This has been an aspect of increasing Communist influence in Iraq but is also a reflection of Arab curiosity toward the USSR and of the belief that benefits can be gained without strings from the Soviets. We can expect Soviet activities in the political, military, economic and cultural spheres to increase to a certain extent at the expense of U.S. and UK activities in similar fields. The well-organized local Communist Party has made startlingly effective use of the relative freedom of action which has been permitted to leftist political groups since the revolution and has emerged in terms of leadership, organization and capacity for “street” action as the strongest party in Iraq at present. Content carried in the media channels of Iraq is heavily weighted toward the Communist point of view.

6. **UAR-Iraq Relations.** The increase of Communist and Soviet Bloc influence in Iraq has posed a delicate problem for Nasser and the UAR. While professing to be an “Arab nationalist”, Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul Karim Qasim has appeared to desire to maintain an independent Iraq, even at the expense of cordial relations with the UAR. He appears to be less concerned with the possibility that Iraq may be Soviet-oriented. In this situation, Nasser has been reluctant to attack Qasim or to seek openly to divert him from his present course. On the other hand, he has been engaged in clandestine activity directed toward stimulating an anti-Qasim coup.
IV. General Guidance

7. In this situation, the U.S. should show a "correct" attitude toward Iraq, indicating our desire to be friendly, but not seeking to force ourselves upon the Iraqis. We should seek a continuing exchange of information and views on Iraq with the UK and attempt insofar as possible to coordinate our respective policies toward Iraq, while recognizing that some divergence of views is likely. We should continue to follow a waiting policy but should keep our position sufficiently flexible so that we can take advantage of any opportunities which present themselves. We should continue to discuss the tenuous Iraq situation with other governments which have interests in the area which may be useful in third nation roles. We should continue our efforts, both by our behavior and by explicit rebuttal of any allegations by officials of unfriendly actions on our part, to convince the present Iraq Government that we are in no way working against it.

8. Dispelling Suspicions

a. We should avoid any situations or actions likely to be attributed to the United States which could be construed as subversive or hostile to Iraq.

b. We should counsel against provocative measures by our friends, particularly the Turks and Iranians.

c. We should maintain only a sufficient number of American officials in Iraq to maintain normal diplomatic activity, carry out approved programs, and meet requests from the government for technical and military assistance.

9. Encouraging Confidence

a. We should conduct our relations on a normal and friendly basis, ceremonially as well as substantively. For example, we should support Iraqi candidates for UN positions where appropriate and reasonable, exchange normal ceremonial courtesies with the Iraq Government, continue our exchange program, and treat various requests in the same manner as we would treat those from other friendly powers.

b. We should seek to develop contacts with the new regime, both official and unofficial. While this is difficult in view of current attitudes, we should seek every opportunity to enlarge any openings which may appear.

c. U.S. agencies should closely follow developments in Iraq so as to be able to take advantage of opportunities, as they may be presented, to achieve U.S. objectives. In this connection, U.S. agencies should be prepared to activate constructive programs if the Iraqis are prepared to cooperate in making these programs fruitful. While the present situation does not appear to permit the U.S. to proceed effectively with these programs, the U.S. should be prepared to consider any specific Iraqi
requests for assistance in the light of the then existing situation and outlook in Iraq and the U.S. availability of funds.

d. Within our limited capabilities to do so, we should cultivate discreetly individual and group friendships with the objective of creating a more favorable climate for U.S.-Iraq relations. This should include personnel both in and out of government.

e. We should use every appropriate opportunity to warn selected Iraqi leaders about the Communist threat.

V. Specific Guidance

10. Information-Cultural. We have sharply reduced our USIS establishment in Baghdad in consequence of the present government's refusal to permit reopening of our facilities. There is little prospect of increasing media activities in the near future though they could be re-established quickly. USIS should concentrate on cultural activities, e.g. exchange of persons, English teaching and exhibits. Efforts should be made to reinstitute press, radio, and film activities as circumstances permit.

11. Economic

a. Technical Assistance. We have indicated our willingness to continue existing technical assistance programs in which the Iraqis have indicated an interest. Although most technicians in Baghdad are still reporting to work in the various ministries, their activities are often circumscribed and some are only partially employed. The USOM non-technical staff should be reduced to the minimum which can be utilized effectively and projects reviewed to determine how many technicians are actually needed and in what specific fields.\(^1\)

b. Private Business. American firms now doing business are experiencing considerable difficulty, particularly those firms having contracts with the Development Board. It is in our interest that, where possible, these firms continue to be active in Iraq since the Soviets are presumed to be ready to fill any vacuums their departure would create. We should continue to give American contractors all possible assistance. Such assistance includes making representations to the Iraq Government on their behalf when necessary. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of an expansion of the Investment Guarantee Program to provide these firms with some financial safeguards. At the same time, efforts should be made as feasible to counter recent Soviet competition for trade and investment in Iraq, emphasizing factors such as the proven quality of American goods and services and the contribution which American enterprise could make to the development of the country. The

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\(^{1}\) The USOM staff has 56 employees as contrasted with 96 on duty on July 14, 1958. [Footnote in the source text.]
U.S. has in this connection authorized the resumption of the sale of commercial vehicles to Iraq.

c. 

Petroleum. Since British interests predominate in IPC, the initiative on petroleum matters should continue to be left to the UK. We should follow oil developments closely, however, and make our views known to the British when appropriate.

12. Military. The Iraqis have not explicitly indicated their intent regarding the 1954 Mutual Assistance Agreement. However, in view of the attacks on it in the military trials and in view of the acceptance by Iraq of Soviet military assistance, and the prompt delivery of four shiploads, it is unlikely that Iraq would reaffirm its adherence to the agreement and it is pointless to seek either an oral or written undertaking in this regard. The Government of Iraq's telegram of July 22, 1958 to the Secretary General of the UN, affirming Iraq's adherence to the various international agreements and obligations incurred by the previous government satisfies the legal requirements of the Mutual Security Act, as amended. Resumption of delivery of grant military assistance items to Iraq depends on Iraqi indication to cooperate and on whether the resumption is in the U.S. interests. Pending such a determination, we have authorized resumption of commercial and military sales of spare parts, replacement items, and major items to Iraq.

13. Baghdad Pact. It is most unlikely that the Iraqis will continue membership in the Baghdad Pact. We should acquiesce in but not actively encourage Iraqi withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact.

VI. Outstanding U.S.-Iraq Agreements Under Previous Regime

14. The United States agreed to a military assistance program and to the maintenance of a military assistance advisory group in Iraq by an exchange of notes dated April 21, 1954.²

15. The United States technical assistance program was established under the general agreement for technical cooperation signed April 10, 1951.³ This has been supplemented by subsequent technical agreements, including in particular, an agreement for a program of economic development dated November 16, 1952⁴ and an agreement for a cooperative program of community welfare signed March 2, 1955.⁵

16. An agreement on atomic energy cooperation for civil uses was signed between the United States and Iraq on May 2, 1957.⁶

² 5 UST 2497.
³ 3 UST 541.
⁴ 3 UST 5882.
⁵ 6 UST 701.
⁶ A treaty on atomic energy cooperation for civil uses between the United States and Iraq did not come into force.
[Here follow a Financial Annex and a Pipeline Analysis of the Mutual Security Program in Iraq.]

163. Telegram 2537 From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, March 7, 1959, 7 p.m.

[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/3-759. Top Secret; Niac; Limit Distribution. 1 page of source text not declassified.]

164. Editorial Note

[2 paragraphs from the Memorandum of Discussion at the 398th Meeting of the National Security Council on March 5 and 1-1/2 pages from the Memorandum of Discussion at the 399th Meeting of the National Security Council on March 12 not declassified. (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)]

165. Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Dulles to Acting Secretary of State Herter


[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/3-1959. Secret. 1 page of source text not declassified.]
166. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, March 26, 1959, 1 p.m.

2758. Department pass Defense. Addressees pass major military commands. Paris also for USRO. Deptel 2145.¹

1. Preparation Embassy's estimate of situation in Iraq in response toreftei interrupted by Mosul coup attempt. Now appears revolt and aftermaths have altered picture only in that as result failure of coup attempt Qassim and pro-Communists have greatly increased their strength as opposed to that of nationalist elements desiring closer relations with UAR.

2. Basic question remaining is whether Qassim and GOI are too far along road to communism to turn back and whether Iraq consequently is fated to be first Soviet satellite in Arab world.

3. Overt signs point sharply left. It appears that Mosul attempt was almost last gasp of nationalist, anti-Communist forces in Iraq. Shawwal's effort was overcome with comparative ease by Qassim and with noticeable absence of panicky reaction. Qassim conducted himself throughout affair coolly and with confident air of man who believes people to be with him. Now seems to us that control could be wrested from Qassim only by assassination and even that would not automatically result in government of different orientation from present one.

4. Communists and pro-Communists have scored noticeable gains since Mosul. Destruction March 11 by mob action, countenanced or at least uninterrupted by security forces, of plants of three nationalist daily newspapers and weekly magazine in Baghdad leaves press field almost exclusively to Communists. This control of press plus appointment of new Director General of Guidance who is known to have been and probably still is Communist means that virtually all of overt propaganda media are now subject to Communist direction. Most significant evidence of this control has been unanimous and savage attack on UAR and Nasser who six short months ago was held by Iraqi people in equal if not greater esteem than Qassim. Today Nasser is a "Fascist dog" and "agent of imperialism". Even taking into account acknowledged Arab volatility and ability change sides almost overnight, this re-mould-

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¹ Telegram 2145, March 4, requested the Embassy's appreciation of the Iraqi political situation, especially in light of the British view that the Communists in Iraq were definitely gaining ground. (Ibid., 787.00/3-459)
ing of Iraqi public opinion has been masterfully managed by Communists, whose task been made easier by clumsy overconfidence of Nasser's attempts to unseat Qassim.

5. Communists are making strong and thus far uniformly successful efforts to dominate Iraq's new Trade Union Movement, Students Union, Teachers Association, League for Defense of Women's Rights and other "popular" and "partisan" organizations whose number increases monthly. Communists appear to be in almost complete control of Popular Resistance Force. According to reports received from Basra, PRF has shown itself willing and able to defy civil and military authority whenever its unofficial leaders think stakes are worth it. Despite Qassim's January 14 pronouncement and recent reassuring statements by Military Governor Brigadier Abdi and PRF Commander Colonel Bamarni, we see little reason believe PRF is not in effect an arm of CPI, wherever the individual loyalties of PRF members may lie.

6. Estimates of number arrested since March 7 run as high as 15,000. Jails throughout country filled and private houses and institutions such as Police Cadet School been taken over as places of detention. Sudden disappearance of respected friends and colleagues has frightened and silenced those who have reservations about course of events.

7. Since Mosul every ministry except Foreign Office has undergone new purge. Hardest hit have been Development Ministry and Education Ministry. Communists now appear be strongly entrenched here and in Economic and Agriculture Ministries. Economic Ministry under Kubba had already embarked on program designed tie Iraq economically as closely as possible to Soviet Bloc. Recent conclusion Iraqi-Soviet accord on development aid is latest and most significant of Kubba's efforts in this direction. Difficulties encountered by private firms, foreign and domestic, are discouraging capital investment and leaving way open for growth of state capitalism and expansion Soviet assistance.

8. Pro-Communist teachers and students are riding high in high schools and colleges. Student association boards rather than faculty councils now often have decisive voice in issues of curricula, administration and faculty appointments. General lowering of academic standards, which have never been high, is reported. Dissenting professors and teachers intimidated, many demoted and some arrested following denunciation by students or other teachers.

9. Military Court President Mahdawis' excesses remain unchecked. It becoming increasingly clear he either member Communist Party or its willing tool. His pronouncements from bench following Communist line almost 100 percent and are given wide coverage by Baghdad press, radio and TV.
10. On top of all foregoing, very atmosphere of Baghdad almost inescapably forces foreign onlooker (especially American) to conclude that Iron Curtain descending. Many of our Embassy staff recurrently followed by security agents. Embassy office and residential telegrams continuously monitored. Four Embassy local employees been arrested (three since Mosul) and held without bail and incommunicado on unspecified charges. International mail censored. Flow of Western newspapers and magazines into Iraq is frequently interrupted. Embassy encountering increasing difficulty in getting exit and re-entry permits for office personnel. Outgoing household effects subjected to search which can best be described as ruthless. Embassy complaints on these and other matters are met with mixture of blandness and insolence familiar to anyone who has dealt with satellite officers since World War II. We are living within contracting circle of social mobility as former friends and contacts turn away. Press, radio, and television keep up continuous attack on “imperialism”, with US depicted as chief offender. Despite GOI official disclaimers (not published in Iraq), US still labeled by Iraqi press as among instigators of Mosul revolt.

11. On other side of picture we see only few hopeful signs. During my recent interview with Qassim his statement about wishing to be neutral seemed to me to be genuine and his general attitude was friendly. Recent definition of PRF duties by PRF Commander (definition which not strictly followed), recent appeals by Education Minister to students to return to school and respect their teachers and by head of Teachers Association for decent treatment of UAR teachers detailed here, and Foreign Minister’s statements to American reporters that GOI aware of non-involvement US in Mosul attempt all may be indications that there are still among Iraqis moderate men of good will trying to stem tide of Communism.

12. Skeptics among us point out, however, that PRF Commander’s statement and appeals to students and teachers to calm down are not inconsistent with Communist emphasis on “discipline” and avoidance unnecessary and uncoordinated trouble-making. This is theme repeatedly stressed in CPI circulars and party guidances [less than 1 line of source text not declassified].

13. Another negatively hopeful sign is that of “eight demands” put to Qassim by CPI through its front organizations after Mosul only two have clearly been met—i.e., withdrawal from Baghdad Pact and purging of “disloyal elements” in government and army circles. Two crucial demands, for arming and executing those condemned to death by Military Court, have not been met and we have not yet seen any indication Qassim intends to comply.
14. Worth pointing out also that there still no Communists in cabinet and that among the ministers only Kubba openly espouses party line.

15. On balance it now seems to us there is grave danger that in short run Iraq will come under preponderantly Communist control. Our past estimates have always centered around question whether Qassim is himself a Communist or otherwise a voluntary follower of Communist direction. In light contradictory reports and differing deductions from available evidence, we still cannot answer that question categorically. Recent events, however, have steadily increased our doubts as to whether Qassim can, even if he wished to, reverse the trend. We still think that loyalty of army and people is primarily directed to him rather than to what appears to be his present program, but there is clear possibility that Communist control of popular organizations and Communist cadres within army and government departments could grant and/or nullify this loyalty to Qassim if showdown came.

16. Nasser no longer appears to have what it takes to reverse tide of events in Iraq. There remain two other possibilities. One is that Qassim himself will realize extent of danger and attempt to halt Communist advance while his personal following in army and among people still gives him capacity to do so. Other is that Qassim will be assassinated and that army would then take over reins under leadership of officers opposed to Communism.

17. Gist of joint estimate prepared by service attachés is that (1) successful anti-Qassim coup by army officers would require quick and well-coordinated use of preponderance of mobile and armored units stationed in or close to Baghdad and (2) appraisal of attitudes of first and second level commanders in these units leads to conclusion that successful coup from this quarter unlikely. (Details of this estimate follow in joint attaché telegram.²)

18. From Baghdad it looks as if 1959 will be year of the bear in Iraq.

19. Service attachés [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] concur.

Jernegan

²Not found.
167. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, March 28, 1959, 2:21 p.m.

2416. Embtel 2758. In light Embassy's evaluation current situation in Iraq, comments desired on following questions which we emphasize purely exploratory:

1. Would it now be helpful to approach Qasim again re GOI attitude toward US military aid agreement, with view to possible release of remainder of military items in pipeline? We doubt such release would have noticeably constructive effect in Iraq and it would certainly have negative results on current valuable UAR anti-Communist campaign. Would also be difficult justify publicly view Iraqi withdrawal from BP.

2. Should US now express publicly its concern re Communist threat to independence of Iraq? We think this would have negative results in Iraq, and might also inhibit UAR anti-Communist campaign. Such step however would help focus world attention on Iraq and remove any impression US complacent re present situation.

3. Should we encourage some nation, such as Turkey or Pakistan, to send emissary to Qasim to warn against danger of letting local Communists become too powerful?

4. Would it be helpful from our point of view in Iraq if current UAR attacks on Iraq should cease?

5. Would Nasser's capacity to reverse tide of events in Iraq be enhanced by any direct encouragement or assistance which we might discreetly give?

6. Assuming we could get the UK and France to agree, would a US-UK-French threat to boycott Iraqi oil if Communist control of Iraq established be a helpful move?

7. Would it facilitate reversal of present trend if IPC lines should be cut by UAR and remain so for considerable time? It seems to us UAR might conceivably decide to do this.

8. Are there any measures in psychological field we could take which might be helpful?

9. Would it be good idea for President to write Qasim in friendly terms to express desire for good relations and to warn re danger of entanglement with Communists?

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/3-2659. Top Secret; Limit Distribution; No Distribution Outside Department. Drafted by Rockwell and approved by Hertter.

Document 166.
There are of course grounds for serious reservations about most if not all of above but we would like your reaction, as well as any suggestions re other measures we might take in effort to prevent further deterioration of situation.

Herter

168. Letter From the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to Acting Secretary of State Herter


Dear Chris: I have been talking with our good friend, Allen Dulles, in regard to the recent reports emanating from Baghdad about Iraq.

I am concerned, and I know you are, because it looks as if Iraq is sliding behind the Iron Curtain at an increased rate.

I know that State is fully aware of the problem as is CIA. But I would like to offer the services of the Navy if there is anything that you think we could possibly do to help keep Iraq from going Communist.

I recognize that there may have been low level discussions with Nasser’s people in regard to his accommodating his future actions more closely to the United States views. Although relying upon Nasser may be taking a big chance because he is not a reliable man, yet it looks as if he has available to him the only assets which can be used quickly enough in Iraq. If this is true, then perhaps it might be possible to initiate negotiations with Nasser immediately. If the initial conversations are satisfactory to us, it might be good to offer him support in specific amounts to assist us.

Enclosed is a note which I have sent to Allen Dulles which contains the alternate suggestions of reduction in oil purchases from Iraq and the possibility of raising the prices, if bribery is more useful than reduction of Kassem’s income.¹

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/3-2859. Secret; Personal.

In this note to Allen Dulles, also March 28, Burke emphasized the need to act quickly to “rectify the rapidly deteriorating situation in Iraq before it came under complete Communist domination.” Burke recommended that Western oil policy—either by threatening to not buy Iraqi oil or conversely to agree to buy more oil if Iraq limited Communist influence—could be a useful weapon.
With warmest regards on these very busy days of yours.  
Sincerely,

Arleigh

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2 Herter responded to Burke in an April 6 letter assuring him that the President had directed a thorough analysis of possible courses of action in Iraq (see Document 172), and that once the preliminary work was done in the Department of State, Herter would get together with the various agencies involved, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and consider the suggestions put forward by Burke. (Eisenhower Library, Herter Papers, Iraq)

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169. Paper by the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Gray)

Washington, April 1, 1959.

IRAQ

Mr. Allen Dulles has briefed the Council almost every week with respect to the deteriorating situation in Iraq. Recent reports from the Ambassador and other sources paint a picture of rather complete gloom in that the trend seems to be towards a Communist government without any arresting factors in sight.

The Planning Board spent considerable time discussing this situation on Tuesday and I am afraid I am unable to report to you any unanimous view of the Board although all members are deeply concerned about the situation.

Source: Eisenhower Library, White House Office Files, Project Clean Up, Iraq. Top Secret. In his covering memorandum to members of the NSC Planning Board, Gray wrote that he was not certain he would raise the question of Iraq at the April 2 NSC meeting, but if he did, he “would plan to speak from the attached note.”

The discussion at the NSC Planning Board on March 31 was summarized in a memorandum from Gray to Major General Wilton B. Persons, Assistant to the President, April 6. Gray reported that members of the Board “seemed disposed to share the view of the State Department that no new policy guidance was necessary.” Gray did not agree. (Ibid., Staff Secretary’s Records, Gordon Gray I)

In an April 1 memorandum from Gerard Smith to Rountree, Smith recounted a discussion at an OCB luncheon on April 1 in which the Board and Gray also discussed this paper on Iraq. Smith recalled Gray’s frustration over Iraq and his fear that it would soon fall to Soviet domination. Smith believed that as CIA and Defense also felt like Gray, he should raise with Rountree whether the OCB should discuss Iraq. (Department of State, S/P Files: Lot 67 D 548, Chronological File)
The State Department has reported that from its point of view the policy statement with respect to the Near East is adequate and that the problems are operational problems. Other members of the Board agree with the State Department that no particular purpose would be served in bringing the matter before the Council this morning.

On behalf of myself and one or two other members of the Board, I should like to express the same kind of frustration that must be felt by everyone here. I feel constrained to point out that our primary objective in the Near East is the denial of the area to Soviet domination. Nevertheless, we sit and watch unfolding events which seem to point inevitably to Soviet domination of Iraq, acknowledging, I am afraid, an inability to do anything about it. It is almost like watching a movie whose end we will not like but which we are committed to see.

I have no more of a solution this morning to present to you than I had to present to the Planning Board on Tuesday. However, it is perfectly clear that the paragraphs in our Near East policy relating to Iraq would not be written today as they were approved several months ago.

(Read Paragraph 39)²

Par. 39b is no longer applicable and 39a was not written against the background of a probable Communist takeover. Similarly, pars. 39c and d seem bland and unrealistic in the light of today's situation.

I feel that I would be derelict in my own duties to the President and to the Council if I did not point out a situation in which we may be failing to meet a bedrock objective.

²See Document 51.

170. Memorandum of Discussion at the 401st Meeting of the National Security Council

Washington, April 2, 1959.

[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1 and 2.]

3. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security

[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

Turning to the situation in Iraq, Mr. Dulles said that Iraq continued to move along the Communizing line. He referred to the extensive and gloomy review of the situation recently sent by Ambassador Jernegan in Baghdad. He also noted the efforts of the Chinese Communists and other Satellite diplomats in Cairo to smooth over the rough relationship between the U.A.R. and Iraq.

After commenting briefly on Nasser's continued attacks on Khrushchev, Mr. Dulles stated that it was clear from intermediaries that Nasser felt the need of some quiet indication that if he continues his breach with Moscow, he will get support from the U.S. and other Western Powers. For example, said Mr. Dulles, we have learned indirectly that Nasser wants us and our allies to buy his cotton crop.

The President inquired whether it would not be a good idea to provide [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] support to Nasser [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]. It seemed to the President that if we were really going to undertake to save Iraq, we should have to begin to do so now. Mr. Allen Dulles pointed out in response to the President that the situation was very complicated. Not all our friends and allies seemed to have the same view on Iraq as we did. In illustration of this point, Mr. Dulles said that in his discussions with Zorlu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, it was apparent that Zorlu still thought Qasim was a nice guy. The President said that it could be that Qasim was a nice guy but if so, he was certainly a prisoner of the Communists in Iraq. This, said the President, is what Rifai, the Foreign Minister of Jordan, thought to be the case. In any event, continued the President, we are facing the complete loss of Iraq to the Communists. In such a situation the President said that it was his idea that we should keep our eye on the principal enemy, namely, the Soviet Union, which was going to take over Iraq. Admittedly, said the President, Foreign Minister Rifai advocated no open attack by Nasser on Qasim because he feared such an attack would simply have the effect of driving Qasim further into the arms of the Communists.

Secretary Dillon expressed the opinion that at least we are in much better contact with Nasser now than we have been for a long time and indeed our relations with him were improving steadily. Meanwhile, we are trying to coordinate our view of the Iraqi situation with the British and the Turks. Secretary Dillon asked those present to remember the unfortunate results of Nasser's last attempt to overthrow the Iraqi Government. In the light of this unhappy result, Secretary Dillon expressed the opinion that if we would join in planning with Nasser to start something in Iraq, knowledge of our activities would presently be widespread in

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1 Document 166.
the Middle East and we would simply be accused of colonialism and imperialism. Nevertheless, Nasser does know that we are backing him even though we are not joining with him.

The President said that he still did not understand why Nasser could not make common cause with Qasim against Communism. The authorities in Jordan think that this course of action could be successful. Mr. Allen Dulles expressed the opinion that there was far too much bitterness between Nasser and Qasim to make such a joint operation possible. On the other hand, Mr. Dulles said he did not believe that Nasser felt that he was getting at present the kind of support in the U.S. that Secretary Dillon thought he was getting. Secretary Dillon replied that the argument he was making had been greatly strengthened by a new instruction which the State Department had sent to our Embassy in Cairo only yesterday.

Mr. Gray asked Mr. Allen Dulles whether he had completed his intelligence briefing because if he had, Mr. Gray wished to make some further comments on Iraq. Mr. Dulles said that he had planned to say a little something about Tibet but would confine himself now to saying that he believed the Dalai Lama was safe [less than 1 line of source text not declassified].

Mr. Gray then spoke briefly to the remaining members of the Council (many of whom had been obliged to leave the meeting in order to attend the opening of the NATO meetings) with respect to the Planning Board’s views on Iraq. He linked these views with the President’s comment with respect to what seemed to the President the necessity of doing something promptly to save Iraq. However, Mr. Gray added his understanding of the difficulties which confronted Secretary Dillon with regard to Iraq. (A copy of Mr. Gray’s remarks on the subject of Iraq are filed in the Minutes of the Meeting and another is attached to this Memorandum.)

Secretary Dillon repeated his view expressed earlier that if it became known that the U.S. was plotting with the U.A.R. against Iraq, the result would be simply to drive the Iraqis further and more rapidly into Communism. Secretary Dillon did mention the scrutiny which was being given to the problem of dealing with Egypt’s surplus cotton and pointed out the ultimate danger that Egypt itself would go Communist if its economic difficulties continued to worsen.

On this subject the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Mr. McConne, said that in his view the sensible thing would be to buy up all the cotton in Egypt and dump it into the sea. It was obviously much

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2 See Document 169.
better to lose this amount of money than to lose Egypt as well as Iraq to the Communists.

Mr. Gray, in support of his contention about the necessity of action to save Iraq, cited Paragraph 34–d of the Basic National Security Policy (NSC 5810/1)\textsuperscript{3} which reads:

"In the event of an imminent or actual Communist seizure of control from within, take all feasible measures to thwart it, including military action if required and appropriate to cope with the situation."

Secretary Dillon replied that this was precisely the policy under which the State Department was now operating with respect to Iraq. In reply Mr. Gray argued that if on the one hand we fear that if we take action now against Iraq, we will push that country further into Communism, and on the other hand we believe that Iraq is going to end up Communist anyhow, it would be worthwhile to take the risk of the first course of action since it might possibly result in saving Iraq. Mr. Dillon replied simply that he agreed with Mr. Gray and others as to the seriousness of the situation and agreed also that our basic objective in the Middle East was the denial of that area to Soviet domination.

Mr. Gray then suggested that at least it seemed to some of us that the U.S. should seek to bring about a common appreciation of the danger in Iraq among ourselves, the U.K., the Turks, and perhaps other Middle Eastern states. Secretary Dillon replied that this was precisely what we were now engaged in doing with the British. Mr. Patterson suggested the desirability of a review of our current U.S. policy toward the Middle East. Secretary Dillon replied that such a review now would be impossible to make. Things were simply moving too fast. The problems facing us in the area were wholly operational in character. In these operations we were being guided, as he had said before, by Paragraph 34–d of the Basic National Security Policy (NSC 5810/1).

[1 paragraph (4-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

Mr. Gray then suggested that inasmuch as so many members of the Council had been obliged to go to the NATO meeting, it would be best to bring the discussion to a close.

The National Security Council:\textsuperscript{4}

a. Noted and discussed an oral briefing by the Director of Central Intelligence on the subject, with specific reference to reports of an Israeli mobilization; and the situations in Iraq and Tibet.

\textsuperscript{3} NSC 5810/1, "Basic National Security Policy," May 5, 1958, is scheduled for publication in volume III.

\textsuperscript{4} Paragraphs a and b constitute NSC Action No. 2065, approved by the President on April 7. (Department of State, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)
b. Discussed the implications for U.S. security, in relation to existing U.S. policy, of the danger of a Communist takeover in Iraq, and reaffirmed the applicability of NSC 5810/1, paragraph 34–d, to the situation there.

S. Everett Gleason

171. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, April 3, 1959, 2 p.m.


1. Much water under Tigris Bridges since Embassy recommended US offer sell arms to Iraq. Believe we should not at this stage raise with GOI question of supplying US arms on any basis, at least not until British have made their decision on arms sale question. Considerable delay likely be entailed in British consultation with BP members. Trevelyan still recommending that HMG offer sell arms and I share his feeling that it better if we stay out of picture for time being. If UK does decide sell Iraq arms, might be better for us to stay clear indefinitely confining our participation to strict commercial sales of reasonable quantities spare parts and ammunition for US equipment already in hands GOI. We are not under any particular pressure this regard. Qassim spoke of it in my first talk with him last January but did not return to subject at our March 17 meeting. Department's point re negative effect our initiative

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/4–359. Top Secret; Limited Distribution; No Distribution Outside Department. Transmitted in three sections.

1 Document 167.

2 This meeting was reported in telegram 2114 from Baghdad, January 19. The portion dealing with U.S. arms assistance to Iraq reads:

"Re arms aid, he had been surprised when two American consignments which arrived Basra at moment of revolution had been turned back without unloading. Had asked Ambassador Gallman for statement of what heavy arms we would be prepared provide new regime but had received no reply. I said I should be glad discuss this whole question with him another time. Pointed out would make a big difference whether Iraq wanted grant or reimbursable aid, as our legal requirements for grant aid were much more complicated. Prime Minister merely nodded. At no time did he say whether he was willing accept continuation MAAG." (Department of State, Central Files, 611.87/1–1959)

3 Reported in telegram 2680, March 18. (Ibid., 611.87/3–1859)
in this respect would have on UAR anti-Communist campaign is well taken.

2. I do not believe that official expression of US concern about Iraqi situation would be helpful just now. World attention already sufficiently directed to trend here. Statement by USG would (A) revive neurotic GOI fears we considering intervention or encouraging intervention by others, (B) increase acceptance among Arabs of Iraqi charge that Nasser acting as cat’s-paw for imperialists, (C) correspondingly weaken impact of Nasser anti-Communist campaign.

If President or Acting Secretary asked to comment at press conferences, recommend reply not go beyond general line President took on February 18, possibly with additional observation that GOI continues to declare that it wishes friendliest relations with US.

3. We doubt that Qassim could be induced see light by special envoy from Turkey or Pakistan. High-level representatives from India, and possibly from Sudan and Morocco, might have some effect, but we judge none these governments would leap at idea. More easily arranged and probably of greater cumulative value would be reiterated expressions of concern by Resident Chiefs of Mission of Arab states, smaller European powers and Afro-Asian states not members of Baghdad Pact or SEATO, whenever they see Qassim in normal course of business. In this category are Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Tunisia; Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and Yugoslavia; India, Indonesia and Japan. If Department has no objection I will urge colleagues from these countries use any meeting they have with Qassim to express hope Iraq will not fall under domestic or external Communist control. Their willingness to do so and effectiveness of their presentations of variants of this theme would, of course, be enhanced by instructions from their governments. Department may wish try to induce such instructions through individual approaches in capitals concerned. My guess is that multilateral approach as through NATO Council, would not be advisable.

4. Assume reference to cessation “attacks” refers only to propaganda warfare. It seems to us Nasser now too deeply committed to call off dogs. He might see advantages, however, as we do, in middle course whereby he kept up campaign against Communist parties and their Soviet backing in ME, and in Iraq in particular, but tapered off direct attacks on Qassim including charges he himself is CP member. We believe there some chance that “opening to the right” could be devised for

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4 Reference is to a Presidential news conference on February 18 during which Eisenhower was asked to evaluate the situation in Iraq. For text of his response, see Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1959, p. 195.
Qassim if UAR propaganda switched to picturing him as essentially sound Arab patriot who had become unwilling captive of Communists. Attacks on personalities might be better centered on influential Iraqi Communists not holding official positions and on foreigners like Bakdash and Bizri, charging latter making Baghdad headquarters for alien influences and assuming leading roles in direction of CPI.

5. Although we not in best position to make judgment, we inclined doubt Nasser needs encouragement or money from us for conduct his propaganda campaign. [2-1/2 lines of source text not declassified] As for Nasser’s capacity check trend in Iraq by promoting overthrow or overhaul its government, we doubt he can do this, even with outside help. If we aided or otherwise encouraged him in that direction, most of blame for renewed failure see in his mind be ours. Furthermore, there would always be danger of leak which would be damaging both to him and to us. On other hand, we should, of course, try assure him west will not stab him in back while he is fighting communism in ME.

6. We see nothing to be gained by a US-UK-French threat to boycott Iraqi oil. It would enrage all Iraqis without really coercing them. It would gravely jeopardize IPC position. It would confirm in Iraqi mind conviction that “imperialists” forever bent on unseating “popular” governments in underdeveloped lands and keeping their people poor and oppressed.

7. We think it would be serious error if UAR cut oil pipelines at this time. Step would immeasurably exacerbate UAR/Iraq feud and would strengthen rather than weaken Qassim regime. West would inevitably be blamed along with UAR, whereas Soviet bloc would have good opportunity tighten hold on country by extending increased aid to cushion shock of “imperialist” squeeze on oil revenues. Iraq would no doubt demand large loan from IPC to tide it over fiscal emergency, under threat of nationalization. If pipelines should be cut, US should plainly dissociate itself from step and use its influence to hasten completion new oil-loading facilities now under construction by FAO.

8. No psychological measures of obvious worth under present circumstances occur to us. We believe VOA on right course in reporting without comment both sides of slanging match between Cairo and Baghdad. Nasser’s propaganda machine is better attuned than ours to pound at Arab consciousness with anti-Communist thesis. Discreet for us to stay off players bench and away from cheering section at this stage. Would be most worthwhile, however, for us canvass all possibilities for encouraging western contracting and engineering firms to continue participation in Iraq development program despite present difficulties and risks. Soviet program will meet only fraction of Iraq’s real needs in next few years, and field should not be left to them alone. We should not rule
out guarantees against loss and extension credits by USG and other western governments for specific and limitable projects (not surveys).

9. We would not recommend personal letter from Eisenhower to Qassim warning against Communists for reasons similar those stated above in paragraph 3. Additional hazard in this case is that sooner or later letter would be leaked in distorted form to Baghdad press, as was case with President’s February 18 statement, and would then be made text for new round of indignant sermons on US “pressure” and “interference in internal affairs Iraq.” Might, however, be well worthwhile for President to send Qassim few days before July 14 National Day letter going well beyond protocol requirements, assuring Qassim that USG well disposed toward young republic, had followed with friendly interest first year of its efforts to create better life for Iraqi people and wished it well in its continued efforts to this end.

Regret our cogitation has produced generally negative reaction to Department’s inquiries. Seems to us best course we can follow until situation clearer is to defend our specific interests here as best we can, to maintain such programs as we can, especially in fields of education and development as symbols continued western interest and good will, and to continue assure Qassim we sincerely want see Iraq be independent and prosperous and are prepared to help toward that end.

Our general estimate of situation and prospects has not changed during week since transmission Embassy telegram 2758.5 We think that their deep aversion to Nasser leads Turks and to lesser extent British to declare somewhat greater confidence than we feel in Qassim’s determination and ability to steer middle course, but we recognize they may yet be proven right. In any case, we see no present alternative to support of Qassim.

Jernegan

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5 Document 166.
APRIL 1959–DECEMBER 1960: U.S. RELATIONS WITH
THE QASSIM GOVERNMENT; CONTINUED U.S.
NON-ININVOLVEMENT IN IRAQI AFFAIRS

172. Memorandum From the President’s Special Assistant for
National Security Affairs (Gray) to Acting Secretary of State
Herter


SUBJECT

Iraq

Following recent discussions in the National Security Council on
the subject of Iraq and in view of the deep concern felt by all with respect
to developments in that country, the President has indicated that he
would like to have brought together, under the leadership of the Acting
Secretary of State, the heads of responsible departments and agencies of
government specifically including, in addition to Defense, JCS, CIA,
USIA and ICA, for the purpose of determining what the U.S. Govern-
ment either alone or in concert with others, can do [1 line of source text not
declassified] to avoid a Communist takeover in Iraq.

I believe that it is fair to say that the President attaches considerable
urgency to this matter and would like a report at the earliest date con-
sistent with thoroughgoing analysis and consideration.¹

I shall be pleased to discuss this with you if you desire.

Gordon Gray

¹ According to an attached memorandum from Herman T. Skosfield of S/S to Dayton
S. Mak of NEA, Herter wished that a “coordinated study” be prepared in the Department
of State prior to any interagency meeting as suggested in Gray’s memorandum. NEA was
given responsibility for preparing said study as soon as possible and clearing it with INR,
P, S/P, G, and W (and perhaps EUR depending on the recommendations). For text of the
study, see Document 175.
173. Memorandum of Conversation

Washington, April 4, 1959, 3 p.m.

SUBJECT
The Situation in Iraq

PARTICIPANTS
United States
The Acting Secretary
NE—Mr. Stuart W. Rockwell

United Kingdom
Mr. Selwyn Lloyd
Sir Harold Caccia
Lord Hood
Mr. Willie Morris
Mr. Denis Laskey

Selwyn Lloyd began by stating that at the recent Camp David meetings\(^1\) it had been agreed that it would be useful if something could be done to end the present tension between the UAR and Iraq. He asserted it had been decided to await the results of Arab League efforts to this end, but these seemed to be proving fruitless and Mr. Lloyd wondered whether the US and UK should not now take some action themselves. There wasn’t much that could be said to Qassim but perhaps the US might take steps in Cairo to get Nasser to “lay off” Iraq. The more the UAR attacked Iraq, the more the latter was forced to rely on the Communists.

The opinion was expressed to Mr. Lloyd that if the US were to approach Nasser in this sense there would be a grave risk that he might interpret this as espousal of Iraq’s cause against that of the UAR and as an indication that the US did not support the UAR anti-Communist campaign. While this campaign carried with it the risk of causing Iraq to rely more than it might wish to upon the Communists, the value of the UAR anti-Communist campaign was so great that it would seem unwise to jeopardize the latter in an effort to ease UAR pressure on Iraq. Furthermore, it was by no means certain that the Qassim regime would turn away from the Communists if the UAR attacks ceased. Accordingly, the US would be very reluctant to approach Nasser in the sense suggested by Mr. Lloyd.

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Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/4–459. Secret. Drafted by Rockwell and approved by Herter on April 13. The meeting was held at the British Embassy. Selwyn Lloyd was in Washington to attend the NATO Ministerial Meeting April 2–4.

\(^1\) See Document 62.
Mr. Lloyd said that the UK was deeply concerned by the situation in Iraq. What if the IPC should be nationalized? Furthermore, he was certain that the Iraqi decision to withdraw from the Baghdad Pact was taken as the direct result of the UAR attack on Iraq. Mr. Lloyd said that he was to see Mr. Hammarskjold in New York in the next few days and wondered whether he might suggest to the Secretary General that he seek to ease the tension between the UAR and Iraq, proceeding from the Arab General Assembly Resolution of last August calling for good neighborly relations between the Arab states.

It was suggested to Mr. Lloyd that if it became thought or known in the Middle East that the Secretary General had intervened between the UAR and Iraq at Western suggestion, there would be the same grave risk of causing the UAR to slack off in its anti-Communist campaign as would be present were the US to approach Nasser directly. However it might be useful for the UK to ask Mr. Hammarskjold to arrange to convey to the UAR the UK’s sincere desire for the resumption of diplomatic relations and the establishment of confidence between the UK and the UAR. Mr. Lloyd thought this was a good idea and said he would approach the Secretary General in this sense instead.

Mr. Lloyd also said that he would explain to the Secretary General the reasoning behind the UK decision to agree to sell arms to Iraq, which was now pretty firm. Previously during the conversation Mr. Lloyd had wondered whether it might not be a good idea for the UK to convey these reasons directly to the UAR. It was suggested, however, to Mr. Lloyd that such action might only deepen the current UAR suspicion of the UK, since any value which might reside in prior notification to the UAR had been destroyed by the publicity already given to the possibility that the UK would reach an affirmative decision on the Iraqi arms matter, and on the grounds that “qui s’excuse, s’accuse”. Mr. Lloyd believed this reasoning had merit. (During this part of the conversation, Mr. Lloyd said he had the impression the US hoped the UK would provide arms to Iraq. In response the US position was outlined. It is that if the UK should decide, in its own interests, to go ahead, the US would not object. Mr. Lloyd said he had thought our position was more “affirmative” than this.)

Turning again to the situation in Iraq Mr. Lloyd asked if there were not something that the US and UK could now do about reducing tensions between the UAR and Iraq. In reply it was noted that Nasser’s direct attacks on Qassim seemed to be less frequent and that the UAR had agreed to attend the Arab League meeting now going on in Beirut. It was perhaps too soon to say that this meeting had failed, and it might be that in the next few days there would be a slacking off of the UAR propaganda attacks on Iraq. It seemed desirable for the US and the UK not to intervene at this stage in this specific sense. However, it might be useful
if the US and the UK were to approach other nations with the suggestion that they instruct their representatives in Baghdad to warn the Iraqi Government against the dangers of becoming too closely involved with the Soviet Union. Such a suggestion had just been received from the American Embassy in Baghdad, together with a suggested list of countries to be approached. These included a number of Arab states, which the Department thought it might not be a good idea for the US and UK to approach, since this would inevitably become known in the Near East thus destroying the effectiveness of any démarche. However there were a number of other nations outside the area which might exert a beneficial influence. It was suggested to Mr. Lloyd that the US and UK might agree upon which of these countries each would approach. Mr. Lloyd thought this was a good idea and said the UK might take Yugoslavia, for example, and the US might take Spain. It was agreed that the Department and the UK Embassy would consult about this.

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174. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State

Jidda, April 4, 1959, noon.

847. King Saud sent Tubaishi with message he vitally concerned about danger of Communist Iraq to Saudi Arabia, Arab world and West. Anxious to know plans or thinking of US and British about what to do stop communism in Iraq.¹ His information that Qassem Communist and believes if not stopped Communist Iraq will take over Kuwait, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia in that order, therefore action to counter vital. Tubaishi interjected personal view that US must watch UK to insure British do not fail in what they are attempting but would not elaborate. Nasser has appealed to King and willing do anything for his support but King believes Nasser has lost heavily as result Mosul and Iraqis have powerful weapon in anti-Nasser sentiment in Syria. Claims Nasser has become obsessed by need destroy Qassem. If US and UK are going take action against communism in Iraq can count on King and

¹ [Text of footnote not declassified.]

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/4-459. Top Secret; Limit Distribution.
Saudi Arabia for anything. Saudi Arabia cannot act alone and must continue in its own interest for time being with public posture of neutralism. Again Tubaishi interjected own inability understand why King did not speak out. King now in Mecca but will leave for Riyadh via Jidda on April 8 and hopes for message from USG before then.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{2}In telegram 891 to Jidda, April 6, the Department asked that Sweeney inform King Saud that the United States shared his concern but recognized that expressions of concern from Western sources might only serve to strengthen the Communist position in Iraq. The Department wondered whether the King would consider approaching Qassim to warn him of the dangers associated with involvement with the Soviet Union. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/4–659)

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175. \textbf{Paper Prepared in the Department of State}

\textbf{Washington, April 15, 1959.}

\textbf{THE SITUATION IN IRAQ}

Policy the United States Should Follow To Prevent Communism From Establishing Control of the Country

\textbf{I. Evaluation of the Situation}

If the rapid development of Communist strength in Iraq is not arrested, there is grave danger that the country will fall under Communist control. The Communists have taken over all significant media of public expression in Iraq. They also control the increasingly active para-mili-

Source: Eisenhower Library, Files of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, Near East. Top Secret. Drafted by Rockwell. Sent by Calhoun to Karl G. Harr, Jr., at the White House for use at the April 17 meeting of the NSC; see Document 176. According to an April 14 memorandum from Skofield to Mak, Herter read and approved this paper. Herter hoped that prompt interagency agreement on the courses of action recommended herein could be achieved without invoking a meeting of the heads of the various agencies and that the coordinated program could be recommended to the President. (Department of State, S/P Files: Lot 67 D 548, Iraq)
tary Popular Resistance Forces, and they are marshaling trade union and student groups to serve the Communist cause. In addition, Communists or pro-Communists are established in certain key positions in the Iraqi Government, notably in the fields of economic development and propaganda, and in the immediate entourage of the Prime Minister. The Communists are also making strenuous efforts to subvert the army, the key factor in the control of the country. The army cannot be said as yet to be Communist-controlled, but apparently the Communists are having success in subverting the lower ranks and the possibility is a real one that in a time of crisis the junior officers and non-commissioned officers would not obey instructions from above which might be opposed by the Communists.

Although the majority of the Iraqis are not sympathetic to communism, there is at present no effective opposition to the Communist forces. The anti-Communist nationalists are at the moment demoralized and virtually powerless.

In the midst of this growing Communist strength the Prime Minister remains an enigma. Although on several occasions he has with apparent sincerity stated that he has no intention of turning Iraq over either to the Western “imperialists” or to the Communists, and although certain Communist demands, such as the execution of imprisoned officials of the Nuri regime and the full arming of the Popular Resistance Forces, have not been met, the Prime Minister has taken no significant action to curb Communist strength.

The Soviet Union is according full support to Iraq both publicly in the propaganda field and particularly by economic and military assistance. The tone and content of the Iraqi press and radio output give firm indication of Soviet guidance and coaching. Meanwhile, despite the Prime Minister’s protestations of friendship for the West, the position of the latter in Iraq continues to deteriorate. Westerners long resident in the country are being expelled and Western contractors are being harassed by the Communists and by government obstruction. The West is daily attacked in the Iraqi press and over the Iraq radio. The Prime Minister’s stated desire that Iraq shall follow a policy of neutrality is rendered meaningless by the actions of subordinate officials of the Iraqi Government who are clearly biased in favor of the Soviet Union and the Communists.

Accordingly, the situation in Iraq is cause for grave concern on the part of the United States. If matters proceed along their present course it seems but a matter of time before Communist control of the country will be established, even though surface appearances may be that Qassim is in control. If the Communists take over Iraq, they will be in a position to extend their influences into Syria and the Persian Gulf areas, particularly Kuwait, thus threatening the West’s control of the Middle East oil
reserves. The repercussions of a Communist takeover in Iraq could well
include the downfall of the regime in Iran.

Despite this grave situation it is notable that certain Middle East
friends of the United States regard the Iraq situation by no means as
darkly as does the United States. Turkey, Jordan, and Israel in par-
cular, and Iran to a lesser degree, appear to believe that Qassim will keep
Iraq independent of the Communists and feel strongly that Nasser is un-
dermining this possibility by his attacks on Iraq. The Turks have gone so
far as to give the impression that they would go to Iraq’s assistance if
Nasser should intervene in that country. Even the UK views the Iraq
situation with less alarm than does the United States. The attitude of the
Sudan seems to be that it is none of the business of the rest of the Arab
world whether Iraq goes Communist, and King Saud, in viewing de-
velopments in Iraq, is torn between his fear of the Communists and his ha-
tred of Nasser. During the recent Arab League meeting in Beirut only
Yemen strongly supported the UAR with regard to Iraq. The reason for
the difference between these states’ appraisal of the Iraqi situation and
that of the United States seems in varying degrees to lie in the fear and
resentment of Nasser on the part of the former and the belief that even a
Communist takeover in Iraq might be preferable to a Nasser takeover.

While the developments in Iraq, from the United States point of
view, present a very dark picture, it must not be forgotten that develop-
ments in the rest of the Near East present a far brighter picture from the
United States viewpoint than has been the case for a long time. The rap-
prochement between the US and the UAR, the effective campaign being
carried on by Nasser against local Communists and the Soviet Union,
the resultant awakening of the Arabs to the danger of international com-
munism—all of these are developments which would not have seemed
possible a year ago and which bring tremendous political benefits from
our point of view. We must be very careful, in considering steps we
might take, with regard to Iraq, to proceed cautiously with any meas-
ures which might jeopardize the present favorable developments in the
rest of the area.

II. Steps which the United States and its Friends Might Take to Arrest the
Trend toward Communist Control of Iraq

a. Endeavor to Convince Qassim of United States Friendship and Desire
to See Iraq Remain Independent

This is being done. The United States has made a special effort to
counteract Communist lies that the United States is plotting against the
Qassim regime and seeks to overthrow it. It is difficult to know whether
Qassim has been convinced but for some weeks he has not reiterated his
previous conviction, apparently based on Communist reports, that the
United States was in fact plotting against his government. In support of
this approach and in order to help provide Qassim with an alternative to complete reliance on the USSR, the United States has indicated its willingness to continue to provide technical assistance and its desire that United States firms continue to contribute toward the economic strength of Iraq. As regards military assistance, the Iraqi Government has never responded to our request for information on its position with regard to the military aid agreement and there is good reason to doubt that the supplying of arms to Iraq at this time would produce benefits within the country great enough to outweigh the disadvantage which would derive from Nasser’s obtaining the impression that we were supporting Iraq against him, with the possible lessening of his anti-Communist campaign as a result. Thus while we should continue to seek friendly relations with the Iraqi Government and to convince them that we are not plotting against them it would not be in our interests to offer to provide arms, beyond agreeing to sell spare parts for United States military equipment in Iraqi hands. At the same time Iraq is not entirely cut off from Western sources of supply for military equipment, since the British have apparently decided to accede to the Iraqi request to sell arms.

b. Military Intervention

It has been suggested that national policy attaches such importance to the prevention of Communist domination of the states in the Middle East that we should be prepared to go even to the length of military intervention to prevent this. If we felt that US military action, if taken in Iraq, would keep Iraq from communism and would not gravely endanger US interests in the Middle East of even greater significance than Iraq, we should not be deterred from taking such action by the threat of Soviet military reaction. However, as soon as US forces left Iraq the revulsion against any government set up under their aegis would be so great that it would probably be swept away and its replacement would in all likelihood be a Communist government. Thus for this reason alone we cannot advocate this course, apart from the long standing United States principles which would be violated by what would in effect be unprovoked United States aggression and apart from the catastrophic psychological reaction throughout Africa and Asia which would inevitably portray us as being worse aggressors than the Communists.

c. Public Expressions of US Concern over Growth of Communism in Iraq

We tried this approach when Syria was threatened with a Communist takeover and came to the conclusion that it did more harm than good. Such a move produces resentment amongst sensitive Arab nationalists, tends to unify Arab opinion in hostility to the United States, and thereby weakens the position of the West and strengthens that of the Communists. The less the West can do in Iraq to provide a target
around which the Communists can rally opinion against the West, the better.

It should also be noted that any public expression of US concern over the growth of communism in Iraq would tend publicly to identify us with Nasser’s current anti-Communist campaign. This would be most unfortunate since Communist propagandists would exploit our statement to substantiate their allegations that Nasser is fast becoming an “imperialist stooge”. Our statement would thus seriously compromise Nasser’s anti-Communist efforts which in the end are likely to be much more effective than any efforts of our own. For the foregoing reasons, a public statement by us expressing concern over communism in Iraq would clearly be unwise.

d. Attempt to Dissuade Nasser from Attacking Qassim and Iraq

However great may be the risks that Nasser’s attacks on Iraq are forcing Qassim to rely more than he might wish on the Communists, we believe that the advantages which the West derives from Nasser’s current anti-Communist campaign are such that the risk in Iraq must be run. It is likely that if we were to approach Nasser to suggest letting up on Iraq he would interpret this as revealing that we were taking Iraq’s side against him; he might slacken if not cease his anti-Communist campaign. We do not wish to run this risk. It is also of course by no means certain that if there were a détente between the UAR and Iraq, the Government of Iraq would turn its attention to curbing the Communists.

e. Encourage Nasser in his Campaign against Communism in Iraq

While we have not directly linked with Nasser’s present campaign against communism the steps we have recently taken to aid Egypt, there is no doubt that Nasser knows that we have taken these steps as a sign of approval of his current campaign and that they have emboldened him in his anti-Communist efforts. We have instructed Ambassador Hare to convey to Nasser expressions of encouragement from the highest circles of the United States Government and we are certain that Nasser, at the moment at least, has no concern that if he presses his attack on communism in Iraq and elsewhere in the Near East the United States will take the occasion to stab him in the back somehow. He would be even more certain of our attitude if something could be done to help him with the difficult problem of disposing of Egyptian cotton, for the lifting of which he now depends so heavily on the USSR. We should continue to encourage Nasser in his present attitude by whatever means may be feasible to us. At the same time it should be borne in mind that Nasser’s current conflict with the Communists, while opening up new opportunities for the West, has not altered his basic pan-Arab goals which include the elimination of the remaining positions of Western, and particularly British, influence in the area.
f. Encourage Representations to Iraqi Government by Other Nations

We believe it would be useful to encourage other nations represented in Baghdad to instruct their representatives there to bring home to Qassim the dangers of becoming too closely involved with the Soviet Union and of allowing the Communists to attain too much control and authority. We are proceeding to attempt to achieve the agreement of the nations concerned to send such instructions.

g. Western Threat to Boycott Iraqi Oil, Cutting of IPC Pipeline, General Economic Boycott

Even if we could obtain British and French agreement to join us in a public announcement at this time that we would boycott Iraqi oil if the Communists established control of Iraq, we do not believe that this would be a desirable step to take as it would enrage the Iraqi population and thus enhance the Communist position, and would cause the Iraqis to turn even more to the Russians. The same reasoning would apply to the possibility of our contriving to have the IPC pipelines cut as a means of bringing pressure on the Iraqi Government. If we undertook an economic boycott of Iraq, the USSR would without doubt step in to aid Iraq, thus further consolidating its position there as it did in Egypt where it quickly agreed to supply commodities urgently needed by the Egyptians. These courses would increase rather than curb the growth of communism in Iraq.

h. Letter from President Eisenhower to Qassim

We have considered the possibility that the President might write an appropriate letter to Prime Minister Qassim warning him of the danger of collaboration with the USSR and the Communists. We have felt, and the Embassy in Baghdad concurs, that such a step would be deeply resented as intervention in Iraqi affairs, would provide the Communists with helpful ammunition against us, and thus would not be effective.

III. Conclusions

The capacity of the United States to take decisive action which would arrest the growing Communist strength in Iraq and at the same time insure against the resurgence of communism as soon as the US action were terminated, is limited. The United States could of course send forces into Iraq but this would not prevent communism from re-establishing itself once these forces withdrew. Furthermore, such military action would set the whole Middle East against us at a time when the current in the area, with the exception of Iraq, is for the first time in a long while running in favor of the United States. It is unlikely that economic warfare against Iraq by the United States would have any effect other than to turn the population against us and strengthen the position of the Communists and of the USSR, which would provide the neces-
sary economic assistance to Iraq. As for assets in Iraq at this time of sufficient significance to influence decisively the course of events in that country, the United States does not possess them.

Other factors which limit the ability of the United States to take decisive and effective action are the support which Prime Minister Qassim continues to receive from the army and the key segments of the Iraqi population; the efficiency of the Iraqi security forces which have foiled several attempts to overthrow the Qassim regime; the identification of the United States with the hated regime of Nuri Said; the social ostracism and personal harassment currently being experienced by Americans in Iraq, and the example of Egypt in obtaining help from the USSR while maintaining its independence, which no doubt leads the Iraqi leaders to believe they can do the same thing.

Another factor which at present is working against the United States is that of timing. The Iraqi leaders have carried out a revolution and swept away all the restraints which the previous regime had imposed on the population. The pendulum in Iraq has thus swung very far from the direction in which it was held for so many years. The Iraqi leaders, even some pro-Western ones, seem to be operating on the philosophy that this is perfectly natural under the circumstances and that in due course a balanced position of neutrality will be achieved. Thus, efforts by outsiders at this time to establish a feeling of alarm and concern in the Iraqi leaders over the degree of progress toward the left come at the wrong psychological moment as far as the leaders are concerned. The problem of course is that if they should attempt at some future date to redress the balance they may find it is too late.

In view of the limited capacity of the United States effectively to alter developments in Iraq by direct approach, it is perforce necessary to turn to indirect methods of influencing the situation. A decision to do this implies, in the circumstances, that the problem will not be quickly solved. There is thus the risk that the Communists will become too deeply entrenched before the indirect approach can become effective in curbing their strength. It must be recalled, however, that when a similar situation, although admittedly not so serious a one, existed in connection with Syria and after our direct approaches to the Syrian problem had failed, the trend toward Communist domination of Syria was effectively arrested by regional elements, with our indirect encouragement. It seems to us that we must approach the Iraqi problem in the same fashion, recognizing the limitations upon our ability to bring about quick results and accepting the risk inherent in the relatively long period of time which will be required before the indirect approach through regional elements can prove effective. We also assume that there are anti-Communist elements in Iraq awaiting a suitable opportunity to bring about a change of the present trend.
The regional force which obviously presents itself as the avenue through which it may be possible to curb the growth of communism in Iraq is Arab nationalism as headed by President Nasser of the United Arab Republic. This force, with its powerful propaganda, is already heavily engaged against communism in the area, and is in specific conflict with the Iraqi regime. Judging from reports received, Nasser is confident that he will win this battle. Although he may be overestimating his abilities vis-à-vis the Communists, there is no doubt he recognizes the serious nature of the struggle and realizes that if he loses it he risks losing Syria and weakening his position in Egypt as well.

We have already taken steps to make clear to Nasser that we approve of what he is doing and that we support him in this battle. Recognizing that in the circumstances the best chances of curbing the Communists in Iraq reside in measures which the Arabs themselves may take to bring this about, we should continue this policy, implementing it with such steps as we can take from time to time in our own right to contribute to the outcome. Assuming that we are granted the necessary time, we should not be discouraged if progress seems slow. We should remember the many months and the patient painstaking work which were involved in bringing the United Arab Republic to a realization of the dangers of communism and in establishing the considerable degree of confidence which now exists between ourselves and the United Arab Republic, a situation which many observers would have thought impossible a year ago. It should be emphasized that if our policy with respect to the United Arab Republic has been successful it has been due in large measure to our recognition of the delicacy involved and our avoidance of the sensational, the dramatic, and newspaper publicity. In dealing with the grave Iraqi situation, it would behoove us to move with the same delicacy, secrecy and painstaking effort.

IV. Recommended Courses of Action

a. Without publicly injecting ourselves into Nasser’s battle against the Communists in the Middle East, or taking sides in the Nasser-Qassim fight, we should discreetly lend Nasser encouragement and assistance recognizing that the United States is severely handicapped as far as ability quickly to change the situation in Iraq is concerned and that the problem should be approached through indigenous forces.

b. If there should develop grounds for sound belief that the trend toward communism in Iraq would be arrested if a détente between Iraq and the UAR could be brought about, we should urgently explore means of achieving this.

c. We should maintain a correct but friendly attitude toward Qassim and the Iraqi Government, refraining from publicly condemning Iraq and from adopting an attitude of public hostility toward her. We
have not given up hope that Qassim, or other forces in Iraq, will take measures to curb the Communists.

d. At the same time, we should make every effort firmly to defend United States interests in Iraq. We should not allow the Iraqis to take unfriendly actions such as the harassment of our personnel without appropriate protest.

e. We should make every effort to maintain and where feasible strengthen the United States “presence” in Iraq. This means maintaining elements of our technical assistance program which are being utilized and attempting to be helpful in other non-dramatic and non-military fields.

f. We should make energetic efforts to align the evaluation by other friendly nations of the situation in Iraq with our own. We need particularly to persuade the Turks of the dangers involved in the current situation in Iraq.

g. We should make efforts to persuade appropriate friendly nations which share our views of the situation in Iraq to make representations to the Iraqi Government to warn it of the dangers of becoming too closely involved with the Soviet Union and of permitting the Communists to become too powerful.

i. [sic] We should cooperate closely with the British and coordinate with them policy designed to achieve our purposes.

j. We should and are urgently examining with the British steps, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] which we might take in the event that, despite the measures described above, a Communist take-over of Iraq occurs. In this connection, contingency plans should be formulated for replacing IPC oil supplies to Western Europe by oil from other Mideast sources.
176. Memorandum of Discussion at the 402d Meeting of the National Security Council

Washington, April 17, 1959.

[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda item 1, "Resignation of John Foster Dulles as Secretary of State."]

2. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security

Mr. Gray reminded the Council that the only business before it this morning was the grave situation in Iraq and what courses of action the U.S. might carry out to meet the threat of a Communist take-over in that country. He then explained that the Director of Central Intelligence would first brief the Council on the latest developments in Iraq and would thereafter add such other items of intelligence as he deemed of particular importance.

[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

With respect to the latest developments in Iraq, Mr. Dulles asked the Vice President's permission to read a brief, coordinated Intelligence Estimate of the situation.1 The report, as read by Mr. Dulles, was extremely pessimistic from the point of view of the interests of the U.S. and the West. It indicated that the Iraqi Communists will presently have the capability to take over direct control of Iraq if, indeed, they do not have this capability already. On the other hand, Mr. Dulles was inclined to doubt if the Communists would make use of this capability in the near future because to do so might not be to their long-term advantage. The report also discussed the changing point of view of the British Foreign Office and of the Turkish Government, both of whom were now inclined to take a much more serious view of Communist influence in Iraq. There had been no change, however, in the well-known Israeli view that Nasser constituted a worse threat than Communism if the U.A.R. gained control of Iraq. Mr. Dulles asked Assistant Secretary Rountree if he entertained different views about Iraq than those provided by the report just read. Secretary Rountree indicated that he did not.

Secretary McElroy asked Mr. Dulles whether he felt that the previous Turkish point of view about Qasim was influenced by the views of

Source: Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records. Top Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by Gleason on April 20. In addition to Gleason's memoranda of this meeting, Rountree and Gerard Smith prepared less extensive memoranda of conversation of the meeting, both April 17. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/4–1759, and ibid., S/P–NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Iraq, The Situation, NSC Action No. 2068)

1 Not found, but the description of the conclusions is similar to that in Documents 179 and 181.
the Israelis. When Mr. Dulles replied that he felt the Turks were somewhat influenced by the Israeli point of view, Secretary McElroy went on to say that he had recently had quite a long talk with Turkish Foreign Minister Zorlu who repeated their well-known view that Nasser was the real enemy in the Middle East and that Communism was nothing like the threat of Nasserism in that area.

Mr. Allen Dulles then informed the Council that a recent telegram from Ambassador Jernegan in Baghdad contained the information that the British Ambassador to Iraq, Sir Hugh Trevelyon, had been ordered back to London for consultation. It was Jernegan’s understanding that Trevelyon still intended to recommend to the British Government that it supply arms to Iraq. However, inasmuch as such arms could not be delivered until late in 1960, this proposal was at this stage, hardly more than a gesture.

Mr. Gray pointed out that he had seen recent information that the U.K. may change its mind on supplying these arms to Iraq. Secretary Rountree volunteered the information that the U.K. Government was at this point attempting to decide whether or not to proceed with its offer of armament to Iraq. There was a difference of opinion in the British Foreign Office and this was why Trevelyon had been called back to London. Some elements in the Foreign Office still believed that it was wise to provide Iraq with an alternative to securing arms solely from the U.S.S.R.

Mr. Allen Dulles then commented on the long and growing list of Iraqi harassments of U.S. officials in Iraq. He also alluded to the so-called repatriation of a number of Kurds from the Soviet Union. While perhaps most of these Kurds had been exiled from Iraq by the former regime of Nuri-Said, there were undoubtedly a number of Soviet agents included among them.

With respect to the list of incidents in which the Iraqis were harassing U.S. personnel in Iraq, Mr. Gordon Gray singled out as particularly shocking their treatment of Mr. Nash. Secretary Rountree agreed that the treatment which he described in detail, was shocking. He indicated that Nash had now been released from prison and given only twenty-four hours to leave the country. Mr. Gray commented that if this sort of

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2 Telegram 2964 from Baghdad, April 15. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.56/4–1559)

3 John R. Nash, a member of USOM in Iraq, was arrested on April 14 by Iraqi plain-clothes agents who searched his house and confiscated a tape recorder. Nash was taken to the Ministry of Defense and then the police station. Despite assurances to Ambassador Jernegan that Nash would be released, he was detained overnight, interrogated, insulted, and treated roughly. He was released at noon on April 15 and given 2 days to leave Iraq, which he did. At no time was he provided with an explanation of his arrest, but his interrogators led him to believe he was suspected of spying. (Telegram 3099 from Baghdad, April 29; ibid., 611.87/4–2959)
thing were to occur in Cuba or Bolivia or almost anywhere else, it seemed that our Government would get excited about such an incident and at least make strong protests. Secretary Rountree countered by stating that we were making strong protests to the Prime Minister. Indeed our Ambassador was at this very moment meeting with Qasim to discuss this and numerous other similar incidents. He believed that the State Department had done an adequate job of protesting each of these incidents as they had occurred.

The National Security Council:

Noted and discussed an oral briefing by the Director of Central Intelligence on the subject, with specific reference to the situation in Yemen; indications that Khrushchev's health may have been impaired by overwork in recent months; and a coordinated intelligence survey of the situation in Iraq.

3. The Situation in Iraq (NSC 5810/1, paragraph 34–d; NSC 5820/1; NSC Actions Nos. 2033–b and 2065–b)

In introducing Council discussion on Iraq Mr. Gray informed the Vice President who was presiding at this meeting, as well as the other members of the Council, that he had discussed the idea of holding such a meeting with the President yesterday morning at Augusta. The President had agreed that such a meeting would be desirable. Mr. Gray added the comment that from personal observation of the President, it seemed to him that his health was good and his tone fine. However, he added that the President had obviously suffered a heavy personal blow in the resignation of Secretary Dulles. Mr. Gray then said that the only written material before the Council on the subject of Iraq was a paper prepared in the Department of State on the situation and possible courses of action. While this paper was responsive to the President's previous instruction, there had been no time to coordinate the paper with the other responsible departments and agencies. (A copy of Mr.

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4. In telegram 2543 to Baghdad, April 10, Jernegan was instructed to meet with Qassim to “leave definite impression of seriousness with which we view apparently rising tide of deliberate anti-American actions and public statements on part of Iraqi officials.” (Ibid., 611.87/4–859) Jernegan was not able to see Qassim until April 28 when he made the démarche as instructed and received a rambling and disjointed response from Qassim. Jernegan commented that Qassim's manner was friendly, his comments broad and idealistic, his conviction that the United States was plotting against him unshaken, and there was no indication that he was disposed to take concrete actions to settle the specific problems of harassment of the U.S. Embassy and Americans in Iraq. (Telegram 3099 from Baghdad, April 29; Ibid., 611.87/4–2959)

5. See Document 170.


Gray’s briefing note⁹ and the State Department paper are filed in the Minutes of the Meeting.) The Vice President then asked Secretary Rountree whether he had any additional comments to make with respect to Mr. Allen Dulles’ briefing on Iraq or the State paper which Mr. Gray had just mentioned.

Secretary Rountree explained that several days ago Secretary Herter had instructed him to prepare this paper on Iraq and to coordinate it subsequently with the other interested departments for presentation to the National Security Council. Unfortunately, there had not been time to effect this coordination prior to the present meeting. It had, however, been distributed to the other departments yesterday and the coordinating process would promptly be begun. The analysis of the situation in Iraq, as contained in the State Department paper, was very similar to the Estimate which Mr. Allen Dulles had just provided to the Council. Secretary Rountree then reminded those present that at the last meeting at which the Council had discussed Iraq,¹⁰ shortly after he (Secretary Rountree) had returned from his visit to Iraq, he had reported on two major developments in that country. The first of these concerned how the Communists had come out in the open in Iraq. The second related to the strong anti-Communist campaign in the several Arab states which had emerged as a result of the demonstration of strong Communist power in Iraq. This latter Secretary Rountree described as an extraordinary change. Unfortunately, however, the effort to launch a program by the Arab League against the pro-Communist regime in Iraq had been unsuccessful. Nevertheless, consideration as to what we should do with respect to Iraq should be undertaken in the light of these two most significant developments. In short, whatever the U.S. considered doing in Iraq should avoid if possible any conflict with this new and favorable anti-Communist trend in all the Arab states except Iraq. In this connection Secretary Rountree pointed out that the U.S. Government had recently greatly improved its relations with Nasser and the United Arab Republic. Nevertheless, the State Department doubted the wisdom of Nasser’s violent attacks on Qasim personally as opposed to the more sensible course of action of attacking Communism in Iraq. There appeared to be in the making, however, a shift in the direction of Nasser’s propaganda and in the future we might expect Nasser to attack the Iraqi

⁹ From this briefing note Gray read to the Council the text of his April 3 memorandum to Herter (Document 172) and stated that he would naturally report the results of this meeting to the President in Augusta, Georgia. Gray then suggested creation of an interdepartmental group as outlined in paragraph b of NSC Action No. 2068 (see footnote 12 below).

¹⁰ See Document 155.
Communists rather than to go after Qasim directly. Such attacks would nevertheless continue to be made against Qasim’s entourage.

Secretary Rountree then indicated that he did not propose to go into a detailed analysis of the situation in Iraq at present because this had been so well done by Mr. Allen Dulles earlier in the meeting. Thereafter he summarized the remainder of the content of the State Department paper and also discussed the attitude of the Turks, the Israelis, and the Jordanians toward developments in Iraq.

The Vice President interrupted to state that he judged that these three nations as well as the U.K. were a good deal less concerned about the situation in Iraq than was the U.S. He presumed that this was so because all these governments were rather more concerned about the threat posed by Nasser. Did this mean, inquired the Vice President, that the position of these governments with respect to Qasim would be to support him because Nasser was attacking him?

Secretary Rountree replied that when he and his associates had talked with the British recently at Camp David, three possible eventualities had been foreseen in Iraq: first, a Communist take-over; second, a Nasser take-over; and third, a “Nationalist” take-over which would remove both the Communists and the pro-Nasser leaders from the Iraqi Government. While all of us had hoped that the latter possibility would actually come to pass, it was agreed that one of the first two possibilities was the more likely. Because they so completely distrusted Nasser, the British were much more willing to undertake the risks which would be incurred by attempting to follow the third possibility of a Nationalist come-back in Iraq.

The Vice President expressed the opinion that even if the Nationalists should win temporarily in Iraq, their victory might lead to an eventual Communist take-over. The Vice President said that this was what he deduced from the State Department paper. While he described this paper as an excellent analysis, the Vice President added that when one got through reading it, one came away with the idea that there was really nothing that the U.S. could do to prevent the worst from happening in Iraq.

Secretary Rountree said that he would like to describe the main factors which underlay the situation in Iraq with respect to these three possible alternatives. He believed that the vast majority of the population in Iraq want neither Nasser nor the Communists to take over their country. Accordingly, there was some reason to hope that even if the

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11 An account of that discussion, in which Iraq was one of the topics discussed, is in a memorandum of conversation, March 22. (Department of State, Secretary’s Memoranda of Conversation: Lot 64 D 199)
Iraqi Communists now have the upper hand, that the pendulum would ultimately swing back away from Communism but not in the direction of Nasserism. This at least was the view and the hope of some of the leading Iraqi citizens.

The Vice President then inquired of Secretary Rountree whether he would say that the people of Iraq were more worried about the Communists or about Nasser. Secretary Rountree replied that at the moment at least they were more worried about the Communists. But, continued the Vice President, the British and apparently the Turks, Israelis, and some others seem more worried about Nasser than about the Communists. Secretary Rountree did not think this was quite accurate but noted that the governments mentioned by the Vice President were certainly reluctant to enter into any program which would result in building up Nasser in the Middle East. The Vice President then commented that nevertheless it seemed unlikely that we could find any middle ground between Communist control of Iraq and control by Nasser. Secretary Rountree answered that a leading authority in the U.A.R. had stated yesterday that in his view Qasim’s career was finished. If it turned out that Qasim was a Communist, then clearly the Communists have him in the bag. If, on the other hand, it turns out that Qasim is not a Communist, the Communists will get rid of him very soon. They will never permit him to swing back to a nationalist but non-Communist position. According to the U.A.R. informant, the U.S.S.R. had been willing to submit to tremendous losses in its long-term program for taking over the Middle East by virtue of the support that it had given to the Iraqi Communists. Secretary Rountree pointed out that of course these views constituted an Arab argument but he nevertheless thought them significant. Secretary Rountree gave it as his own view that we do not believe that we can yet conclude that Qasim was lost and that there was no possibility of a reverse of the trend of Iraq toward Communist domination.

The Vice President then referred to the several alternative U.S. courses of action as set forth in the State Department paper. He commented that there seemed a strong implication that each one of these alternatives was weighed down with so many liabilities from the U.S. point of view that one was driven to the conclusion that it was perhaps better to let Iraq go down the drain than to attempt to carry out any of the alternatives. Secretary Rountree said that he could not agree with the Vice President’s deduction but the Vice President replied that the State Department paper seemed to argue against each of the alternative courses of action because each course of action, while providing some hope of improvement in Iraq, carried with it the likelihood that it would hurt the interests of the U.S. in all the other Arab countries.

Secretary Rountree responded by stating his belief in the possibility of avoiding the loss of Iraq while using means short of drastic U.S. ac-
tion. The basis for his belief, said Secretary Rountree, lay in the fact that the Arab countries themselves were now so deeply concerned about the Communist threat to Iraq and to the entire Middle East. As a result, the Arab countries themselves may undertake to do what is necessary to save Iraq. Such a course of action would certainly be the best from the U.S. point of view and this was the course of action which at the present time the U.S. Government was following. Secretary Rountree added that this did not mean, of course, that there were not certain things that the U.S. could do to assist the Arab movement.

(At this point the Vice President temporarily left the room to take a telephone call from the President at Augusta.)

While the Vice President was absent from the room, Mr. Gray asked the members of the Council whether they would approve of his drafting a Resolution by the National Security Council on the resignation of the Secretary of State. Mr. Gray thought that the Council Resolution should be undertaken prior to the appointment of a successor to Secretary Dulles. All present responded enthusiastically to Mr. Gray's suggestion. (The draft Resolution is given as Item 1 in the list of Council actions for this meeting.)

When the Vice President had returned, Secretary Rountree went on to say that the most hopeful possibility of saving Iraq was in his opinion to give the lead in the process to the Arab states themselves. We were encouraging this course of action in every possible way. If this course of action did not ultimately succeed and Iraq was lost to the Communists, we could at least derive some comfort from the fact that the Arabs themselves would thereafter recognize the necessity for drastic action if the whole Middle East was not to be lost to Communism. Once this realization had dawned, then the U.S. would be in a position to undertake forceful military measures in collaboration with the Arab states to change the situation in Iraq.

The Vice President observed that he understood that the State Department was trying to build up the basis for this course of action with respect to Iraq. Secretary Rountree replied in the affirmative and said that in addition to the State Department paper before the Council, we had discussed this course of action with the British in the Macmillan meetings at Camp David, along with various other contingencies. Secretary Rountree added that there was a group of U.S. officials working on the problem in very great secrecy. The group had arrived at no magic solutions but it was engaged in surveying practically continuously all possible courses of action.

The Vice President said that as he understood Secretary Rountree's remarks, he was in effect stating that we simply could not tolerate a Communist take-over in Iraq and that we were therefore engaged in building a case to prevent this from happening or for overthrowing a
Communist regime in case one became established in Iraq. Secretary Rountree answered in the affirmative and stated that the U.S. could not tolerate a Communist take-over in Iraq. Such a take-over would not only result in the loss of Iraq, it would pose great danger to Iran, Kuwait, and Syria—indeed in time it would endanger the entire Arab world. This was not only an obvious truth, thought Secretary Rountree, but one which he thought in a short time the Arab states themselves would recognize.

The Vice President next inquired of Secretary Rountree whether there was any considerable number of people in Iraq who would rally to the support of Qasim against either the Communists or the pro-Nasser forces. Were there a number of genuine Iraqi Nationalists? Secretary Rountree replied that while there were plenty of strong personalities in Iraq who would support Qasim against either Communist or Nasser forces, these Nationalists were not well organized at the present time. Secretary Rountree went on to add that we were not as appalled over the possibility of a pro-U.A.R. take-over in Iraq as were the British. We felt that we could do more about a Nasserite regime in Iraq at some future time than we would ever be able to do about a Communist regime in that country. Moreover, we are convinced that the Iraqis basically would never accept Egyptian domination over any considerable period. Since we thus believe that any Egyptian domination of Iraq would inevitably be for a short term, we are not too greatly concerned about the possibility of a take-over by Nasser in Iraq.

General Twining at this point stated that if the Council was entertaining thoughts of going as far as our current NSC policy on the Near East suggested, namely, to prevent by all possible means Soviet domination of countries in the Near East, we had better begin now to think about preparing for the possibility of military action in the area. If we contemplate military action to save Iraq, General Twining was convinced that we would need to clarify our reasoning in order to make such a move acceptable to the American public. Moreover, said General Twining, have we asked Nasser what he would think about such a U.S. plan for military action? We could easily take over Iraq by military force if the appropriate preparations were made in advance.

Secretary Anderson said that he was convinced that one of the basic elements in Soviet and Chinese Communist strategy was to multiply the number of crises in the world at any given time. We are now in such a situation as was exemplified by the Berlin crisis, Iraq, etc. If the Russians are very concerned about the possibility of having a free Berlin within Soviet controlled territory, how much greater should our concern be if Iraq fell into Russian hands. When you look at the Arab states which border Iraq, you cannot fail to observe the very great lack of significant military capability in all of them. Accordingly, if a strong Communist
military capability should be established in Iraq, then the whole of the Middle East is likely to go down the drain. Any such Communist military strength in Iraq would likewise lead to a most serious threat both to NATO and to the economic life and health of Western Europe as a whole. Fuel requirements alone would present an appalling problem for Western Europe as the Suez affair clearly demonstrated sometime ago. This would have repercussions even for the U.S. If the Suez affair had continued a few months longer, Secretary Anderson said he was convinced that fuel would have been rationed in the U.S.

Secretary Anderson then said that he agreed with Secretary Rountree as to the modification in the past few weeks of prior Arab hostility toward the U.S. Nevertheless we must be realistic. In his judgment, said Secretary Anderson, there was really no basic and permanent Arab unity except perhaps unity against Israel. The basic interests of the Arabs were the basic interests of the individual Arab countries rather than of the Arab nation as a whole. Even if we assumed that the man in the street does not want Communism to win out in Iraq, there always remained the problem of how effective the man in the street can be in Iraq unless we provide him with external assistance. With respect to the choice between Nasserism or Communism in Iraq, Secretary Anderson expressed himself as shocked that the British or anyone else could fail to realize that Communism is much the worse of the two choices. To Secretary Anderson indeed there was simply no choice at all. That the U.A.R. should take over as an alternative to the Communist take-over was to Secretary Anderson not even a debatable point.

Continuing, Secretary Anderson said that he was particularly worried about certain earlier situations which resemble the crisis we were now facing in the Middle East. He recalled all the discussion in the National Security Council about saving Indo-China from the Communists. After a great deal of talk, we finally came to the conclusion that we simply could not afford to lose Indo-China to the Communists. Yet after that, when we finally got down to military planning, we found ourselves talking about such a scale of magnitude that our intervention appeared to be hopeless. In point of fact, therefore, much of Indo-China was lost to the Communists while we were here talking and planning about saving it. We must not now repeat this error in the Middle East. How long are we expected to wait before we take action or make plans? How firm is our resolution that we cannot afford to lose Iraq to the Communists regardless of the risks that we would incur by forceful action to save the country? Secretary Anderson believed that the people of the U.S. would understand a U.S. decision to intervene to save Iraq. He expressed himself as much more worried about public opinion in Europe. Certainly there was no fuss in the U.S. about the action which our armed forces took in Lebanon and Iraq after all was much more important than
Lebanon. Secretary Anderson emphasized that he did not wish to state positively that we were taking adequate steps or inadequate steps to support Nasser or to do other useful things but he simply could not bring himself to believe that Qasim was a possible trump card in our hands. On the contrary, Secretary Anderson said he considered Qasim to be a doomed man if he did not actually prove to be a Communist.

Secretary Anderson went on to say that he did not think that Nasser and Qasim were comparable in terms of their capacity to make use of and yet to hold off the Soviet Union. Accordingly, it seemed to Secretary Anderson that the National Security Council ought to share the President’s view that any take-over by the Communists in Iraq was completely unacceptable and that we should be prepared to take very great risks to prevent such a take-over. To this end he recommended that the Council set up at once a group of Government officials whose sole duty it should be to plan to prevent such a Communist take-over. At the same time we should exert all possible pressure on our European allies and on our Arab friends to act in timely fashion to save Iraq, as we certainly did not do in the case of Indo-China. We do not want another Dienbienphu. We face a formidable task in preparing the U.S. to act militarily against Iraq without having recourse to the use of atomic weapons. Such U.S. intervention would require many divisions.

Turning to Secretary Rountree, the Vice President commented that as he understood the State Department view, it was that the State Department felt that no action which the U.S. can take at the present time could succeed in Iraq. Secondly, the State Department sees nothing that we can do to save Iraq which, even if successful in that country, would not destroy the U.S. position and prestige in all the other Arab countries. Secretary Rountree replied that this was indeed the case and would be the case until the Communists actually took over in Iraq and by so doing brought the Arabs to see what this meant for them and therefore induced them to support U.S. intervention to destroy the Communist regime in Iraq. The Vice President then went on to say to Secretary Rountree that as he, the Vice President, understood it, as far as Nasser and the leaders of the other Arab states were concerned, all that the State Department thinks we can expect for the time being is that they can stir up public opinion in Iraq to stand up against the Communists. Secretary Rountree replied in the affirmative.

Mr. George Allen stated that there seemed to him to be other possibilities. Perhaps, he said, he viewed the situation in Iraq with less concern than the other members of the Council. It seemed to Mr. Allen quite possible that Qasim’s course of action might well end up as a repetition of the action previously taken by Mossadegh in Iran and by Nasser in Egypt. In the midst of the Iranian and Egyptian crises, many of us in the U.S. were convinced that both Iran and Egypt were lost to the West.
Nevertheless, as Iran and Egypt showed, every time one of these Arab governments drastically changes in character, the pendulum inevitably swings back in due course. Therefore, Mr. Allen argued that he was not at all sure that the situation in Iraq had at this point gone any further than had the similar developments in Iran under Mossadegh and Egypt under Nasser at an earlier time. He therefore recommended that we remain calm and roll with the punches. He was quite sure that the Soviets would have a great deal of trouble in Iraq and he had the feeling that we were going through an era in Iraq not unlike that which Iran and Egypt had earlier gone through. If we did not lose our poise and our nerve, we might well come out all right. Moreover, if by our courses of action, we ended by handing over Iraq to Nasser, Mr. Allen was sure we would find Nasser extremely hard to deal with. In fact, if he added Iraq to his existing holdings, he would soon end up by swallowing the whole of the Middle East. He would therefore, said Mr. Allen, be inclined to let the nations of the Arab world settle their own affairs. In concluding his remarks, Mr. Allen pointed out that the great difficulties which Nasser had encountered in attempting to line up the Arab League against Iraq at the Beirut meeting had resulted, as it turned out, in only Yemen supporting Nasser’s efforts.

Mr. Allen’s comments induced Secretary Rountree to outline in some detail the recent meeting of the Arab League at Beirut and the reasons for Nasser’s failure to get Arab League support against Qasim. He said that the Arabs feared a complete triumph of Nasser. Secretary Rountree himself believed that the possibilities that Nasser could permanently take over in Iraq were very remote. He therefore repeated that he was not particularly worried about the U.S. policy of encouraging Nasser in his current anti-Communist program.

Secretary McElroy stated that he and his colleagues in the Defense Department together with the Joint Chiefs of Staff had been giving thought to U.S. requirements in the event that a determination was made for military action in Iraq. It was the view of the Defense Department that if we were to intervene in Iraq, we would have to be invited to do so by some kind of Iraqi governmental unit as had been the case in Lebanon. If Qasim was not going to be around long enough to invite us in to assist him in action against the Communists and we nevertheless intervened, we should be regarded in the eyes of much of the world as merely having become engaged in old-fashioned power politics. Secretary McElroy likewise thought it would not be easy to sell a program of military intervention in Iraq to the American people. In any event he was quite sure that we could not intervene in Iraq without requiring several divisions and without encountering severe logistical problems. Although of course we could successfully intervene, we must realize that we could not do so without bringing on a real strain in this country.
We might very well be forced to total mobilization to prepare for various contingencies; for example, that Iraq would be defended militarily by the armed forces of the Soviet Union. This of course could well lead to war between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. All this, in Secretary McElroy's view, pointed straight to trying to do whatever we could to act in Iraq without resorting to military actions—more perhaps than we were now doing. For example, should we not consider boycotting Iraqi petroleum? It would be possible for the Free World to get along without oil from Iraq. Beyond this course of action Secretary McElroy recommended that we should make a further effort to determine what Qasim's objectives and wishes really were—whether he was a Communist or an anti-Communist or, hopefully, a Third Force Nationalist. If the latter turned out to be the truth, then Qasim must be made to accept whatever support the U.S. could supply. If this were not the case and he turned out to be a Communist, we should think at once of applying commercial sanctions. Speaking with great feeling, Secretary McElroy said he felt it was outrageous that our British and French allies were treating developments in Iraq so casually when these were the very nations who would suffer first and the most acutely if Middle Eastern oil were lost to Western Europe and the Free World.

Mr. Gray asked for some clarification as to the views given in the State Department paper with respect to shutting off Iraqi oil as a commercial sanction against the Iraqi regime. Was the State Department thinking of a sudden and drastic shut-off of this oil or of a more subtle course of action such as a progressive reduction in Free World purchase of Iraqi petroleum supplies? Secretary McElroy replied that we were thinking rather of the progressive reduction of the purchase of the oil than of a sudden embargo.

Mr. Allen Dulles said that he was very much inclined to agree with Secretary McElroy that what was happening in Iraq represented a major effort by the Soviet Union to split the Middle East. He expressed himself as particularly worried about the eventual fate of Iran and he said that we could not sit by and let the situation in Iraq deteriorate further. In his opinion the Soviets would certainly not have risked their whole position in Egypt if they really did not mean business in Iraq. Their policy and action in Iraq was not certainly a mere drift. The Soviet policy was carefully calculated. Furthermore, he expressed disagreement with the analogy drawn by Mr. Allen between Mossadegh and Qasim, between Iran and Iraq. [2 lines of source text not declassified] He felt that there were a number of possible courses of action. He felt we should certainly try to induce the Arabs to take the lead and join in a united front against the Iraqi Communists. In this endeavor Bourguiba might prove a useful instrument. Perhaps he could find out what was really in Qasim's mind and what were Qasim's true objectives in Iraq.
The Vice President commented that it seemed to him that the great problem about waiting until the Communists had overtly taken over in Iraq as Secretary Rountree advocated, prior to direct U.S. action was this: if the Communists do take over Iraq there will be in a very short time no one left to invite us or anyone else to intervene. Under these circumstances could we still move in? We might but it would be very awkward. On the other hand, the arguments of Secretary Rountree and the State Department paper certainly did emphasize the difficulty of any overt U.S. course of action.

Secretary Rountree commented that Nasser had actually stated that Iraq was a battle which he was obliged to win. Secretary Rountree believed that the employment of Arab military forces against Iraq at some future time was not unlikely. It should be U.S. policy to support such Arab initiative rather than for us to intervene first and overtly.

Secretary Anderson said that while he agreed with Secretary McElroy in general on the desirability of commercial sanctions against the present government in Iraq, he nevertheless doubted whether we would be given a good case to apply sanctions against Iraq as we had been given such a case in Iran when Mossadegh proceeded to take over and to nationalize Western oil concessions in Iran. He believed that the Iraqi Communists would not take over the petroleum industry in Iraq as Mossadegh had in Iran. Therefore, it would be harder to refuse to buy Iraqi oil. So he came back, he said, to talking about U.S. divisions. We must prepare for the time when we reach the conclusion that Iraq is indeed lost to the Communists. We must at that point be able to act in timely fashion. Accordingly, we must have people constantly working on this problem every hour and every day to explore every U.S. action.

Secretary McElroy noted that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had not yet had an opportunity to consider the State Department paper which was now before the National Security Council. He believed that the Chiefs wanted an opportunity to consider the paper. Secretary Rountree said that the State Department was proposing to have meetings at once on its paper with the other responsible departments and agencies. The Vice President again praised the State Department paper despite the fact it concluded that there were more liabilities than assets for practically every course of action proposed in the State paper. He added that he would agree with Secretary Anderson that if we wait until the Communists clearly and openly take over in Iraq, we won’t be able to do anything about the accomplished fact.

Secretary Anderson in this context pointed out the difficulties of determining when such a Communist take-over had actually occurred. Secretary McElroy added the point that as regards military action against Iraq he doubted whether the Arabs, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] could overthrow the Communist regime in Iraq. To this
argument Secretary Rountree stated that the kind of military action he envisaged did not consist of a plain confrontation of Iraqi armed forces by the armed forces of the United Arab Republic. Rather such military action would consist of the infiltration of U.A.R. military forces into Iraq to work hand in hand with dissident forces already in action in Iraq, against the Communist regime. At this point Mr. Gray said that he wished to suggest a course of action upon which the Council might agree and recommend to the President. (For the text of the proposed action see Mr. Gray’s attached briefing note.) He then read a somewhat lengthy proposed NSC action on the subject of Iraq. The Vice President immediately at the conclusion of Mr. Gray’s proposal asked Secretary Rountree how it sounded to him. Secretary Rountree replied that he believed that the State Department should proceed with further consideration of its own paper in conjunction with the other interested departments and attempt to get a coordinated view as to the correct approach. As to Mr. Gray’s proposal for regular meetings of a group to study the problem, Secretary Rountree suggested that this would certainly be done in any case. He stressed the great concern of the State Department about developments in Iraq.

In response to Secretary Rountree, Mr. Gray pointed out that the group of officials mentioned in his proposed NSC action would not be expected to deal with day to day operations with respect to Iraq. He added that he realized that at the present time the State Department was heavily burdened. Nevertheless, ten days had passed since the President had asked that a group be set up to study possible courses of action in Iraq and Mr. Gray felt that the President’s sense of urgency must be maintained.

The Vice President said that it appeared to him to be useful if three or four high-level officials of the interested departments could keep meeting regularly so that when the President returned from Augusta they would be in a position to report to him. He added his view that the U.S. Information Agency should be a member of this group. In short, he would agree with Mr. Gray’s proposed NSC action if Secretary Rountree thought it was workable.

Secretary Rountree observed that he did think the proposal was workable. The Vice President then stated that the group to be set up should spend a minimum amount of time on the nuances of language and promptly get down to what courses of action the U.S. might undertake in the face of various contingencies. He urged that the group not haggle over language. Secretary McElroy added that to have the group report each week on its activities to the Council might be a wise course of action for a period of time but not indefinitely. The State Department would be the best judge on this point.
The National Security Council: 12

a. Discussed the situation in Iraq, in the light of a report on the subject prepared by the Department of State as a first step in carrying out the President’s instructions (transmitted to the Acting Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense on April 3, 1959) that the Acting Secretary of State take the lead in bringing together the heads of responsible departments and agencies for the purpose of determining what the U.S. Government, either alone or in concert with others, can do [1 line of source text not declassified] to avoid a Communist take-over in Iraq.

b. Agreed that continuing work, further to implement the above-mentioned instructions by the President, should be done by an interdepartmental group composed of representatives at the Assistant Secretary level of the Departments of State (Chairman) and Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the U.S. Information Agency, assisted as necessary by the International Cooperation Administration. This group would be requested to develop integrated views, keeping their principals fully informed, and to report to the National Security Council each week unless otherwise directed. The group would be concerned with further consideration of the above-mentioned State Department report, current developments, and feasible courses of action; taking into account the discussion at this meeting, particularly the sense of urgency required to prevent a Communist take-over in Iraq.

Note: The action in b above subsequently submitted to the President for his approval and transmittal to the Acting Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman, JCS, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Director, USIA, and the Director, ICA, for appropriate implementation.

S. Everett Gleason

12Paragraphs a and b and the Note that follows constitute NSC Action No. 2068, approved by the President on April 22. (Ibid., S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)
177. Memorandum From Vice President Nixon to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Gray)


After our recent meeting I had some thoughts which might be profitable to consider in developing any particular course of action. These ideas all suggest that we use caution in any endorsement of Nasser and his present operations.

First, it is obvious that the Soviets have some really expert personnel in the Middle East and are able to coordinate their actions in Iraq and the UAR. In addition, they undoubtedly have plans calling for the replacement, elimination or control of Nasser if he begins really to hurt their plans, although at the present his propaganda works to solidify Iraqi groups into the Communist popular front in that country.

Second, we have worked hard with the Turks, Saudis and Iranians to prevent Iraq from joining the UAR, and to make an "about face" now could damage our reputation for integrity, particularly after our use of troops in Lebanon.

For these reasons, the wisest plan may be for us to follow a parallel but separate course as long as Nasser continues to berate the Communists publicly, always being prepared to part ways cleanly, quickly and expertly if he changes or if we wish to change. In short, we must be able to exploit his anti-Communist effort without in any way having to agree to deeper commitments.

Source: Department of State, S/P–NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Iraq, The Situation, NSC Action 2068. Top Secret. Executive Secretary Lay transmitted this memorandum to the heads of the agencies whose representatives were on the interdepartmental group on Iraq, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the Directors of Central Intelligence, the U.S. Information Agency, and the International Cooperation Administration.

1 See Document 176.

178. Editorial Note

Assistant White House Staff Secretary John S.D. Eisenhower included the following information on Iraq in his "Synopsis of State and Intelligence material reported to the President," April 18–20, 1959:

"Communist pressures have resulted in a number of personnel changes in important Iraqi government posts, and a major revision of the Iraqi cabinet is reported to be impending."
"According to a UK Foreign Office official, the British Ambassador to Iraq—now on consultation in London—holds that there is no alternative to continuing the present UK policy in Iraq, avoiding actions embarrassing to relations with Qasim, and trying to find ways to help him. So far no decision has been reached on an arms offer, but the Ambassador favors it and other projects. He feels Qasim has not given in to every Communist demand, and the label 'Communist' is being used indiscriminately in regard to Iraq." (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)

President Eisenhower initialed the synopsis.

179. Special National Intelligence Estimate

SNIE 36.2/1-59 Washington, April 21, 1959.

THE COMMunist THREAT TO IRAQ

The Problem

To reassess SNIE 36.2-59, "The Communist Threat to Iraq," in the light of subsequent developments.

The Estimate

1. The main themes of SNIE 36.2-59 were the ominously effective Communist drive toward power in Iraq; the apparent disorganization and lack of effective leadership among the local nationalist opposition to Qassim—military and civilian; and the fact that Nasser viewed the situation as a serious challenge and one which he must fight even at the risk of losing Soviet support. We believe that the validity of these judgments has been borne out by subsequent developments, of which the most important are the abortive Mosul uprising in early March and the widening breach between Nasser on the one hand and Qassim and the Soviets on the other.

2. Within Iraq itself, the chief effect of the abortive Mosul rebellion has almost certainly been to help the Communist cause—by increasing

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Source: Department of State, OCB Files: Lot 61 D 385, Iraq Documents. Secret. The special estimate, submitted by the CIA, was prepared by the CIA, INR, the intelligence organizations of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff. On April 21, this estimate was concurred in by all representatives of the USIB except the representatives of the AEC, FBI, the Director of the National Security Agency and the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, who abstained on the grounds that the topic was outside their jurisdiction.

Qassim’s dependence upon his Communist backers, by adding to his pronounced distrust of nationalist opposition elements, and by underscoring the deficiencies and reducing the capabilities of those elements. Nasser’s diatribes against Qassim and his Soviet and Communist backers have almost certainly intensified Qassim’s fears. In this atmosphere the Communists have been moving aggressively, and their influence now permeates all levels and activities in Iraq.

3. Starting with several of Qassim’s closest advisors, strong Communist influence now exists in the Ministries of Economics, Development, Agriculture, Education, and National Guidance. In the armed forces, many actively anti-Communist officers have been removed from their commands, transferred, or arrested on allegations of anti-regime activities, and have been replaced by men felt to have a stronger personal loyalty to Qassim, some of whom are known to be pro-Communist. These changes have weakened the anti-regime potential of the armed forces and made them more susceptible to Communist penetration.

4. The Communists now enjoy virtually complete control over the internal dissemination of information. Nearly all non-Communist newspapers were sacked and destroyed by the mob at the time of the Mosul revolt. Radio Baghdad is under the control of a Communist director, and is used frequently to broadcast Communist-inspired “popular demands” for action of various types by Qassim. Proliferating “mass organizations” also serve this purpose, as well as providing channels for feeding the Communist line directly down to labor, student, female, and similar groups.

5. Finally, the Communists are near masters of the “street,” with their position reinforced by the Qassim government’s recent distribution of small arms to some units of the “Popular Resistance Forces,” and they have succeeded in intimidating many Iraqis who are basically opposed to Communism.

6. Popular and military loyalties still appear attached to Qassim rather than to Communism. Hence Qassim may still have some capabilities to avoid Communist domination of Iraq if he were disposed to do so. However, these capabilities are decreasing, those of the Communists are increasing, and Qassim’s feeling of dependence on the Communists continues to grow. Accordingly, we think it highly unlikely that Qassim will strike at them, and we know of no potential leader in Iraq who could do so with success. In short, the Communists will soon, if they do not already, have the ability to assume direct control in Iraq. We believe that the local Communists and the USSR will prefer for some time not to assert Communist power openly, though they would probably do so in the event of a serious challenge to their position.
180. Editorial Note

On April 23 at the 403d Meeting of the National Security Council, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles briefed the Council on "Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security." Included in that briefing was the following discussion on Iraq:

"With respect to Iraq, Mr. Dulles stated that the developments in that country were proceeding along the road which we feared they would continue to take. There had been a wave of new arrests of non-Communists and there was still every indication of a progressive Communist take-over in Iraq. The prevailing feeling in Baghdad was apparently one of terror even within the Army. Mr. Dulles then noted a list of recent incidents and harassments of U.S. and Western officials.

"Mr. Gray pointed out that subsequent to last Friday's special NSC meeting on Iraq, a group had been established to watch the situation in Iraq under the chairmanship of Assistant Secretary Routree of the Department of State. It appeared that this group had not yet reached a unanimity of opinion but Mr. Gray believed that the group would have a report for the Council in time for next week's meeting.

"The President inquired what we had done to carry out the arrangements we had made with the British about Iraq during their recent visit. Secretary Herter explained that the relatively complacent British Government view of developments in Iraq had not significantly changed. Mr. Allen Dulles commented that there was a great deal more agreement about the Iraq situation at the working levels in the British and U.S. Governments than there was at the top level where we and the British held differing views." (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, April 23; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

Also on April 23 Assistant White House Staff Secretary John S.D. Eisenhower included the following information on Iraq in his "Synopsis of State and Intelligence material reported to the President":

"Mass rallies against 'imperialism,' commemorating the Bandung conference, are scheduled for 24 April in Baghdad and elsewhere in Iraq. These demonstrations will be sponsored by numerous Communist-dominated mass organizations and will serve to keep non-Communist-elements aware of the Communist 'power of the street.' Communist leaders might also take the opportunity to complicate further the Qassim regime's relations with the West by staging incidents involving Western personnel and property." (Ibid., Eisenhower Diaries)
PROBABLE REACTIONS TO THE COMMUNIST THREAT IN IRAQ

The Problem

To assess the reactions of interested states to the developing situation in Iraq.

Conclusions

1. Nasser regards the Communist-backed Qassim regime as an immediate and critical danger to his interests. The UAR will continue efforts to topple this regime, and has more political and subversive potential than any other government for doing so. Nevertheless, this potential has been impaired and increasing Communist control in Iraq will weaken it further. Nasser will welcome improved relations with the US, but will also seek to avoid a complete break with the Bloc. (Paras. 7, 10–21)

2. Most other governments in the area, as well as some British circles, have shown less concern about developments in Iraq and have hoped that Qassim would provide a useful counterpoise to Nasser. These hopes are fading, and we believe that awareness of the Communist threat will spread. Initially, most of these governments will prefer action to reverse the trend without augmenting Nasser’s influence, but if this proves not feasible, there will be increasing willingness to countenance, if not support, Nasser’s efforts. Notable exceptions will be Israel and probably the present regime in Jordan. (Paras. 6, 8, 22–28)

3. Except for the UAR, Arab states individually can do little to affect the situation in Iraq. A unified stand among the Arab governments would be more promising, but difficult to maintain. Short of military intervention by their armed forces, Turkey and Iran have only limited capabilities. (Paras. 22–26)

4. We believe that the Soviets would much prefer to avoid a sudden Communist coup or provocative Bloc action in Iraq. They almost certainly hope, and probably believe, that a continuation of present
trends will obviate the necessity of such a move. While we believe that
the USSR would take energetic measures involving some risks to main-
tain the Communist position in Iraq, in our judgment it would not at this
time intentionally run serious risks of general war for that purpose. The
closer Iraq comes to membership in the Communist camp, the greater
will be the degree of risk which the Soviet Union will be prepared to run
if Communist power there should be challenged. (Paras. 29–31)

[Here follows the five-page “Discussion” portion of the estimate.]

182. Memorandum of Discussion at the 404th Meeting of the
National Security Council


[Here follows a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting
and agenda items 1–3.]

4. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security

[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

In Iraq unrest and disorder continue, particularly along the Iranian
and Syrian frontiers and possibly along the Turkish frontier. It seems
probable that the Syrians and the Turks are stirring up trouble among
the border tribesmen in Iraq. In any case, Baghdad believes that the dis-
sident tribes are getting support from both Syria and Turkey. The Com-
munists are continuing to consolidate their strength in the economic
field in Iraq. Soviet technicians have recently arrived in Basra. The Eco-
nomic Minister in Iraq has recommended a revision of Iraq’s agree-
ments with the Free World, and has suggested that Iraq’s economy
should be organized along Soviet lines. However, the attitude of Turkey
toward the situation in Iraq has recently changed. Turkey now wants
U.S.-Turkish talks on the problem.

[Here follows discussion of events in Iran and Soviet-UAR rela-
tions.]

Drafted by Boggs on April 30.
5. The Situation In Iraq (NSC Action No. 2068)¹

Mr. Gray called on Secretary Dillon for a report on the work of the Interdepartmental Group established by NSC Action No. 2068. Mr. Dillon said that the Group had been meeting regularly and had appointed a working group which had reached agreement on an outline of planning, covering measures already taken, measures to be taken, continuing measures and contingency planning. We had already approached Nasser and indicated that we approved his anti-Communist campaign. However, he has made it known that he wishes more support from us. In collaboration with the U.K., we have suggested to a number of other countries (aside from the major Western Powers) that they warn Qasim against communism. Japan and Spain have already responded to this suggestion. We have also approached Turkey and discovered that Turkish thinking has changed and that the Turks are now concerned about Iraq and want to talk to us about what to do. [2 lines of source text not declassified] The U.K. feels there is danger from communism in Iraq, but nevertheless seems to be prepared to deliver heavy armaments to that country on the basis of stating to the Iraqis that the U.K. is convinced that Iraq will preserve an attitude of independence and neutrality and assure the continued supply of oil. We have received a report from Egypt that Nasser will cease his personal attacks on Qasim but will continue his anti-Communist campaign. We consider this a favorable development in U.S. policy. In Iraq itself we have asked our Ambassador to protest vigorously against restrictive measures imposed on U.S. personnel. Apparently our protests have had little effect on the Qasim government. We are asking Ambassador Jernegan to come back to the U.S. to deliver a first-hand report next week.

In the future, Secretary Dillon said, it seems probable that we will approach Nasser again to explore parallel measures which the U.S. and the U.A.R. might take. This approach, however, will involve some very delicate timing and will probably not be attempted until Ambassador Jernegan makes his report. We are continuing to encourage other Arab leaders to express concern over the situation in Iraq; we are continuing efforts through the Mutual Security Program to strengthen Iraq's neighbors; and we are continuing to encourage states in addition to Japan and Spain to warn Qasim against communism.

In connection with contingency planning, Secretary Dillon continued, we are studying the oil situation to see whether a continued flow of oil could be maintained in the event of a Communist take-over in Iraq; and we are reviewing U.S. military plans. Mr. Dillon added that the review of military plans was an essential element in this situation if we

¹See footnote 12, Document 176.
were to be able to move quickly in the event of necessity. In conclusion Mr. Dillon said that the agencies represented on the Interdepartmental Group were in general agreement, that the committee would keep on top of the situation, and that it would continue to make reports to the Council.

General Twining said that the military planning to which Mr. Dillon referred was solely U.S. planning, although the U.S. and U.K. had contingency plans based on their being invited into Iraq.

The Vice President wondered whether the British thought they could make a deal with the Iraqi Communists and whether they considered Nasser a greater danger than the Communists to the Near East. He also wondered whether the U.S. would continue to take the public position that it would not intervene in Iraq. Secretary Dillon answered the last question in the affirmative, adding that while we were discouraged about the trend in Iraq, we did not wish to indicate publicly that we thought Iraq might go Communist. The Vice President suggested that it might be well to talk the matter over with certain Senators and ask them not to go too far in saying that Iraq may go Communist.

The President said the British attitude seemed to be that they were not sure what line Qasim would follow in the future, but they were very sure about the line communism would follow and were very much concerned over the possibility of a Communist take-over in Iraq. The British also feel that Nasser cannot be trusted.

*The National Security Council:*\(^2\)

Noted and discussed a report presented by the Acting Secretary of State on the activities of the Interdepartmental Group established by NSC Action No. 2068.

[Here follows a brief note indicating that President Eisenhower held a special NSC meeting prior to this regular one to discuss a report of the Comparative Evaluations Group.]

Marion W. Boggs

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\(^2\)The following paragraph constitutes NSC Action No. 2074, approved by the President on May 4. (Department of State, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)
183. Memorandum of Discussion at the 405th Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1 and 2.]

3. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security

[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

With respect to Iraq, Mr. Dulles said that he would not say very much at this time because Ambassador Jernegan was here to give a report on developments in Iraq. He did have, however, one or two developments which had occurred since Ambassador Jernegan had left Baghdad. There had been more clashes in the last couple of days in the northern part of Iraq between dissident Kurdish tribesmen and the Iraqi army. These clashes probably had been fostered by the United Arab Republic. We had also learned [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] that some of the Communist officers in the Iraqi army were making more extreme statements than those being made by the recognized Communist leaders in Iraq.

The National Security Council:¹

Noted and discussed an oral briefing by the Director of Central Intelligence on the subject, with specific reference to possible Austrian agitation in the Italian Tyrol; the circumstances surrounding the departure of the Soviet Attaché at Rangoon; the views allegedly expressed to a leader of the Greek Progressive Party by Khrushchev; the implications of the current visit of the Shah of Iran to Western Europe; highlights of De Gaulle's first year of power in France; and recent developments in Jordan and in Iraq.

4. The Situation In Iraq (NSC Action Nos. 2068 and 2074)²

Mr. Gray asked Secretary Herter to introduce Ambassador Jernegan who would, thought Mr. Gray, report to the National Security Council about the latest developments in the Interdepartmental Watch Group which had recently been established by the NSC to scrutinize developments in Iraq.


¹The following paragraph constitutes NSC Action No. 2077, approved by the President on May 18. (Department of State, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)

²See footnote 12, Document 176, and footnote 2, Document 182.
Ambassador Jernegan moved to the Council table and opened his remarks by stating that he supposed that it would not be necessary to describe in any detail the process of Leftward drift which had begun in Iraq on July 14 of last year and which had been greatly accelerated in recent weeks and months. Of this development Ambassador Jernegan thought it sufficient to state that it was obvious that the Communist Party in Iraq was more and more active both overtly and covertly. The Communists had achieved substantial control of many popular organizations in Iraq, a number of which the Ambassador cited. The most alarming symptom of what was going on in Iraq was the fact that these popular organizations were following whole-heartedly the Communist Party line. Things had reached a point where the Communist Party actually signed statements and manifestos openly.

In addition, Ambassador Jernegan said that there was good reason to believe that the Communists and their sympathizers had now succeeded in penetrating more deeply into the government of Iraq. They had not yet reached the level of the cabinet but they were entrenched at the second and third echelons of the Iraqi government. There were numerous reports that the Iraqi army had likewise been infiltrated to some extent. Ambassador Jernegan said he was not sure just how far infiltration into the army had occurred. Perhaps some of our reports on this matter were slightly exaggerated. Nevertheless, it was at best a gloomy picture and one that was getting worse rather than better.³

Ambassador Jernegan then stated that in his opinion there were five major reasons for this trend to the Left in Iraq. The first of these reasons was a reaction against the pro-West attitudes and policies of the former Nuri regime. Secondly, Qasim himself and many other Iraqi leaders distrust the West and feared that we were working to destroy the new regime. The third reason was widespread fear that the regime would be brought down by Nasser and the U.A.R. Ambassador Jernegan commented that it was obvious that Nassar was out “to get” the new regime and in this instance Qasim’s fears were justified. Fourthly, the Communists themselves in Iraq had worked very hard and were extremely well organized. The fifth reason was that Qasim may really want events to take the course they have been taking. He might be a Communist or a pro-Communist. Personally, however, Ambassador Jernegan did not think so. He did think that Qasim was scared and that he was tolerating the Communist activity because he felt sure of the strong support of the Communists.

³This was the general conclusion of telegram 3144 from Baghdad, May 3, which was an extensive assessment of the Iraqi situation for the previous 5 weeks. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/5-459)
In the face of this picture, continued Ambassador Jernegan, we have been following a policy of trying to reassure Qasim and to support his regime. We have repeatedly offered our assistance to help Qasim. While Ambassador Jernegan admitted that this policy had not thus far worked too well, matters might have been much worse if we had tried another kind of policy. He therefore believed in this policy and strongly advised that we should stick to it. He did not really believe that Qasim wanted to end up in the Soviet camp and he therefore thought that sticking with our present policy was less risky for the U.S. than the adoption of a policy of hostility to Qasim whether overt or covert. A U.S. policy of overt hostility would surely drive Qasim more completely into the hands of the Soviets. [3-1/2 lines of source text not declassified] Finally, there was no one now in sight who could replace Qasim if we succeeded in ousting him.

Ambassador Jernegan then suggested that in carrying out the present U.S. policy vis-à-vis Iraq, he believed that there were two or three additional things which we might attempt to do. First, he felt we should try to end Iraq’s complete isolation from all the other Arab countries. Some degree of rapprochement might be useful although, of course, this would require a change in Nasser’s point of view. Ambassador Jernegan felt that we should try to get Nasser to stop his direct attacks on Qasim while continuing his general anti-Communist campaign. While Nasser’s anti-Communist campaign had produced very useful results in the Middle East generally, this campaign had been a failure as regards Qasim personally because he was the great hero in Iraq and the father-figure of that country.

Secondly, Ambassador Jernegan urged that we carry out a technical assistance training program for Iraq which had already been proposed and agreed upon in Washington. This program, he explained, would train 170 Iraqis either in the U.S. or in Beirut. The proposal now awaits the approval of the Iraqi Government and the nomination of the 170 candidates.

Thirdly, Ambassador Jernegan thought that this Government ought to propose to negotiate a cultural agreement with Iraq. Such cultural agreements were all the rage today in Iraq. Many such agreements had been made with the Iron Curtain countries. In connection with such a U.S.-Iraqi cultural agreement, Ambassador Jernegan recommended that we invite some of the high officials of the Iraqi Government to visit the U.S. Such officials should be in the cultural or economic areas and not in the political.

This, said Ambassador Jernegan, was his story in a nutshell although he would glad to answer any questions which members of the Council wished to put to him.
Secretary Scribner asked about business conditions in Iraq at the present time. Ambassador Jernegan replied that business was a bit depressed. There was a good deal of unemployment, there had been a significant drop in foreign trade and in construction. There was a serious lack of confidence in the new regime on the part of Iraqi businessmen.

Mr. McConie inquired about the oil situation. Ambassador Jernegan replied that this was good and output had actually been increasing. Secretary Quayle inquired whether the Ambassador felt that Qasim would continue to recognize that Iraq’s economic ties were still necessarily with the West. The Ambassador replied that this would certainly be the case as far as petroleum was concerned. The Iraq Petroleum Company did not seem now greatly concerned about dangerous interference by the Iraqi Government. With respect to other kinds of trade, Ambassador Jernegan said he did not know precisely the views of Qasim. On the other hand, it was clear that the Minister of Economics in the Iraqi cabinet desired to counter-balance Western ties with Eastern ties and has therefore signed a lot of trade agreements with the Iron Curtain countries.

The President thanked Ambassador Jernegan at the conclusion of the discussion.

The National Security Council: 4

Noted and discussed an oral report on the subject by the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq.

[Here follows agenda item 5.]

S. Everett Gleason

4 The following sentence constitutes NSC Action No. 2078, approved by the President on May 18. (Ibid., S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)

184. Editorial Note

From May 12 to 15, President Eisenhower’s synopsis of State and Intelligence material included accounts of events in Iraq. On May 12, the following information was reported to the President:

“Hare found Nasser’s thinking on Qasim very much like ours. Despite somber aspects of the Iraqi situation, Nasser felt there were a few hopeful glimmerings. He made clear he did not wish to obstruct any constructive developments in Iraq. Agreeing in principle with the desirability of closing Arab ranks to the Communist menace, the UAR leader
nevertheless saw practical difficulties arising from extraneous circumstances. Nasser said he had no plan whatsoever for renewing full relations with the British. Referring to the UK’s decision to supply matériel to Iraq, he said the British had not yet made their views known to him.” (Synopsis of State and Intelligence material reported to the President by John S.D. Eisenhower, May 12; Eisenhower Library, Whitman Filé, Eisenhower Diaries)

On May 13, the following information was reported to the President as part of the synopsis of State and Intelligence material:

“The Communist-controlled press is intensifying its pressure on Qasim to legalize political parties and to appoint avowed Communists to the revised 18-post cabinet. Editorials during the past few days have sharply attacked the government on this issue, and have referred to Qasim in tones less laudatory than usual. The strongly pro-Communist ministers of economy and health have publicly backed the party’s demands, and the leading Communist newspaper is seeking endorsements from other cabinet members.

“A Foreign Office official has informed Embassy London that the Canadian Ambassador in Cairo conveyed to Nasser on Monday Lloyd’s letter to Fawzi concerning the UK decision on arms for Iraq. Nasser read the letter and listened ‘thoughtfully.’ He seemed to regard the UK position with ‘understanding and respect,’ and said Fawzi would reply to the letter. The Foreign Office official obviously is gratified by this outcome, according to our Embassy.” (Ibid.)

John Eisenhower’s synopsis of May 14 included the following information on Iraq:

“Nasser told Hare on Saturday [May 12] that one of the ‘hopeful glimmerings’ in the Iraqi situation was Qasim’s stand on political parties and his retention of certain ministers who had been strongly criticized by the Communists. In these circumstances Nasser had decided to desist from attacks on Qasim to afford him the opportunity to stand up to the Communists.

“Hare later reported Nasser told IBRD President Black on Monday he could understand what the British were trying to do in giving arms to Iraq, although he did not think it would be effective.” (Ibid.)

On May 15, the following information on Iraq was included in John Eisenhower’s synopsis reported to the President:

“The Soviet bloc is apparently succeeding in its efforts to obtain civil air rights in Iraq. The USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary have been negotiating for a route to Baghdad, presumably via Cairo. Iraqi Airways is reported to be preparing a new schedule which would include the USSR and East Europe as well as Asian and African countries now served. Moscow reportedly has offered to re-equip the Iraqi civil air fleet.” (Ibid.)

At the 406th Meeting of the National Security Council, May 13, General Cabell included the following on Iraq in his briefing on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security”:
“General Cabell said that in Iraq the Communists continued their drive and were demanding the inclusion of avowed Communist Party members in the Iraqi cabinet now being formed. The Economic Minister and one other minister have supported the inclusion of Communists in the cabinet. The Iraqi press appears to be conducting a strong pro-Communist campaign and is at the same time de-emphasizing Qasim. There are many indications of a struggle behind the scenes between Qasim and the Communists. Qasim is not opposing the Communists but is seeking to control the terms on which they enter the Cabinet. Relations between the U.S.S.R. and Iraq continue to be close, with Soviet aircraft being delivered to Iraq and Soviet technicians and economic missions entering the country.” (Ibid., NSC Records)

185. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq

Washington, May 15, 1959, 8:31 p.m.

2891. Confirming discussions in Washington, Ambassador authorized in early conversation with Prime Minister to make oral comments along following lines:

“As you know, I have just returned from a brief period of consultation Washington. I found there great continuing interest in Iraqi developments and continuing sympathy for aims of your government—the improvement of standard of living of Iraqi people, the establishment of true democracy, and maintenance of independence of Iraq.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/5-1559. Secret. Drafted and approved by Rountree and cleared in draft by Murphy.

1 According to telegram 3307 from Baghdad, May 18, Jernegan made the same oral comments to Foreign Secretary Jawad who agreed it was important that Jernegan speak to Qasim along the same lines. (Ibid., 787.00/5-1859)

According to telegram 3385 from Baghdad, May 26, Jernegan saw Qassim on May 25 and made the comments as instructed. Jernegan reported that he “toned-down anti-Communist warning” because Qassim had recently made assertions of neutrality and for Jernegan to make such warnings would imply that the United States was not convinced of Iraq’s neutrality. After Jernegan made his points, Qassim claimed he had not doubted U.S. friendship and was sure U.S.-Iraqi relations would improve. Jernegan attempted to refute specific rumors and stories that the United States was working against Iraq. Qassim listened to Jernegan’s extensive defense and then stated that he did not attach much importance to rumors. Jernegan commented to the Department that while Qassim was not as forthcoming as he could be, he seemed “reasonably sympathetic” and “gave no indication of skepticism.” He concluded, “I think we are on the right track in expression confidence in him and should continue seek ways to reassure him by concrete actions as well as words.” (Ibid., 787.00/5-2659)
At the same time, I found much concern over what many people consider evidence of growing Communist influence in Iraq, which seems to threaten maintenance of country’s independence. I need hardly point out to you the unfortunate effect which Communist control of Iraq would have on relations between our two countries. People who have followed progress of Soviet Communist expansion since World War II pointed out that number of developments in Iraq, such as policy and activities of Iraqi Communist Party and various popular organizations, appear to follow traditional Communist strategy of gaining control of sources of power, one by one, and then taking over government itself. They emphasized that this process can take place even though government currently in office is not sympathetic to aims and ideology of international communism.

I reported to authorities in Washington assurances you had given me that you intended to maintain Iraq’s independence and that you did not believe Iraqi people wished to adopt Communism. These statements were received with pleasure, but I was asked to stress need which my Government sees for great watchfulness in these matters.

I was also asked to tell you that US Government continues to place confidence in you personally and in government under your direction. It continues to desire friendliest relations. It does not wish to make your task more difficult. In particular, I am instructed to assure you again that US Government is not intriguing against you either in Baghdad, other cities or in frontier areas where there have been reported disturbances. We do not believe any Americans are associated with such activities, even as private individuals.

Furthermore, my Government would look with disfavor on any acts by governments of other countries which might disturb the independence of Iraq.”

Dillon
186. Special National Intelligence Estimate

SNIE 36.2–3–59


IMPLICATIONS OF A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER IN IRAQ

The Problem

To estimate implications of a Communist takeover in Iraq and of possible courses of action by other powers over the next year or so.

Assumption

In previous estimates, we concluded that the Communists would soon be in virtual control of Iraq, if indeed they were not already in that position.¹ The present estimate examines the situation which would obtain if such a Communist takeover were in fact to take place.

Conclusions

1. Both the Iraqi Communists and the USSR would probably seek to conceal Iraq’s subservience to Soviet policy, and it may remain well nigh impossible to determine precisely when the movement toward Communist control has passed the “point of no return.” Nevertheless, the establishment of decisive Soviet influence over Iraq would presage a radical change in the Middle Eastern political scene, and over the longer run, the USSR would almost certainly exploit this base to enhance Communist influence elsewhere in the area. (Paras. 11, 14–15)

2. Even a Communist Iraq would want to avoid isolation within the Arab Community. It might thus initially soft-pedal subversive actions against its Arab neighbors, but it appears almost inevitable that sooner or later such efforts would be directed against Syria, Kuwait, and Iran. The regime would probably also move to obtain greater influence over the Iraq Petroleum Company and to exert a disruptive influence on the Middle East oil industry. Actions such as these would be likely to be

Source: Department of State, OCB Files: Lot 61 D 385, Iraq Documents. Secret. A note on the cover sheet indicates that this special estimate, submitted by the CIA, was prepared by CIA, INR, the intelligence organizations of the Army, the Navy, the Air force, and the Joint Staff. All members of the USIB concurred with this estimate on May 19 except the representatives of the AEC, FBI, the Director of the National Security Agency, and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, for Special Operations, all of whom abstained on the grounds that the topic was outside their jurisdiction.

¹ The likelihood of a Communist takeover and the probable reactions of other interested parties to the developing threat are discussed in SNIE 36.2–59 (17 February 1959) [Document 161] and SNIE 36.2/1–59 (21 April 1959) on “The Communist Threat to Iraq” [Document 179] and in SNIE 36.2–2–59 (28 April 1959) on “Probable Reactions to the Communist Threat in Iraq” [Document 181]. The present estimate supplements these previous estimates. [Footnote in the source text.]
accelerated if the Communist regime felt compelled to maintain its momentum in the face of outside attack. (Paras. 15–18, 22)

3. Nasser will persist in a two-fold effort to undermine the Communists in Iraq and to prevent the spread of their influence elsewhere in the Arab World. For both these endeavors, he will seek discreet US support as a source of influence over conservative and opportunist elements in other Arab States and as a counterweight to Soviet pressures. (Paras. 24–28)

4. Nasser is unlikely for some time at least to be able to affect significantly the situation within Iraq. His chances are fairly good for isolating the Communist regime from the rest of the Arab World and blocking the spread of its influence. He has greater popular appeal and more assets in the Arab States generally than has Qassim, and his anti-Communist crusade has already had widespread public effect in the Arab World. He would probably have the support of the Arab World as a whole in any measures he might take to repeal aggressive Iraqi moves beyond Iraq’s own borders. Except in the case of an internal upheaval in Iraq, direct UAR military intervention is unlikely. For such a move at least tacit Western support would be needed. (Paras. 38–48)

5. Turkey, Iran, the UK, and the conservative Arab States will remain distrustful of Nasser’s ambitions, but would be likely to find themselves compelled eventually to recognize that he must almost certainly play a major role if Communist influence in Iraq is to be contained or eliminated. For the time being, however, these states will probably gyrate through shifts in policies and alignments. (Paras. 23, 29–32, 34)

6. Turkey and Iran are unlikely to intervene overtly in Iraq without US support; in any event such intervention would be highly repugnant both to Iraqi nationalists and to the Arab World generally. While direct US and UK military intervention in Iraq could result in the removal of Qassim and the Communist-dominated regime, Arab nationalists would be deeply offended by such action. The effect would probably be modified if important Arab leaders were consulted in advance, if some justification beyond that of simply resisting Communism could be found, and especially if the operation were quick and decisive. (Paras. 41–42)

7. Should UAR subversive efforts against Iraq appear to be effective, the USSR would probably respond with economic and political pressure on the UAR. The Soviets would also be prepared to make the considerable effort necessary to support the Iraqi regime in the event of external economic measures against it. (Para. 50)

8. The USSR’s initial and immediate reaction to overt military intervention in Iraq would probably be limited to action in the UN and to warnings, backed by military preparations, of Soviet countermeasures
if the intervention did not cease. If these political measures failed and if
the Communists were overthrown and a new government established
in Iraq before the USSR could bring effective countermeasures to bear,
Moscow would probably accept the situation rather than attempt to up-
set it by direct use of force. (Para. 52)

9. If the Iraqi regime showed some ability to maintain resistance to
an intervention by neighboring states, the USSR would probably soon
begin to supplement its diplomatic support with material aid. If only
Arab or Iranian forces were involved, the USSR would probably at-
ttempt to provide military assistance, including “volunteer” technicians
and specialists, on a covert basis, but it would try to avoid provoking
direct Western involvement. In case Turkey were involved in this inter-
vention, the USSR would probably also extend this kind of support, and
would probably also engage in military redeployments along the Turk-
ish border. Nevertheless, it would still seek to avoid provoking Western
involvement. The Soviet response would probably be the same even if
Western conduct and posture lent implicit support to the local effort.
(Para. 53)

10. In the case of direct US or UK military involvement, a Soviet de-
cision would have to be virtually immediate. The nature of the Soviet
response would depend in large measure on the manner in which the
 crisis had developed and on the scale and nature of the Western inter-
vention. On the one hand, failure to act would not only mean the loss of
 the Communist position in Iraq, but also a blow to Soviet prestige else-
where, particularly in Eastern Europe. On the other hand, open Soviet
involvement in Iraq would involve great military disadvantages for the
USSR and would probably require violation of Turkish and Iranian air
space or territory or both. This in turn would serve to spread the conflict
with the risk of making it general. In these complex circumstances, we
cannot precisely assess the chances of Soviet military intervention
against the US and UK forces. We believe that the odds are against such
intervention, although the chance of such a move cannot, of course, be
ruled out.2 (Para 54)

[Here follows the “Discussion” portion of the estimate (paragraphs
11–54) with sections headed: “Introduction,” “Probable Policies of a
Communist Dominated Iraq,” “Attitudes and Aims of Other Interested
States,” “Actions Which Might Affect the Situation: Chances of Success
and Probable Consequences,” and “The Soviet Role.”]

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2 The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believes that the Soviet leaders are
virtually certain to estimate that any overt engagement of Soviet and US armed forces
would lead to general war. Accordingly, they are most unlikely to undertake to intervene
in Iraq in the contingency posed. He would accordingly delete the last two sentences and
substitute: “We therefore believe that the USSR would not intervene militarily against US-
UK forces.” [Footnote in the source text.]
187. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree) to Acting Secretary of State Dillon


SUBJECT

Statement to the NSC on the Situation in Iraq

Discussion

The situation in Iraq is scheduled for discussion at the NSC meeting on May 21. The Secretary last reported to the NSC on the Iraq situation on May 7 (Tab A). Ambassador Jernegan accompanied the Secretary to that meeting and gave an oral briefing on Iraq.

In discussing Iraq with the NSC this week I would suggest you may wish to comment along the following lines:

Ambassador Jernegan returned to Iraq last Thursday (May 14) after helpful discussions with the Department and other interested agencies. The Council will recall that the Ambassador’s general view was that the situation in Iraq is not yet lost, that there have been some encouraging though by no means conclusive signs that Qasim is resisting some Communist demands, and that in our contingency planning we should therefore avoid taking any actions which might jeopardize the hope of weaning Qasim away from dependence on the Communists.

Although there have been further developments favoring the Communists in Iraq, there have recently been some encouraging signs that the Communists may yet be prevented from taking over. Starting with his April 30 speech Qasim has made several public statements in which he has continued to resist Communist demands for permitting political party activity and executing the “traitors” convicted by the military tribunal. In these recent speeches, Qasim has also emphasized Iraq’s adherence to a foreign policy of neutrality and a willingness to be friendly with all states that wish to be friendly with Iraq. Both Qasim and Foreign Minister Jawad have personally assured the US and other representatives that Iraq will not go Communist. Despite overt Communist pressures for participation in the cabinet, Qasim has so far not named any Communists to cabinet posts. The British have informed us that Qasim’s personal reaction to their decision to accede to his request for arms

Source: Department of State, S/P–NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Iraq, The Situation, NSC Action 2068. Top Secret; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Rountree’s Special Assistant, Harrison Symmes, and sent through Murphy.

1 See Document 183.
appeared to be favorable. Meanwhile, our Embassy in Baghdad has reported that following Ambassador Jernegan’s representations of about two weeks ago customs difficulties experienced by the Embassy have been eased. The Iraq Government has recently requested an ICA participation program to include sending ten police officers to the US. The Iraq Embassy in Washington has published a letter asserting that 100 Iraqi students have come to the US since the revolution and an additional 100 are expected to matriculate in this country in the autumn.

The latest SNIE on Iraq (Tab B),\(^2\) on which the Director of CIA will probably have briefed the Council, brings out the dangerous implications of a Communist takeover in Iraq. The conclusions it draws indicate the importance of continuing our contingency planning.

So far as planning is concerned, a US-UK Working Group is actively involved in the consideration of courses of action designed to deal with the present situation and in the preparation of contingency plans in the event of a Communist takeover. We also continue to work as closely as possible with allies other than the UK in regard to Iraq. For example, utilizing the occasion of an orientation trip through the area, Deputy Assistant Secretary Hart has discussed the situation in Iraq with key officials of the Turkish and Iranian Governments. These discussions have revealed that the Turks and Iranians have begun to see the situation much more clearly as we view it. The Inter-Agency Committee established under NSC action 2068\(^3\) has continued to meet, and it had the benefit of the views of Ambassador Jernegan on the situation in Iraq and his comments on the Committee’s Outline of Planning (Tab C)\(^4\) while he was here on consultation. Ambassador Jernegan generally approved the Committee’s Outline of Planning but cautioned against taking any action designed to bring down the regime until it had been decided that Qasim is beyond hope. The steps recommended in the Outline of Planning, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] are now being carried out.

Now that he has returned to Iraq, Ambassador Jernegan has been instructed at an early meeting with Prime Minister Qasim to assure him once again that the US Government is not intriguing against him either in Baghdad, other cities, or in frontier areas where there have been reports of disturbances. The Ambassador is also to say to Qasim that the US would look with disfavor on any acts by other governments which might disturb the independence of Iraq.\(^5\)

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\(^1\) See Document 186.
\(^2\) See footnote 12, Document 176.
\(^3\) Reference is to Document 119.
\(^4\) See Document 185.
Recently UAR propaganda on Iraq has discontinued the previous personal attacks on Qasim. The US suggested this tactic to Nasser. If there is any truth to rumors that Nasser and Qasim might get together, we believe the cessation of the UAR’s attacks on Qasim personally will have been an important element.

In summary, there is some evidence that the situation in Iraq may have improved slightly from our point of view since the last report to the NSC. The single bits of evidence—such as, for example, Qasim’s not giving in to Communist demands for the licensing of political parties or the execution of political prisoners—do not loom large. Taken together, however, they appear to us to justify the present line of trying to build up Qasim’s confidence in our intentions toward him and weaning him away from the Communists as the best alternative we now have.

**Recommendation**

That you make an oral statement on Iraq along the lines outlined above.

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188. Editorial Note

At the 407th Meeting of the National Security Council, May 21, Allen Dulles informed the Council as part of his briefing on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security” that confirmed evidence “in recent days had indicated a real effort by Nasser to provide support to Prime Minister Qasim against the Communist Party of Iraq. This would be a most hopeful sign if only Nasser could be trusted. Meanwhile, the UAR had up-graded its attack on the Iraqi Communists while toning down its attacks on Qasim personally. This would constitute a very favorable development provided it lasts. Mr. Dulles said that the Kurdish situation in Iraq and other countries in the Middle East was becoming more and more confused.”

Later in the meeting, Under Secretary of State Dillon briefed the Council on Iraq:

“Mr. Gray inquired of Secretary Dillon whether he had anything to report on the work of the Interdepartmental Group on Iraq established by NSC action. Secretary Dillon said he could report only very briefly. While the Interdepartmental Group had been meeting, it had no further suggestions to make with respect to action at this time. All the programs
for Iraq are underway [1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]. Secretary Dillon testified that the general feeling was that we had been making some progress in Iraq in recent days. For example, our differences with the Turks and with the Iranians as to the seriousness of the situation in Iraq have disappeared. Then secondly, the UAR has behaved far better than we had hoped. It was still our hope that Qasim could be prevailed upon to stand up to the Iraqi Communists. Thus, by and large, we felt slightly more optimistic about Iraq although the situation was certainly anything but rosy. The few odds and ends of improvement were not very significant in themselves but they provided some hope if looked at cumulatively.

Mr. Gray said that he understood that Ambassador Jernegan was about to engage in another interview with Prime Minister Qasim. Mr. Gray asked if we had instructed the Ambassador to inform Qasim of the serious view taken by the U.S. of increasing Communist influence in Iraq. Secretary Dillon and the President said that of course we had so informed Ambassador Jernegan.” (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, May 21; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

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189. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree) to Acting Secretary of State Dillon


[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/5–2359. Top Secret; Limit Distribution. 4 pages of source text not declassified.]

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190. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Murphy)


[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/5–2759. Top Secret; Limit Distribution. 2 pages of source text not declassified.]
191. Memorandum for the Record

Washington, June 1, 1959, 11 a.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting of Special Committee on Iraq

PARTICIPANTS

Assistant Secretary of State William M. Rountree, Chairman
Mr. Parker T. Hart, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Mr. Stuart Rockwell, Director, Office of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State
Mr. Harrison Symmes, Special Assistant to Mr. Rountree
Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense F. Haydn Williams
Dr. Lynford A. Lardner, ISA, Department of Defense
Colonel Butler—JCS (USAF)
[less than 1 line of source text not declassified], CIA
Mr. William J. Handley, Area Director, NEA, USIA
Mr. Philip J. Halla, NSC Staff

In opening the meeting, Mr. Rountree said he thought it would be advisable for the group to meet regularly on Mondays at 11 o’clock until further notice. He remarked that we had probably all seen the cabled report of Ambassador Jernegan’s conversation with Kassem following his return from consultations in Washington.\(^1\) Mr. Rountree observed that the Ambassador seemed neither encouraged nor discouraged as a result of his latest discussion with the Iraqi leader. The Assistant Secretary felt that there was slight evidence of improvement, particularly regarding the Communists. There were, however, no signs that Kassem was building up any anti-Communist forces. One encouraging fact was Kassem’s decision not to arm the Popular Resistance Forces. At least one could say that the situation has not deteriorated further.

Mr. Rountree continued that the Iraqi decision to cancel our military assistance agreement and the supplemental sales agreement is the latest development. This was done by diplomatic note, which was in itself an innovation, although the note was only delivered\(^2\) shortly before the press announcement was made. The Department is not sure what the “economic assistance agreement” of July 23, 1957 is which the Iraqis have also canceled. Mr. Rockwell said it possibly concerned the police agreement made by the Richards Mission. (Embassy Baghdad’s cable

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\(^1\) See footnote 1, Document 185.

\(^2\) The Iraqi Government delivered the note to the U.S. Embassy the morning of May 29.
3439 of May 29—copy attached—thought the reference might be to the telecommunications agreement signed in connection with the Baghdad Pact.

Mr. Rountree’s Deputy, Mr. Parker T. Hart, reported on his recent trip to the area. Mr. Hart said he went primarily to discuss the Iraqi situation with the Turks at their request. He had a lengthy conference at the Hilton Hotel in Istanbul with Foreign Minister Zorlou and several other Turkish officials, including the former Turkish Minister to Syria, whom he had known in Damascus. Mr. Hart regards this man, who is now Zorlou’s Middle East advisor, as a very sound individual. The discussion showed that Zorlou may have revised his views of Arab nationalism somewhat. He now seemed to agree that the choice was between independence and Communism in Iraq. At the same time, Zorlou hoped that we would not help resurrect Nasser’s influence in Iraq. During the conversation, Zorlou appeared moderate and willing to listen. Among other items, the Turkish Foreign Minister agreed to our suggestion that the Turks extend military aid to the Afghanistan Military Academy. The Turks indicated that they were worried about Iran as well as Iraq, regarding the Shah’s country as a weak reed.

Zorlou’s attitude toward the Kurds was that they were beset by ancient rivalries and always scrapping among themselves. The Turks do not favor Kurdish activity at present and have so informed Kassem. However, Zorlou considers the Kurds a factor to be held in reserve for possible use if the Iraq situation deteriorates.

In Iran, Mr. Hart mentioned meeting with General Paklavan, deputy head of SAVAK, the Iranian intelligence mechanism, whom he found to be very knowledgeable on Iraq. Mr. Hart found the general attitude toward Iraq more relaxed in Tehran than in Beirut and Ankara. The General appeared to have numerous sources in Iraq which Mr. Hart presumed were among the Shiite Muslim community. Paklavan thought a strong force was building up in the Iraqi army, which would be prepared to take anti-Communist action if necessary. He indicated that the Iranians were also attempting to hold back the Kurds and keep them in reserve.

In response to my question as to whether there were still differences of view between Zorlou and Prime Minister Menderes concerning Iraq, Mr. Rountree said he had talked with Zorlou when he was here last week for Secretary Dulles’ funeral. He confirmed Mr. Hart’s impres-

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3 Not printed. (Department of State, Central Files, 687.00/5–2952)
4 Hart reported his conversation in telegram 3229 from Ankara, May 16. (Ibid., 787.00/5–1659)
5 Hart reported his conversation in telegram 2303 from Tehran, May 21. (Ibid., 787.00/5–2159)
sions, stressed Zorlou’s dislike of Nasser and his feeling that we should not build up the UAR leader, as well as an impression that the Iraqi situation might start to deteriorate quickly. Zorlou wanted to start joint planning for possible contingencies in Iraq. Mr. Rountree still thinks this would be highly dangerous and said he “finessed” this Turkish request. The Assistant Secretary feels that we should continue to exchange information, but go no further with the Turks at this time.

Mr. Rountree then asked Mr. Rockwell for comments. The Director of Near Eastern Affairs said that he thought things looked a little better than the last time the group had met.  

[less than 1 line of source text not declassified] when asked for comments, said things perhaps are improving, although recent events in themselves had not proven the case. He said Kassem has not given the real tip off of his intentions, which might come if current rumors that he is about to remove one or both of the two pro-Communist Taher brothers turn out to be true or if he cracks down on Col. Mahdawi of the military tribunal.

Mr. Handley asked for State’s view of Ambassador Jernegan’s suggestion that we send a representative to the celebration of the July 14th revolution. Mr. Rountree replied that if invited we would attend. If the USSR is invited and we are not, it would be highly significant. (Mr. Handley told me later that Ambassador Jernegan had suggested that someone like Dr. Elson of the National Presbyterian Church might represent the U.S. Although he had not yet taken up the matter with Mr. George Allen, Handley expressed some doubt of the desirability of this type of appointment and, in fact, wondered whether we should send a special representative at all. I said that perhaps a sensible military representative might make more impression on the present regime in Iraq, although, of course, Dr. Elson is known for his interest in Near Eastern matters.)

Mr. Haydn Williams said he had no substantive comment. He found Mr. Rountree’s report interesting and useful. He liked the idea of regular weekly meetings, which would provide useful information for briefing the Council principals, for discussion of whether there will be a report, and, if so, its contents. Mr. Williams favored group discussion of

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6 At the 408th Meeting of the National Security Council on May 28, as part of his briefing on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security,” Allen Dulles briefed the Council along similar lines noting that Qassim seemed anti-Communist and cautiously favorable to the West. Dulles stated that it was still too early to detect any clear trend. (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, May 28; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

7 As suggested in telegram 3394 from Baghdad, May 26. (Department of State, Central Files, 887.424/5-2659)
what the reports will contain. He thought it would be useful to include a
check off list for the Council on actions taken. The meetings could also
permit the input of new ideas from other agencies.

Mr. Rountree agreed in general, noting that the Group would meet
regularly and that his office would undertake to supply on an informal
basis advance copies of briefing material prepared for the Secretary of
State.

I asked whether the Committee would report this week. Mr.
Rountree indicated a report would be made along the lines of the previ-
ous report.8

Mr. Handley said USIA was looking into the Iraqi request that
bookmobiles be provided through UNESCO and asked Mr. Rountree’s
view of the policy implications. Mr. Rountree favored the idea, although
he was not happy about the fact that the U.S. would receive no publicity
from such an activity. When asked for details Mr. Handley replied that
USIA was working with ICA since the equipment would be costly and
with the UNESCO relations staff in the State Department. USIA could
supply books.

Mr. Lardner of Defense mentioned the problem of certain effects
casted by Iraq’s abrogation of the military assistance agreements. This
raised a question as to what we should try to do about the equipment we
had already given them. The discussion brought out the fact that we had
given Iraq five F–86 aircraft (which Col. Butler said are not flyable be-
cause certain parts have been returned to the U.S.) and thirteen 8” How-
itzers [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] which are part of the
equipment for an armored regiment. These guns are operational, if
maintenance has been kept up. Mr. Rountree and Mr. Rockwell agreed
that this represented a problem that we would have to take up with the
Iraqi. Mr. Rockwell noted that there is a one-year cancellation notice
provision in the agreement, but he was not sure there was much the U.S.
could do in view of Iraq’s unilateral action.

Philip J. Halla

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8See footnote 1, Document 192.
192. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Rountree) to Acting Secretary of State Dillon


SUBJECT

Statement to the NSC on the Situation in Iraq

Discussion

The situation in Iraq is on the NSC agenda for June 4.¹ A report on Iraq in accordance with NSC action 2068 was last made on May 21 (Tab A).² It is our understanding that as in past meetings the Director of CIA will present an intelligence evaluation of the Iraq situation³ before your statement is made and that it should not be necessary for you to go into details in regard to recent events. I would suggest that you call the attention of the Council to the Embassy’s telegraphic evaluation of the situation dated June 1 (Tab B)⁴ and that you make a statement along the following lines:

The Embassy’s general estimate of the Iraq situation dated June 1 states that the drift towards Communism in Iraq has been slowed down at least temporarily and the Communists have suffered some setbacks and resultant loss of prestige. Nevertheless, the Communists remain the most cohesive and disciplined political force in Iraq today with an undetermined number of members and sympathizers in the Army, the Popular Resistance Force, and the civilian bureaucracy. The slight retreat of

¹ No report on Iraq was made by Dillon at the NSC meeting. A memorandum of a telephone conversation between Dillon and Gray, June 3, 10:30 a.m., reports that they agreed there was no substantial change from the previous meeting on the situation in Iraq and therefore no need for a Department of State update. (Ibid.)

² See Document 188.

³ At the 409th Meeting of the National Security Council on June 4, Allen Dulles provided the following account of events in Iraq as part of his briefing, “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security”:

“With respect to Ambassador Jernegan’s recent lengthy telegram regarding Iraq, Mr. Dulles said he was inclined to accept Jernegan’s conclusions, which he summarized for the Council, to the effect that the drift toward Communism in Iraq had at least slowed down although Iraq was far from out of danger. There was perhaps some reason to believe, said Mr. Dulles, that Moscow has cautioned Prime Minister Qasim to go a little slow.” (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, June 4; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

⁴ Reference is to telegram 3451 from Baghdad, June 1, which is summarized below. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/6-159)
the Communists in Iraq may therefore be only tactical. Moreover, there are no signs that Qasim is building an anti-Communist organization of his own, and he still seems to feel he cannot do without the continued support of the Communists. The Embassy concludes that we and our friends are following a correct policy at present and that our chances of retrieving the situation will best be served by continuing to support Qasim and giving him concrete evidence of our support for Iraq’s continued independence under his leadership.

Ambassador Jernegan saw Qasim on May 25 and at that time carried out his instructions to assure Qasim of our support. During this conversation the Ambassador took up several specific cases of alleged US involvement in activities prejudicial to Iraq’s interests and tried to show Qasim that the allegations were fabrications designed to poison US-Iraqi relations.

Meanwhile, the Iraqis have formally notified us of their decision to terminate the April 21, 1954 Military Assistance Agreement, the July 25, 1955 supplement to that agreement, and an “economic assistance” agreement of May 22, 1957 resulting from the visit of the Richards Mission earlier in 1957. The Iraq Government’s note to us which was friendly in tone, as well as a Baghdad Radio broadcast have referred to the termination of these agreements as one of the steps being taken by Iraq to liquidate Iraq’s past commitments in order to implement its policy of positive neutrality. The Baghdad Radio broadcast asserts that the agreements represented a “conditional” form of assistance that derogated from Iraqi sovereignty. At the same time, however, the broadcast stated that Iraq desires to enhance the bonds of friendship with the US on a basis of understanding and mutual interest.

Our policy in the current situation might be summed up under the following headings:

(1) Continuing efforts to promote the reconciliation of Qasim and non-Communist elements in Iraq with the UAR and the other Arab countries, stressing the idea that Iraq’s independence should be preserved without reliance on the Communists and with a view to the establishment of a joint effort against the Communists. In this connection, we are using opportunities to persuade the UAR and other Arabs to indicate that they support Iraq’s independence. Where feasible we are also supporting efforts by the Arab League or neutral states to effect a reconciliation between Qasim and the UAR.

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5 See footnote 1, Document 185.
6 5 UST 2496, 6 UST 2227, and 8 UST 772, respectively. On March 9, 1957, President Eisenhower announced that he was sending James P. Richards, former Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, to the Middle East to explain the Eisenhower Doctrine and to report to the President on possible cooperation and mutual assistance as contemplated under the doctrine.
(2) Continuing to promote a better understanding by Qasim of US and UK attitudes toward Iraq and its continued independence and to dispel his suspicions of our intentions.

(3) Encouraging Afro-Asian states that have learned the true nature of the Communist threat to national independence to use their influence where feasible to bring home to Qasim the menace of Communism.

(4) Encouraging the Turkish and Iranian Governments to continue their contacts with Qasim and other Iraqi officials, stressing their support for a truly independent Iraq. We are also at the present time avoiding any commitment to undertake joint contingency planning with the Turks because of the risk that such planning might be disclosed to the Iraqis.

(5) When necessary we continue to make firm representations in support of our interests in Iraq and stress the mutuality of Iraqi and Western economic and commercial interests.

(6) We continue to follow a line of non-involvement in the UAR-Iraqi propaganda battle.

So far as contingency planning is concerned, the Inter Agency Committee established under NSC action 2068 and the US/UK Working Group which was reactivated following the Camp David talks have continued to meet and to follow closely the current situation. [4 lines of source text not declassified]

Recommendation

That you make an oral statement on Iraq along the foregoing lines.

193. Memorandum for the Record

Washington, June 8, 1959, 11 a.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting of Special Committee on Iraq

PARTICIPANTS

Assistant Secretary of State William M. Rountree, Chairman
Mr. Parker T. Hart, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Mr. Harrison Symmes, Special Assistant to Mr. Rountree
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA) Robert H. Knight

Dr. Lynford A. Lardner, ISA, Department of Defense
Colonel William A. Stiles, Joint Chiefs of Staff
[less than 1 line of source text not declassified], CIA
Mr. William J. Handley, Area Director, NEA, USIA
Mr. Philip J. Halla, NSC Staff

At the opening of the meeting, I stated that as of that hour (11:00 AM) we did not know whether there would be a Council meeting this week.\footnote{There was no NSC meeting held that week.} Mr. Rountree said that if a meeting were held, the Department would brief Acting Secretary Dillon to report briefly on Iraq. There was perhaps less reason to report this week than last, so far as developments are concerned, except for the fact that the Committee had not reported last week because of the agreement between Mr. Dillon and Mr. Gray.\footnote{See footnote 1, Document 192.}

Mr. Knight of Defense, substituting for Mr. Haydn Williams, wondered why it was necessary to convene the Committee every week in view of the fact that there seemed general agreement on the policy being followed (which he described as one of “wait and see”) and that the members of the Committee had not been prepared to introduce alternatives.

Mr. Rountree said the main purpose was to permit the agencies represented to compare notes. He gave Mr. Knight a background briefing on the origins of the Committee; as he saw it the group had been formed as a result of the Vice President’s wish at the NSC (in the President’s absence) to have people looking for ideas which could be applied in the Iraq crisis and not necessarily to write a paper or draw up a plan. However, preliminary contingency planning was going forward in Defense and CIA.

Mr. Knight thought the Committee should report back to the NSC at this stage to the effect that there was general agreement on the policy being followed, that contingency plans were being formulated or reviewed, and should then recommend to the Council that the group not meet for the time being. Mr. Handley thought that if that were done, the Committee should be relieved of responsibility for making action recommendations. I said I wondered if this was not premature. I was not sure my principal would favor putting the Committee on the shelf. Mr. Rountree said this was not the case. The Committee would not meet henceforth unless a meeting were requested, which could be done by any member agency. State would review the situation on Fridays to determine if it thought a meeting should be called. The understanding was that Mr. Rountree would so recommend to Secretary Dillon. Advance copies of the paper submitted to Mr. Dillon would be available to members of the group. Mr. Rountree felt that such a report could be made this
week, if an NSC meeting were scheduled, or whenever the next meeting occurred.

Turning to the situation in Iraq, Mr. Rountree said the Department was still concerned about whether the U.S. would be invited to the celebration of the July 14 Revolution. The Iraqis have invited the British and Turks, among others, but not the U.S. He felt that if invited, we should send a relatively high ranking (sub-Cabinet level) official, such as Deputy Under Secretary of State Murphy. Mr. Hart noted that the issue of Iraq's agreeing in advance, at least in the principle, to pay compensation for the three Americans killed last July 14 might be an issue connected with the invitation and our decision to accept. Mr. Rountree noted that the U.K. planned to be represented by its Ambassador in Baghdad, perhaps aided by a British Ambassador from one of the neighboring states. I asked what the advantage would be to the U.S. in sending a man of Mr. Murphy's standing. Mr. Rountree thought the opportunity which he would have to talk with Kassem would be worthwhile and noted that Kassem and Murphy had gotten along well last year when he visited Iraq.

Further questions then arose as to other developments in Iraq. Mr. Rountree said the firing of non-Communist army officers was apparently continuing, although the rate had not increased. One more local employee of the U.S. Embassy had been arrested, making a total of nine arrested or deported. On the positive side, there were continuing reports that Kassem's pro-Communist aide, Tahir, would be demoted through a foreign assignment.

I asked whether Mr. Rountree had discussed the situation with Ambassador Hare, who is now on leave in the U.S. He said that he had and that Mr. Hare would return to Washington later for further talks with U.S. officials. Commenting on my question (based on Dana Adams Schmidt's article in the Sunday Times) about Nasser's probable next move, Mr. Rountree said the situation is explosive in the Middle East, aside from the Iraq situation. He listed three elements: (1) The Suez Canal crisis involving the Danish ship, a crisis which he felt had been precipitated by the Israelis. The case may go to the Security Council (Israel's cabinet is discussing it today) and if so the U.S. will be placed in a difficult position. (2) The air battle over the week-end between UAR and Israeli planes indicated the degree of tension between the two sides. (3) The tension between Jordan and the UAR, which has deliberately closed the Syrian-Jordanian border. This issue is in the hands of the UN Presence (Spinelli) Mission at the moment. Mr. Rountree said we hope that Hammarskjold will get further into the act on both the Suez Canal and Jordan border problems. Separately each item is important. Taken together they may make Nasser feel impelled to act to cover up the fact that he lost in his moves against Kassem. Meanwhile, our relations with
the UAR are pretty good and Nasser himself seems to have worked rather hard on his side toward normalizing them. Mr. Rountree feared, however, that a crisis over Israel, the Canal, or Jordan would rock the boat.

Mr. Handley said USIA was scraping together money to put a small show on at the Damascus Fair in August, in response to the Consul General’s recommendations. It would include things like closed circuit television and a solar energy exhibit. Handley said he would not favor making a major splash at this time, but thought we should participate in a limited way to demonstrate the normalizing of relations.

Dr. Lardner of Defense noted that according to Ambassador Jernegan’s reports, Kassem seemed favorably influenced by the Indians. He wondered if the Indian Ambassador in Baghdad (Chopra) may be a useful channel [5-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]. A discussion of the role of the previous Indian envoy to Baghdad, a Muslim, followed, but no decisions were taken.

The meeting adjourned about 11:40 AM.

P.J.H.

194. Memorandum of Discussion at the 410th Meeting of the National Security Council

Washington, June 18, 1959.

[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1 and 2.]

3. *The Situation in Iraq* (NSC Actions Nos. 2068, 2074, 2078 and 2090)¹

Mr. Gray pointed out that the Council had had no report since May 21 by the “Rountree Committee” which had been set up to report each week to the Council on developments in Iraq. He understood that Secretary Dillon was prepared this morning to provide the Council with the current thinking of the Rountree Committee on Iraq.

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¹ See footnote 2, Document 176; footnote 2, Document 182; and footnote 4, Document 183. NSC Action No. 2090, approved by the President on May 25, stated that the Council noted Dillon’s report on Iraq at the 407th Meeting of the NSC, May 21 (see Document 188). (Department of State, S/5-NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)
Secretary Dillon said that the Interdepartmental Committee, chaired by Mr. Rountree, had asked him to make this report. The report indicated that we should continue to carry out the measures vis-à-vis Iraq which had been described earlier to the National Security Council. The Committee did not feel that any new or additional measures were desirable unless conditions in Iraq should change radically in the future. Secretary Dillon thought that by and large the situation in Iraq seemed a little less discouraging than it had a month ago. He concluded by citing a number of indications of a somewhat better atmosphere from the U.S. point of view in Iraq.

Secretary Dillon then indicated that the Interdepartmental Committee was unanimous in its feeling that while the situation in Iraq should be kept under continuous review, that it would be desirable to release the Committee from the obligation to make weekly reports to the Council inasmuch as no different types of U.S. measures were contemplated. The Committee would prefer instead to report to the Council only when they feel they had something new and significant to say.

No objection was raised to the Committee's recommendation.

The National Security Council:

a. Noted an oral report on the subject by the Department of State, based upon the work of the interdepartmental group established by NSC Action No. 2068.

b. Agreed that the above-mentioned interdepartmental group should henceforth report to the NSC only when it considers that developments justify such a report, rather than making a weekly report as called for by NSC Action No. 2068.

Note: The action in b above, as approved by the President, subsequently transmitted to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman, JCS, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Director, USIA, and the Director, ICA, for appropriate implementation.

S. Everett Gleason

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2 Paragraphs a and b and the Note that follows constitute NSC Action No. 2100, approved by the President on June 22. (Ibid.)
195. Special National Intelligence Estimate

SNIE 36.2/2-59


SHORT-TERM OUTLOOK IN IRAQ

The Estimate

1. Concerning the situation in Iraq, we now feel that recent SNIE’s have been too gloomy.¹ There are signs of growing resolve on Qassim’s part to move with increasing determination against the Iraqi Communists. We now think that Communist control of Iraq is somewhat less likely than we thought it was a few weeks ago.²

2. This does not mean that the tide has turned finally and irrevocably against the Communists. They almost certainly retain an influential position in government ministries and some army commands. Their power over mass organizations and street mobs has not evaporated. The regime has as yet shown no signs of dissatisfaction with its close ties with and heavy dependence on the Sino-Soviet Bloc.

3. Any estimate of what will happen next has to be highly tentative. The Soviet Ambassador has left for Moscow for “medical reasons” and the USSR may decide that a tactic of temporary accommodation is now the better part of Communist valor. Indeed, there is a recent report that attempts are being made by the Communists to work out a united front with dissident elements of the leftist National Democratic Party. On the other hand, the Communists, whether or not prompted by Moscow, may feel impelled to strike back—to protect themselves and their position against the reprisals that would be likely if the nationalists gained dominance.

4. The period between now and the week of 14 July, the first anniversary of the Revolution, promises to be one of intense political maneuvering. Events taking place during this period of popular emotional buildup could precipitate significant clashes.

Source: Department of State, OCB Files: Lot 61 D 385, Iraq Documents. Secret. A note on the cover sheet indicates that this estimate, submitted by the CIA, was prepared by CIA, INR, the intelligence organizations of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff. All members of the USIB concurred with this estimate on June 30 except the representatives of the AEC and FBI, the Director of the National Security Agency, and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, the subject being outside their jurisdiction.


² In briefing the NSC at its 412th Meeting on July 9 on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security,” Allen Dulles informed the Council that “there were continuing signs of Prime Minister Qasim’s intention of curbing the power of the Iraqi Communists,” but that “the tide had not yet irrevocably turned against the Communists.” (Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, July 9; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)
196. Editorial Note

In John S.D. Eisenhower’s “Synopsis of State and Intelligence material reported to the President,” July 10–13, the following account of events on Iraq was included:

“Anti-Communist elements have been further encouraged by the tenor of Qasim’s speeches in the past several days. A number of high Army officers predict that Communist officials in the government will be purged soon after the 14 July celebrations and conservative former officials will be called to serve.

“A serious riot involving Communists and security forces has been reported in a town in southern Iraq on 10 July.

“Iraq has apparently made devious overtures to reestablish diplomatic relations with Jordan. Jordan’s reply through the same channel that it is not averse to such a resumption provided (1) Qasim expresses regret over the murder of King Faisal, and (2) certain possessions which the Hashemites have taken to Iraq be returned to Jordan.” (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)

On July 14, John Eisenhower included the following on Iraq in his “Synopsis”:

“Baghdad Radio on 13 July announced the reorganization and enlargement of Qasim’s cabinet to include four new members. Three of these, according to their backgrounds, are extreme leftists. Biographical information is not sufficient to determine whether the three are aligned with the Communist party.” (Ibid.)

The Director of Central Intelligence, Allen Dulles, briefed the National Security Council at its 413th Meeting, July 13, on the cabinet reorganization in Iraq. Dulles’ account, part of his briefing on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security,” reads as follows:

“With respect to developments in Iraq, Mr. Dulles stated that it was difficult to interpret the meaning of the recent reshuffle of the Cabinet. It was plainly something of a sop to the Communists because three of the four new Cabinet members were extreme Leftists. On the other hand, developments suggest a continuing trend toward a course of action which would free Qasim from dependence on the Communists. In sum, we were a little disappointed in the new Cabinet although it offered no dramatic changes.” (Ibid., NSC Records)

The Embassy in Baghdad submitted an analysis of the new Cabinet in telegram 130 from Baghdad, July 15, which was similar to Dulles’ assessment. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/7–1559) This was a view not shared by the Israelis, who used an official [text not declassified] to “plant” the view with the United States that the new Iraqi Government clearly strengthened Qassim’s hand against the Communists. (Telegram 173 from Ankara, July 17; ibid., 787.13/7–1759)
197. Memorandum Prepared by the Assistant White House Staff Secretary (Eisenhower)


[Here follows a section on an unrelated matter.]

Iraq

We have informed our NATO mission that available information indicates that in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk clashes involving violence and casualties occurred on July 14 and the days immediately following. However, our information is still incomplete and it by no means has been established that these developments represented a calculated and clear-cut clash between Communists and anti-Communists, as some press treatment has suggested. Though the evidence strongly indicates that an important ingredient in the situation was the long-standing hostility between Kurdish and Turkoman elements of the Kirkuk population, Communist exploitation is not improbable. The role of the Kirkuk Army garrison during the violence remains obscure. The Baghdad Government subsequently ordered military reinforcements to Kirkuk to re-establish order and, on the basis of the latest reports, the Government now appears to have the situation under control. Meanwhile, the Department has also received reports of minor clashes between Communist and nationalist elements in suburban Baghdad areas which resulted in some local casualties.

[Here follows a section on an unrelated matter.]

John SD Eisenhower

198. Editorial Note

At the 414th Meeting of the National Security Council, July 23, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles briefed the Council on disorders in Iraq as part of his “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security” briefing as follows:

“Iraq, which Mr. Dulles described as a troubled land was, he said, having still more trouble. Apparently the Kirkuk outbreak had been put down more rapidly than our own or the Egyptian press had indicated. Still, however, no one knows much about why the outbreak began or how it began. On the other hand, further outbreaks could occur at any time. Qasim has condemned all the elements involved in these outbreaks and has especially singled out the Communists. Qasim has been invited to go to Moscow for a state visit and it is reported that he has accepted the invitation without, however, specifying any date.”

Later on in the briefing was the following exchange:

“Reverting to the Kirkuk disturbances, the President inquired of Mr. Dulles about the ethnic difference between the Turkmans and the Kurds. Mr. Dulles replied that they are different tribes and had a different language and he believed that they are ethnically quite different. He said that he had virtually completed a lengthy study of the Kurds and would be able to report to the President more fully on his question later.” (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

199. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, August 9, 1959, 11 a.m.

355. Department pass Defense. Information addressees pass major military commands. Paris also for USRO. Embassy telegram 3451. Following is Embassy’s estimate of current situation in Iraq:

1. Corner Turned. Since our last general assessment (June 1), tide running against Communism here has greatly increased in strength.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/8-959. Secret. Transmitted in three sections and repeated to Amman, Ankara, Beirut, Benghazi, Bonn, Cairo, Damascus, Jidda, Karachi, Khartoum, London, Moscow, Paris, Rabat, Rome, Tehran, New Delhi, Tripoli, Tel Aviv, Tunis, Basra, Dhahran, and Kuwait.

1 See footnote 4, Document 192.
CPI has gone too far and has alarmed and angered Qassim to point where he will now not only definitely check any CPI attempts to increase power but will also take concrete steps to reduce its present power. Indications that Prime Minister now believes himself strong enough to stay in control without help of any other group and particularly without help of CPI include: Virtual nullification of PRF as active force, public identification of committees for defense of republic as illegal, (temporary?) closing of General Federation of Trade Unions offices and arrest of its Communist General Secretary, public denunciation by Qassim of student union participation in political terrorism and partisan propaganda, public rejection by Qassim of National Union Front, dismissal of some (though far from all) pro-Communist army officers and return to duty of certain previously retired officers, and Qassim’s condemnation of Kirkuk massacres.

2. Where Will CPI Go From Here? Our belief that upward thrust of CPI now halted and its power being reduced does not lead us to underestimate tremendous gains party has made since July 14, 1958. Party’s tactics for coping with current reverses is to admit that its partisans, and to some extent party itself, have made mistakes, to tar its enemies with same brush, and, we believe, to count on Qassim’s tendency to be lenient with repentant sinners to save party apparatus from serious harm. Soul-searching session of central committee held recently, and party press has announced its results will soon be published. We expect that resolutions and manifestoes put out for public consumption will be of roll-with-punch variety. Possible that search for scapegoats will lead to expulsion or downgrading of some party stalwarts. By sitting tight, quietly mending factional splits and strengthening internal organization, CPI may and probably will come to January 6 starting line for resumption of political activity as well-organized cohesive party probably second only to NDP in size and best prepared of all parties to wage political campaign.

3. Intermediate Communist Objectives. International Communism has reason to be pleased with gains already made here and may have recommended caution and moderation to its local adherents for time being. Communists should be well satisfied during next few years if GOI continues to be a neutral state in which Soviet bloc is in good standing and in which a legal CPI has developed strong apparatus. Move toward satellization of Iraq might well be deferred until after revolution in Iran, which Communists confidently predict. Then Communist drive could pick up speed and power with prospect of acquiring as Soviet satellites two oil-rich Middle East countries with warm-water ports.

4. What Will Qassim’s Position Be? Prime Minister has been repelled by Communist excesses in Kirkuk and elsewhere. He says he intends punish severely individuals found to have taken direct part in murders.
and other crimes in order prevent recurrences such disorders. He has set in motion house cleaning of army and government departments. Qassim apparently still not convinced, however, that Communist ideology threatens Iraq’s future in any way he, as popular leader, cannot meet and overcome. (He has never used word “Communist” in his denunciations.) While there seem to be elements of extreme naivete in this position, it may just be that under present circumstances in Iraq toleration is a more effective tactic than suppression. In this connection we do not think Qassim will suppress CPI if it eschews violence and subversion, nor that he will liquidate popular organization, in whose founding he has taken friendly interest, if they heed his call for reforms.

Barring new developments, Prime Minister will try to adhere to his announced plan to permit resumption of “party life” by next January and to move toward new constitution and election of a Parliament by next July. We doubt that he can carry out this schedule but believe he will try.

5. Political Party Prospects. Our guess is that next five months will see following political party developments. NDP will try to increase its numbers and improve efficiency its organization. Ba’ath will re-emerge as significant Arab nationalist force in Iraq. Istiqlal and other right-wing nationalist groups will play little part unless in coalition with Ba’athist. CPI likely to be less aggressive and to fall back a bit to regroup. CPI may even try ally itself with some new left-wing party (organized by Mahdawi) in order to come to elections under some innocuous coalition label.

6. Economic Prospects. Apart from political problems, particularly the Communist issue, government will be faced with serious economic difficulties which may hamper its efforts maintain internal stability and keep Communists in place. Administrative mismanagement and confusion, low productivity, labor indiscipline and harassment of foreign and Iraqi business and industrial enterprises since revolution have created serious economic situation. Retrieval will be close thing, but solid hope for rapid improvement lies in emergence of Hadid as chief Economic Administrator, down-grading of Kubba and return of officially encouraged discipline to labor force. Serious effort now being made reactivate long-stalled development program, with concomitant improvement in attitude toward participation Western firms. These signs of recognition that Iraq’s economic salvation cannot be achieved through ties with Soviet bloc. Soviet aid program limited in scope and will be slow in realization. Exaggerated expectations of its benefits may react against Soviet prestige as its limitations become generally apparent. Effects such disillusionment, however, could be offset by gains local Communists would derive from economic confusion and hardship.
7. *Iraq and Arab World.* While process of Iraq’s reassimilation into Arab world not yet progressed measurably, current climate for it more favorable than at any time since last October. Prospects been enhanced by changed UAR policies (abstention since March from attempts unseat Qassim, toning-down of anti-Qassim propaganda) and by domestic course Qassim now following. Fact Qassim no longer fears Nasserite subversion has contributed greatly to his resolution to bring Iraqi Communists into line, and this in turn should raise his standing with other Arab governments.

8. *Position.* US policy toward Iraq republic—friendly support for Qassim’s declared objective of neutral and truly independent Iraq despite many months of abuse of US and harassment of Americans in Iraq—at last beginning pay dividends. Qassim’s earlier suspicions of US and of British as well seem to have been largely overcome. He has repudiated Communist attempts blame “imperialists” for recent internal conflicts. Press now not exclusively anti-American and once virulent tone of Radio Baghdad been muted. Although their range of Iraqi contacts is still limited, official and unofficial Americans in Iraq are no longer pariahs. Over-all relations with East and West still not in balance but by no means as far out of line as formerly. We convinced our best bet is to continue support Qassim in every reasonable way, provided, naturally, that he continues his present course.

9. *Conclusion*

Despite favorable developments and portents reviewed above, Iraq likely be turbulent trouble-spot for years to come. Qassim’s evident resolve to achieve internal stability and adopt effectively neutral stance in foreign relations must contend with persistent regional and world tensions and with inherent instability of Iraq’s political, cultural, religious and ethnic make-up. Our hopes for measurable progress toward relative stability and genuine independence are riding on shoulders of one man, whose judgment regarding key factor of Communism is still open to question.

10. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] Service Attaché con-cur.

Jernegan
On September 10 Allen Dulles briefed the National Security Council at its 418th Meeting on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security.” Included in this briefing was the following on the situation in Iraq:

"Mr. Dulles said that the situation in Iraq was considerably more tense because of the growing feeling of the anti-Communists that Kassem will not take forthright action against Communism. The core of anti-Communist sentiment is in the Army, even though the Army is to some extent penetrated by the Communists. General Abdi is the most frequently-mentioned possible leader of an anti-Communist regime succeeding Kassem. The UAR is shifting toward a more active role in Iraq, including the dispatch of arms and money to bolster pro-UAR elements in the country. Fear of a Communist coup prevails but there is no evidence that such a coup is contemplated. In fact the Iraqi Communists are now taking a softer line. Any attempt at a coup could mean civil war.” (Memorandum of discussion by Boggs, September 10; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

General Saleh al-Abdi, a trusted confidant of Qassim, was the Military Governor General of Iraq and had been one of the original perpetrators of the July 1958 revolution. (Memorandum from H.W. Glidden of RME/NE to Meyer, September 14; Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/9-1459)
201. Memorandum of Conversation

SecDel/MC/23 New York, September 21, 1959, 11:30 a.m.

SECRETARY’S DELEGATION TO THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, September 17–22, 1959

PARTICIPANTS

**US**
- The Secretary
- Mr. Jones
- R.W. Adams, NEA

**Iraq**
- Hashim Jawad, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Iraq

SUBJECT

The Situation in Iraq

The Secretary expressed his pleasure at meeting Foreign Minister Jawad and said that he was pleased to note the great improvement in relations between the United States and Iraq over the past year. The Secretary added that there had been considerable concern a year ago that Communist elements might seize control in Iraq.

Mr. Jawad assured the Secretary (and repeated several times during the ensuing conversation) that Iraq couldn’t possibly become a Communist-controlled country. He said that he was particularly happy that Ambassador Jernegan was in Baghdad and had so correctly reported the Iraqi scene to the Secretary at a time when others might have been misled by the apparent rise of communism during the revolutionary period. Not only is communism alien to Iraqi culture, but the present government is dedicated to the cause of democracy. The Prime Minister firmly believes in the future of democratic government and intends to permit the re-establishment of political parties in January 1960, with elections to follow as soon as possible thereafter. The Communists will also be allowed to organize a political party, Mr. Jawad said, as the government prefers to cope with the Communists out in the open rather than have them hide underground. The previous danger that armed Communist groups might prove troublesome, concerning which the Prime Minister had been particularly alert, had now disappeared with the disarming of all the revolutionary groups.

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Source: Department of State, Conference Files: Lot 64 D 560, CF 1476. Limited Official Use. No drafting officer is indicated on the source text. The conversation took place at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.
In response to a question by Mr. Jones, Mr. Jawad said the Iraq Development Board was again beginning to make good progress in carrying out established development programs. The basic, long-range programs are good, and there is no need for the Development Board to consider any new projects at this time. Iraq needs considerable foreign assistance in its development, but Mr. Jawad assured the Secretary that if Iraq sought aid from the Soviet bloc, such aid and any resultant technicians would be “tightly controlled”, and would, of course, be utilized only in the carrying out of established Iraqi programs.

Land distribution, and a better utilization of agricultural lands are among the major problems Iraq faces in its economic development, Mr. Jawad said. It will be the work of many years properly to distribute land. A real problem is the lack of managerial knowledge, and the present government feels that there is a real need for the previous landowners or sheiks, many of whom left their lands after the revolution, to return to give proper management. They were the “real entrepreneurs” who put in capital and know-how in the operation of their agricultural estates. The government is therefore making an effort to have at least some of them return to their holdings.

Mr. Jawad said that relations with neighboring countries had improved considerably since Iraq left the Baghdad Pact. While there were some border disputes with Iran, some of very long standing, he thought it might not be too difficult to reach a friendly settlement with Iran. Iraq, he said, has always had closer ties with Turkey and Iran than with the Arab countries. The sooner this is understood by Nasser, who “has been dreaming of an empire”, the sooner normal relations can be resumed with the UAR. The entire “Egyptian conspiracy” in Iraq, Mr. Jawad said, has been based on Nasser’s false assumptions that Iraq is closely bound to the Arab countries and that, lacking Nasser’s domination, Iraq would turn to communism.

Iran has no problems with the United States, and no particular issues in the current session of the United Nations General Assembly in which it is vitally concerned. Of greatest interest to Iraq and all the smaller countries during the current session is the possibility, or the hope, that the United States and the Soviet Union can reach some sort of understanding which will lead to a lessening of tensions and of the threat of world war.

1In a separate memorandum of this conversation, during a discussion concerning the three Americans killed during the Iraqi coup, the Secretary thanked Jawad for his personal attention to this matter and hoped he could ensure that a larger compensation be given to the families. Jawad responded that although he thought his government had done all it could he “promised the Secretary that he would see what he could do about greater compensation as soon as he returned to Baghdad.” (Ibid.)
202. Special National Intelligence Estimate

SNIE 36.2-4-59  

POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAQ

The Problem
To estimate the short-term outlook for Iraq.

The Estimate

1. The situation in Iraq has grown even more unstable and uncertain since our last estimate (SNIE 36.2/2-59, "The Short-Term Outlook in Iraq," dated 30 June). Qassim has made a number of moves to limit Communist activities. At the same time, these measures have been overshadowed by his public approval of pro-Communist Col. Mahdawi's anti-nationalist activities in the People's Court and the recent execution of Brigadier Tabaqchali and other participants in the Mosul uprising, as well as four civilian members of Nuri's last government.

2. Meanwhile, throughout the period the Soviet Bloc has continued and even expanded its activities in Iraq. Increasing numbers of Bloc personnel are working in Iraq, some of whom are high-level specialists advising Iraqi ministries. The Bloc is rapidly implementing its military and economic agreements and new negotiations have taken place, for example, in the field of atomic energy and civil aviation. In general, we believe the Soviet Bloc is likely to continue its support to Qassim. However, at the same time that Qassim has been cultivating expanded relations with the Sino-Soviet Bloc, he has also been seeking to improve Iraq's position with the West.

Source: Department of State, PPS Files: Lot 67 D 548, Iraq, Secret. A note on the cover sheet indicates that this special estimate, submitted by the CIA, was prepared by CIA, INR, and the intelligence organizations of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff. All members of the USIB concurred in this estimate on September 24 except the representatives of the AEC and FBI, the Director of the National Security Agency, and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, who abstained on the grounds that the topic was outside their jurisdiction.

1 Document 195.

2 For our assessment of basic factors affecting Soviet policy toward Iraq and its connection with Soviet objectives in Iran, see Annex: paragraphs 45 and 47 of NIE 30-59, "Main Currents in the Arab World," dated 25 August 1959 [Document 71]. We believe these paragraphs remain valid. [Footnote in the source text.]
3. Predictions as to future developments must remain highly tentative. Despite Qassim's success in maintaining his position, he has not yet developed a political organization personally loyal to him. He probably hopes to maintain an equilibrium between Communist and the various non-Communist forces. He may be able to do so, possibly by counterbalancing the Tabaqchali execution with new moves to cut down Communist power. For example, the trials of persons involved in the Kirkuk disturbances would provide such an opportunity. However, we believe that the struggle for control of Iraq is about to enter another critical phase. The execution of Tabaqchali could serve as a catalyst for action in the tense situation. Such a crisis would not necessarily prove decisive, but it would probably involve more extensive disturbances and reprisals than have yet taken place.

4. Reports of coup plots, including the assassination of Qassim, have increased in recent weeks, but no organization capable of bringing off a successful coup is known to exist. Iraqi nationalists' disillusionment with Qassim is at a new peak and the UAR apparently once again fears that Qassim cannot be relied upon to keep Iraq out of Communist hands. Nasser has claimed that any new coup move would fail, but may now feel compelled to attempt to create a climate favorable for a coup.

5. Qassim and the Communists are both almost certainly aware that the nationalists may resort to desperate measures. Either or both may move to forestall a nationalist challenge, though we believe that the Communists would still hope to act in conjunction with Qassim. We believe that army support is essential, either to maintain the Qassim regime in power or to overthrow it. There is little firm information available upon which to judge the balance of sentiment among army leaders toward Qassim, the nationalists, the UAR, or even the Communists. There is considerable reason to believe, however, that troop commanders in the Baghdad area are loyal to Qassim and that many identified antiregime nationalist and pro-UAR officers have been purged or placed in positions of relative unimportance. Thus, if the nationalists, either alone or with UAR help, do attempt a coup at this time, we believe that its chances of success would be less than even. In the event of a coup attempt, and especially if Qassim were assassinated, serious civil strife is likely.

6. Action against the Communists in the Kirkuk trials would hearten the anti-Communist forces. However, Qassim is not likely to take continuing strong action against the Communists so long as he is under direct attack by Nasser. On balance, we believe that the influence of the various Arab nationalist elements in Iraq will be further weak-
ened. The probable result of this weakening would be acute and more overt hostility between Iraq and the UAR and consequently increased turmoil in the Arab World and the Middle East generally.³

Annex

Paragraphs 45 and 47 of NIE 30–59, “Main Currents in the Arab World,” dated 25 August 1959.⁴

45. We believe that the Soviets attach considerable importance to the stakes involved in Iraq. However, Soviet tactics in seeking to build and consolidate Communist power there will depend on their assessment of the risks and opportunities involved. They probably prefer that the Iraqi Communists acquire the substance of power behind a facade of Arab nationalism. Under present circumstances, at least, they will probably avoid attempting an overt and complete Communist takeover because of the risks of failure and foreign intervention and the probable costs to Bloc relations with Nasser and the nationalist movements. Their most likely tactic is to foster some form of popular front. Nevertheless, they would probably not remain content to share power indefinitely. If in time they came to believe that the Iraqi Communists could take over and retain power, the Soviets would be likely to support them in doing so, particularly if the situation in Iran seemed to be developing in a manner favorable to Soviet interests.

47. In the broadest sense we believe that the emergence of radicalism in Iraq has demonstrated the essential conflicts between Soviet policies and those of the reformist brand of Arab nationalism. In the long run, Bloc interests will almost certainly lie with the more extreme proponents of social and economic change. Even allowing for maximum

³The Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Intelligence, Department of the Navy, does not concur with the third and fourth sentences of this paragraph. He would delete them and substitute the following:

“This circumstance would probably have the effect of fusing the Iraqi nationalists of all shades and of creating a more amenable attitude toward the UAR among those nationalists hitherto wary of, if not antagonistic toward, Nasser. The probable result would be to sharpen the conflict between the Communists and the anti-Communists in Iraq, and thus increase turmoil in the Arab World and the Middle East generally.” [Footnote in the source text.]

⁴See Document 71.
flexibility in Bloc tactics toward individual governments, it is likely to become increasingly difficult for the Soviets to maintain the substance and even the form of convincing support for both reformism and radicalism, particularly if the latter continues to grow as a significant force in Arab affairs.

203. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Jones) to Secretary of State Herter


SUBJECT

Statement to the NSC re the Situation in Iraq

Discussion:

Pursuant to NSC action 2068, April 17, 1959,¹ an inter-agency committee was established to concern itself with the situation in Iraq and to consider feasible courses of action with a view to preventing a Communist take-over in that country. The Department's NEA Assistant Secretary was named chairman of the group.

The inter-agency group held a number of meetings during April, May and June under the chairmanship of Mr. Rountree. Ambassador Jernegan was brought home and his views were extremely helpful to the Committee's deliberations as well as to the NSC, before whom Mr. Jernegan appeared personally.

In its deliberations, the inter-agency committee agreed that the policy outlined in NSC 5820/1 entitled "Statement of United States Policy toward the Near East"² continued to be valid, and no change of this basic policy was required. With reference to specific courses of action, the Committee felt that dramatic military or political action by the United States was not desirable, that the most effective restraint on Com-
nism in Iraq is that exercised by the Arab peoples themselves, and that our best efforts could be along the lines of encouraging Qasim, particularly through third parties such as Afro-Asian representatives, to maintain an independent Iraq resistant to the Communist threat.

When the situation in Iraq appeared to be improving (Tab B), the NSC accepted a recommendation on June 22 by the inter-agency group that further weekly reports by the Committee to the NSC would be discontinued unless there occurred a substantial change in the situation in Iraq.4

Since there have been some recent somewhat disturbing developments in Iraq, the inter-agency committee under my chairmanship met again to examine the Iraqi situation on September 24. It was agreed to report to the NSC that the meeting was held, that the situation in Iraq was reviewed, that at the moment there appears to be no reason to alter policies and action courses previously agreed upon, but that the Committee would meet again when further information and evaluations are available including particularly the views of Ambassador Jernegan. In this connection, we have sent a telegram to Ambassador Jernegan asking for an assessment5 and his preliminary response6 may be available to you before the meeting Wednesday morning.7

Recommendations:

1. That you report to the Council that the inter-agency committee concerned with Iraq pursuant to NSC action 2068 of April 17 met on September 24, that it reviewed the situation in Iraq including the September

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3 Tab B is a memorandum from Rountree to Dillon, June 17, reporting on events in Iraq since May 21 and the work of the interagency committee. (Department of State, S/P-NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Iraq, The Situation, NSC Action 2068)

4 See Document 194.

5 Telegram 920 to Baghdad, September 28. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/9-2859)

6 In telegram 787 from Baghdad, September 29, the Embassy informed the Department that telegram 784 from Baghdad (September 28), which crossed telegram 920 to Baghdad, “gives our best estimate present situation.” The Embassy did not see any reason to change U.S. policies since U.S. capabilities for influencing the situation remained extremely limited, and believed that U.S. intervention, either direct or indirect, would only make matters worse. (Ibid.)

In telegram 784 from Baghdad, the Embassy submitted a general estimate on Iraq during the last 7 weeks, stating that the “pattern of events during the period has been inconsistent, with factors unfavorable to Communist cause running parallel to another sequence which has benefited Communists. But momentum of anti-Communist trend has slowed, while circumstances which favor Communists have assumed greater importance, especially in past two weeks.” The Embassy concluded that Qassim’s ability to maintain a “balance” was declining, and outspoken nationalist criticism might impel him to turn once again to the Communists for support. (Ibid.)

7 September 30.
20 executions,\(^8\) that it was felt that at the moment there appears to be no need to alter the basic policy established by NSC 5820/1 and the courses of action previously agreed upon by the Committee, but the Committee intends to keep close surveillance on the situation in Iraq and meet again after further information and evaluations are available, particularly from Ambassador Jernegan.

2. If there is a request at the Council for an account of significant developments in Iraq since the last report by the Committee on June 17, you may wish to draw upon the summary attached herewith as Tab A.

3. That you indicate that you will again report to the Council concerning Iraq following the next meeting of the inter-agency committee.

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Tab A\(^9\)

Summary of Events in Iraq Since Late June

In reviewing the situation since the latter part of June, the intervening period can usefully be divided into the time up to August 11 and the period since then.

1. Between late June and early August the following favorable developments took place:

   a. The Popular Resistance Forces which had been heavily infiltrated by the Communists were first disarmed and subsequently all but disbanded by Qasim. Training was discontinued and even the wearing of PRF-type uniforms in public has been forbidden.

   b. A number of strongly anti-Communist newspapers, including several that had been sacked by Communist-led mobs at the time of the Mosul revolt, re-emerged. They have continued up until the present to take a line strongly antagonistic to Communist activities in Iraq.

   c. The influence of the moderate Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance appeared to be on the increase and there was an apparent lessening of anti-Western suspicions on the part of the Iraqi Government.

   d. Qasim reaffirmed his ban on political party activity and publicly rebuffed Communist efforts to press the formation of a United National Front.

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\(^8\) See Tab A.

\(^9\) Top Secret.
e. Finally, the Communists badly overplayed their hand at the time of the July 14 celebrations of the first anniversary of the revolution. Communist supporters were involved in bloody atrocities and murders in Kirkuk which moved the Prime Minister to public expression of horror and public castigation of the "anarchists" responsible for these events. This stand on Qasim's part, and concomitant measures taken by the military authorities against the student unions and other Communist infiltrated organizations, greatly heartened nationalist and anti-Communist elements in Iraq.

2. The resurgence of the nationalists shortly reached such dimensions that Qasim apparently again became nervous for his own position and became convinced that his policy of seeking to maintain a balance between the Communists and nationalists was in danger. In any event it was suddenly announced on August 11 that Brig. Gen. Tabaqchali and a number of other senior officers suspected of involvement in the Mosul revolt would, contrary to prevailing expectations, be brought to trial before the so-called People's Court of Col. Mahdawi. These officers were all considered to have nationalist leanings. This decision began a train of events which have increased tensions in Iraq.

a. On August 13, Qasim, apparently stung by the defiant attitude of Tabaqchali and other defendants in the opening session of their trial before the People's Court on the previous day, publicly gave the court president, Col. Fadhil Mahdawi, his unqualified support and endorsement. This move discouraged the hopes of anti-Communist elements who consider that by his words and deeds Col. Mahdawi had shown himself to be favorably inclined to, if not the actual ally of, the Communists in Iraq.

b. Large numbers of Communist students who had been rounded up after the Kirkuk massacre were ordered released by Qasim and allowed to return to their studies with an admonition to stay out of politics.

c. A Communist-dominated coalition slate won the Journalist Association elections, with the result that the Board of the Association, which has the power to close down publications by expulsion of publishers from membership, is largely in the hands of the Communists and their sympathizers.

d. The execution on August 25 of five military officers and one civilian earlier convicted of participation in the Mosul revolt provided a further indication of the way the wind was blowing. This was followed on September 20 by the sudden carrying out of the death sentences handed down earlier by Col. Mahdawi's Court, of the 13 nationalist officers headed by the popular Brig. Tabaqchali. The immediately preceding execution of Sa'id Qazzaz, Minister of Interior under Nuri Sa'id, and three old regime police officials was apparently intended partly as a sop to the Communists and partly to counter criticism that no old regime executions had been carried out whereas 23 of the thirty officers sen-
tenced to death in connection with the Mosul rebellion have been put to
dead.

3. While developments since August 11 have clearly been to the
disfavor of the nationalist elements, it seems premature to conclude that
the Communists have made corresponding gains. As late as two days
ago, Qasim declared publicly that Iraq will maintain its policy of neu-
trality and will become a satellite of no country. Qasim’s actions against
nationalist elements since August 11 quite probably were designed to
establish respect for his authority in the face of recurring rumors of anti-
Qasim conspiracies allegedly supported by Nasser. Undoubtedly they
have earned for Qasim bitter nationalist hatred. Despite a few relatively
mild disturbances in reaction to the September 20 executions, Qasim
seems as of the moment still to have the internal security situation under
control. However, the army on which Qasim depends for his authority
appears deeply riven by Communist-nationalist conflict.

204. Memorandum of Discussion at the 420th Meeting of the
National Security Council

Washington, October 1, 1959.

[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and
agenda items 1 and 2. Secretary of State Herter presided at the meeting.]

3. The Situation in Iraq (NSC 5820/1; 1 NSC Actions Nos. 2068, 2074,
2078 and 2100; 2 SNIE 36.2-4-59) 3

Mr. Gray said the next item was a report by the Interdepartmental
Group on Iraq, established by NSC Action No. 2068. At this point Mr. G.
Lewis Jones and Mr. Armin Meyer of the Department of State joined the
meeting.

Mr. Jones presented the report of the Interdepartmental Group. He
said the Group had concluded that (1) dramatic action by the US in Iraq
was not desirable; (2) restraint by the Arab countries is the best means of
restraining Iraq; (3) Kassem should be encouraged through third parties

Drafted by Boggs on October 2.

1 Document 51.
2 See footnotes 1 and 2, Document 194.
to maintain an independent Iraq which would resist the Communist threat. The Group was keeping the situation in Iraq under close scrutiny and had agreed to meet again in ten or twelve days, shortly after the CENTO session. 4 After the meeting of the Group, a telegram from Ambassador Jernegan (telegram of September 28, 1959) 5 had been received. This telegram indicated that (1) the short-range prospect for internal stability in Iraq was worse, (2) the anti-Communist trend was slowing up, (3) US capabilities in Iraq are extremely limited and US intervention in the country would only make matters worse. The Ambassador believes contingency planning looking toward the protection of American lives and property is desirable; accordingly, the Washington Liaison Group had been asked to be on the alert for evacuation of Americans from Iraq.

Mr. Jones said there were numerous reports of a forthcoming attempt to assassinate Kassem. 6 Such reports emanating from Cairo and Baghdad may, however, be Communist provocations. If major civil strife should occur in Iraq our best course might be to insure that Iraq’s neighbors did not undertake a rash interference in Iraq’s internal affairs. Contingency planning with some countries against the possibility of civil strife in Iraq might do more harm than good if Iraq became aware of the planning. However, the US should continue to consult the British as appropriate on all the factors in the Iraq situation. In conclusion, Mr. Jones reported that a recent telegram indicated that the Turkish Ambassador had recently seen Kassem and found him “calmly confident.” The Turkish Ambassador believed it unlikely that Kassem would willingly swing to Communism.

Secretary Herter said the Turks appear to be optimistic about the situation in Iraq. Mr. Gray said he had the impression Nasser had not been as active recently in propaganda and subversive activities in Iraq, even though recent rumors continued to link Nasser with assassination plots. He asked Mr. Dulles to comment.

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4 October 7–9; see Documents 76 and 77.
5 See footnote 6, Document 203.
6 On October 1, Goodpaster prepared a “Synopsis of Intelligence Items Reported to the President.” The first item, based on September 28 information, reads: “Baghdad seething with rumors that Qasim is about to order execution of additional prominent prisoners. A new coup, to start with the assassination of Qasim, is scheduled ‘within a week.’ Our Ambassador considers the situation hazardous and unstable. Nationalist reaction to the execution of Mosul conspirators is virulent and spontaneous.”
7 Telegram 807 from Baghdad, September 30. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/9–3059)
Mr. Dulles said that Radio Cairo continued to be anti-Kassem and that Nasser had resumed some radio attacks on Kassem. Also Nasser had been doing some contingency planning and had urged the assassination plotters not to move too fast. Nasser had inquired of the US [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] what our attitude would be in the event of a battle in Iraq among Kassem, the nationalists and the Communists. The UAR may be laying plans to intervene in the event chaos ensues in Iraq. Rumors were generally wrong, but it was possible an attempt would be made on Kassem’s life in the next two months. Mr. Dulles agreed with Mr. Jones as to contingency planning, but believed we should be giving thought as to what we might do in various possible situations. We should plan for measures to protect Western interests in the event of chaos in Iraq and our consultative lines with the British should be kept open.

Secretary Herter thought the question of Iraq would probably be discussed at the CENTO meeting. He noted that the Turks have been consistently optimistic about Iraq; while the British, who were formerly optimistic, are now downcast.

Mr. Gray asked whether the Department of Defense had sufficient guidance on the Iraq situation. Mr. Gates said it did, and added that planning under CINCEUR was in good shape.

Mr. Gray said he assumed the Interdepartmental Group would assess the situation in Iraq again after the CENTO meeting.

The National Security Council:*

a. Noted and discussed an oral report by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs on recent developments with respect to Iraq, the work of the interdepartmental group established pursuant to NSC Action No. 2068–b, and a recent evaluation by Ambassador Jernegan of the situation in Iraq.

b. Noted that the interdepartmental group established pursuant to NSC Action No. 2068–b would continue to keep the situation in Iraq under scrutiny, and would reappraise the situation following the forthcoming CENTO meeting and report the results thereof to the Council.

[Here follows agenda item 4.]

Marion W. Boggs

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*Paragraphs a and b constitute NSC Action No. 2133, approved by the President on October 14. (Ibid., S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)
205. Editorial Note

On October 7 at approximately 6:30 p.m. local time, Prime Minister 'Abd al-Karim Qassim was wounded in the shoulder in an assassination attempt. Radio Baghdad announced that the Prime Minister was not seriously hurt, asked the Iraqi people to remain calm, and established a curfew for the night of October 7.

In an October 7 report to Secretary Herter, Director of Intelligence and Research Hugh Cumming, Jr., suggested that this assassination attempt might be the beginning of the coup against the Qassim government about which the United States had been picking up rumors. Cumming reported that later that evening Qassim gave a broadcast over Radio Baghdad giving substance to the claims that his wounds were slight. Cumming suspected that the United Arab Republic would be blamed for the attempt. (Department of State, NEA Files: Lot 61 D 43, Baghdad)

On October 10, the Department of State drafted a message from President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Qassim, cleared with Goodpastor at the White House, expressing deep gratitude that Qassim escaped serious harm in the attack on his life and wishing him a speedy recovery. (Telegram 1016 to Baghdad, October 7, 7:41 p.m.; *ibid.*, Central Files, 787.13/10–759)

206. Memorandum From the Central Intelligence Agency's Member on the Inter-Agency Committee on Iraq [*name not declassified*] to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Jones)


[Source: Department of State, NEA Files: Lot 62 D 435, Inter-Agency Group on Iraq. Secret. 5 pages of source text not declassified.]
207. Memorandum of Discussion at the 423d Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1 and 2.]

3. *The Situation in Iraq* (NSC 5820/1; NSC Actions Nos. 2068, 2074, 2078 and 2100; SNIE 36.2–4–59; NSC Action No. 2133)¹

Mr. Gray said the next item was an oral report by the Secretary of State on the situation in Iraq,² to be made on behalf of the Inter-Agency Group on Iraq. Mr. Gray recalled that the Council on October 1 had agreed that the Interdepartmental Group would continue to keep the situation in Iraq under scrutiny and would reappraise the situation following the forthcoming CENTO Meeting. Secretary Herter said the Inter-Agency Group met on October 16 and will meet again at any time events require a reappraisal of the situation. Meanwhile Iraq is being watched with anxiety. Unrest in that country may lead to further attempts on the life of Qasim. Moreover, Secretary Herter was quite disturbed by the dispute between Iran and Iraq over the Shatt-el-Arab boundaries and navigation. The Iranians were quite willing to discuss this dispute and the Iraqis professed to be willing to do so, but never quite got around to sending negotiators to a meeting. This dispute could some day be explosive. Turning again to the internal situation in Iraq, Secretary Herter said it was difficult to know whether the Communists were gaining or losing influence. However, he was quite disturbed about the possibility of demonstrations and disorders at the time Qasim leaves the hospital. Mr. Dulles said that according to some reports Qasim was more seriously wounded than was first reported. Secretary Herter remarked that on the other hand Ambassador Jernegan had visited Qasim in the hospital and had reported that he seemed to be in good health. Mr. Dulles then reported that [6-1/2 lines of source text not declassified].

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¹ See footnotes 1–3 and 8, Document 204.
² Based on a memorandum from Hart to Herter, November 4. (Department of State, S/P–NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Iraq, The Situation, NSC Action No. 2068)
The National Security Council:

Noted an oral report by the Secretary of State on the results of the reappraisal of the situation in Iraq following the recent CENTO meeting, undertaken in accordance with NSC Action No. 2133–b by the Interdepartmental Group established pursuant to NSC Action No. 2068–b; and comments by the Director of Central Intelligence related thereto.

[Here follows agenda item 4.]

Marion W. Boggs

3 The following paragraph constitutes NSC Action No. 2146, approved by the President on November 10. (Ibid., S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot D 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)

208. Editorial Note

At the 426th Meeting of the National Security Council, December 1, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles included in his briefing on “Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security” the following on Iraq:

“Mr. Dulles noted that the latest U.S. Embassy review of the situation in Iraq was gloomier than past reviews. Kassem was still in the hospital despite his recovery from the attempt to assassinate him, probably because he feels safer there. [3 lines of source text not declassified] In conclusion, Mr. Dulles characterized Kassem as an enigma and said he might hang on for several months longer.” (Memorandum of discussion by Boggs, January 26, 1960; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

Dulles’ reference to “the latest Embassy review” was to telegram 1234 from Baghdad, November 25. (Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/11–2559)
Memorandum of Discussion at the 428th Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda item 1. Vice President Nixon presided at the meeting.]

2. Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security (NSC Action No. 2068) 1

Reporting on Iraq, Mr. Bissell said that Kassem left the hospital last week after his recovery. His recuperation was celebrated publicly by a parade which had been organized and dominated by the Communists. Iraqi troops had been extensively deployed during this parade and the Nationalist quarters had been blocked off. In addition to these arrangements, Kassem had held a six-hour press conference which turned into a denunciation of the Nationalists. In this conference he had reversed himself sufficiently to say that the Kirkuk massacre had been stirred up by the Nationalists and that he had denounced a current attempt to contest Communist control over an Iraqi student union. In other words, all the auspices surrounding Kassem’s departure from the hospital indicated that he now blames the assassination attempt against him on the Nationalists and that his mind is inflamed against them. The indications now are that if Kassem had to make a choice, he would rely heavily on the Communists instead of maintaining the precarious balance which he has been seeking to maintain in the past. However, Mr. Bissell continued, the picture in Iraq is not entirely black. Kassem’s popularity has considerably diminished, and there are officers in the army who take the Nationalist point of view and who are ready to move against him. Recognizing that predictions are hazardous, Mr. Bissell predicted that if no further assassination attempts were made against Kassem, there was a strong possibility of a growth in Communist power. However, there was a better than even chance that another attempt would be made to assassinate Kassem. An abortive assassination attempt known to Kassem would drive him into the arms of the Communists. The actual assassination of Kassem would quite likely result in civil war and possibly in an intervention by Iraq’s neighbors. In summary, Mr. Bissell felt that there would be further assassination attempts and that each of these attempts could present serious policy problems in Washington.

Secretary Herter said the difficulty with the Nationalists was that they were divided into two groups, the genuine Nationalists and the

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1 See footnote 12, Document 176.
Nasser stooges. Mr. Bissell said there was even a third group of Nationalists consisting of the survivors of the Nuri Said regime. He added there were indications now that Nasser believed it would not be feasible for the UAR to attempt to annex Iraq. Secretary Herter said Nasser was still active in stirring up trouble in Iraq. The Vice President asked whether he was correct in assuming that this Government had no particular affinity for any of the three groups of Nationalists. Secretary Herter said we hoped that Kassem would be able to steer a middle course. This Government did not want Iraq to be taken over by either Nasser or the Communists. He remarked, incidentally, that our Ambassador to Iraq was not very optimistic about the situation. The Vice President inquired whether Secretary Herter felt there was no possible third force in Iraq. Secretary Herter said there was none. [1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]

Mr. Gray reminded the Council of the existence of the Interdepartmental Group on Iraq established by NSC Action 2068, and said he felt sure the Secretary of State had in mind having the Group keep the Council informed as to the situation. The Vice President was sure that the Interdepartmental Group would be considering the events mentioned by Mr. Bissell. The Vice President recalled that Mr. Bissell had mentioned possible intervention by Iraq’s neighbors and asked which neighbors would be likely to intervene in the event of civil war. Mr. Bissell said that Jordan or the UAR might intervene. [1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified] Nasser was in close communication with the Baath party. Both Jordan and the UAR felt it would be risky to initiate action against Iraq, but in the course of a self-generated crisis, such as a civil war in Iraq, they might feel free to intervene. Secretary Anderson asked whether the Communists and the Nationalists were about equal in armament in Iraq. Mr. Bissell answered in the affirmative, while pointing out that the Communists were numerically fewer. However, the Communists were organized and disciplined while the Nationalists were divided and discouraged, although the Nationalists probably had the army on their side. Secretary Herter said there was one optimistic note, namely the normal antipathy of Moslems to Communism. Mr. Bissell said he would give the non-Communists a slight edge in the event of civil strife in Iraq because Abdi, the Military Governor, was a symbol of authority and was anti-Communist. Hence in the event of the assassination of Kassem, continuity of authority was possible through the person of Abdi.

[Here follow the remainder of agenda item 2 and agenda items 3 and 4.]

Marion W. Boggs
210. Special National Intelligence Estimate

SNIE 36.2–5–59

SHORT-TERM PROSPECTS FOR IRAQ

The Problem
To estimate the short-term outlook in Iraq.

The Estimate

1. Since Qassim went into the hospital following the unsuccessful attempt on his life on 7 October, Iraqi politics have shown a superficial calm. There has, however, been mounting tension between the Communists and the various nationalist factions.\(^1\) During the same period, the economy has continued its steady decline, with rising unemployment and prices, stagnating business activity and investment, and a bogging down of the development program. In these circumstances, we believe that Iraq is facing a growing crisis of leadership.

2. The enigmatic figure of Qassim is still central to the short-run outlook in Iraq. Ever since the 1958 revolution, he has maneuvered between the Communists and their antagonists. He probably still considers himself uncommitted to any faction, and capable of playing a role above the struggle. His messianic tendencies have apparently been reinforced by his recent near-martyrdom.

3. However, conflicting political pressures and growing internal problems are likely to make it increasingly difficult for Qassim to remain in effective control and still avoid committing himself to one or another of the Iraqi factions.\(^2\) Baathist elements and other Pan-Arab

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Source: Department of State, PPS Files: Lot 67 D 548, Iraq, Secret. A note on the cover sheet indicates that this special estimate, submitted by the CIA, was prepared by CIA, INR, the intelligence organizations of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff. All members of the USIB concurred in this estimate on December 15 except the representatives of the AEC and FBI who abstained on the grounds that the subject was outside their jurisdiction.

\(^1\) In this estimate, we use the term "nationalist" to describe a varied array of Iraqi elements whose chief common quality is that they are not Communist or pro-Communist. When necessary, we distinguish among the nationalist groups—which range from the left-of-center National Democratic Party and the Pan-Arab socialist Baath to more conservative groups with varying allegiances toward Iraqi as against Pan-Arab nationalism. [Footnote in the source text.]

\(^2\) In a December 11 memorandum to Katherine W. Bracken, Chief of the Mid-East Aegean Division of INR, Deputy Director of NE Nicholas Thacher commented on a draft version of this SNIE. Thacher stated that NE did not concur with the thrust of this sentence, which "strongly pointed to a conclusion" that Qassim's continuance in power would lead necessarily to his total dependence on the Communists through force of circumstances and choice. (Department of State, NEA Files: Lot 61 D 43, Baghdad)
nationalists sympathetic to Nasser have of course long opposed Qassim. Their opposition is probably now shared to a growing extent by Iraqi nationalists who once saw in Qassim a leader able and determined to keep Iraq out of the hands of both Nasser and the Communists. Nationalist elements have been alienated by various actions of Qassim, e.g., his continued support for the outspokenly pro-Communist Colonel Mahdawi, his execution of Brigadier Tabaqchali in September, and the antinationalist tone of his speech of 2 December. Qassim’s failure to cope with deteriorating economic conditions has almost certainly added further to growing disillusionment.

4. Even so, we believe that Qassim will continue his attempts to maintain himself in power by relying on the support of the armed forces while maneuvering between the various political factions. If he continues his recent line of conduct, he will become increasingly isolated from nationalist elements. It is possible that he might regain a measure of nationalist support, but to do so would require a more drastic reversal of his recent policies, as well as more effective leadership, than we consider likely. Hence, we believe that he will be increasingly isolated from anti-Communist elements, to the longer range advantage of the Communists.

5. We continue to believe that short-run Communist strategy calls for consolidating power and expanding influence without assuming the risks of an overt takeover. It is also likely that, in Communist eyes, Qassim retains his usefulness as a figure who, combining popular appeal and willingness to countenance the Communists, is preferable to any other immediately available leader in terms of short-range Communist interests. In these circumstances, the Communists will probably continue efforts to impress upon Qassim their usefulness and reliability as supporters of his regime against the machinations of the “imperialist” powers and Nasser’s agents. In pursuing these tactics, the Communists have, despite certain internal differences, the advantage of better organization than their more numerous but factionalized opponents and a greater ability to make sudden shifts in tactics.

6. Present evidence concerning Qassim’s state of mind, particularly his fear of the UAR and the nationalists, indicates that the Communists have good prospects of success in alternately exploiting Qassim’s misgivings and courting his favor. And at least in the short run, Qassim would have Communist support against a nationalist opposition short of an uprising. Thus, the reliance of Qassim and the Communists on one another for support appears to be increasing.

7. While alarm and discontent are generally growing, disparate nationalist groups have not coalesced and are likely to do so only on a temporary basis. Present evidence does appear, however, to warrant the estimate that a nationalist move to undercut the Communists would
probably involve an attempt to destroy Qassim’s power as well. For a
time at least, nationalist opposition groups may be driven closer to-
gether out of common fear that they cannot afford to wait too long, lest
Qassim’s concessions to the Communists cost more nationalist lives or
his countermeasures reduce nationalist capabilities.

8. The Iraqi Army, as a whole, has supported Qassim against internal
challenges to his regime. This support reflected the army’s approval
of Qassim’s “neutralist” policies, its improved status resulting from bet-
ter pay, more modern equipment, and its closer identification with the
government. Nevertheless, a degree of alarm and disillusionment has
beset many elements of the army as the Iraqi situation becomes more
unsettled, and plotting among military and civilian groups appears on
the increase. On the whole, so long as Qassim survives and continues to
cultivate the army, he can probably retain considerable military sup-
port, which will reduce the chances of overthrowing him. Internal insta-
\ility and tension is likely to increase, however.

9. In these circumstances, the most likely way to remove Qassim
would be by assassination, and we consider it probable that another at-
tempt will be made before long. We are much less confident concerning
which nationalist leaders or groups will actually undertake it.

10. If Qassim were eliminated, the outcome of the coup would de-
pend on how quickly and effectively its organizers could move to con-
solidate control. Substantial army support would clearly be essential to
its success. Given the present state of discontent with the regime, we be-
\lieve that a well-organized nationalist coup would have at least an even
chance of establishing power over the country. Even if the effort were
inspired by civilian nationalists (e.g., Baathists), the resulting regime
would probably work with and through military officers—possibly
such figures as General Rubai and General Abdi. Chances of success
would be best if the coup appeared to be wholly internal and without
prior commitment to any foreign power, including the UAR.

11. If effective control were not quickly established, Qassim’s re-
moval could result in widespread disorders and even civil war, with
Iraqi Communists taking active measures to protect their position, such
as reactivating the People’s Resistance Forces (PRF) and arming their
supporters. In such a situation, moreover, there would be at least an
even chance of overt intervention by one or more of Iraq’s neighbors.

12. Turkey’s attitude toward the Qassim regime, heretofore rather
tolerant and hopeful, would almost certainly change rapidly if Turkish

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3Rubai and Abdi have the advantage of legal claims to power if Qassim should dis-
appear, since Rubai is formal Chief of State and Abdi is military Governor-General of Iraq.
[Footnote in the source text.]
leaders came to believe that Communist ascendancy were imminent. Relations with Iran will remain distant, conditioned by the Shatt al-Arab controversy and by Qassim's suspicions of the Shah's intentions toward him. Israel has consistently encouraged Turkey and Iran to tolerate Qassim lest his overthrow strengthen Nasser.

13. Nasser still desires to see Qassim overthrown, but he has been more restrained in his plotting, and we do not believe that he seriously entertains hopes of establishing UAR control over Iraq. Most dissident Iraqi groups turn to Nasser for support in their conspiracies, and the UAR will continue to extend both material and moral backing to various Iraqi elements opposing Qassim, without being overly particular as to which faction initiates a move. Nasser would be reluctant to use overt military force in support of the nationalist cause, but he might feel compelled to respond to a call for help. Before doing so, however, he would probably require US assurances against counter-moves by Israel and Turkey.

14. Hussein still desires to re-establish Hashemite rule in Iraq and to block the extension of Nasser's influence there. Iraqi exiles are in contact with Hussein, and will continue to play upon these desires. However, Hussein is unlikely to intervene overtly in Iraq unless he receives Western acquiescence and support. Although Hussein has been maintaining contact with the UK, Turkey, and Iran concerning Iraq, none of them has indicated much confidence in intervention by Hussein as a solution. However, should the situation become more critical, his aspirations might be taken more seriously. Even Israel might under certain circumstances countenance intervention by Jordan, though it would react strongly against any such move by Nasser.

15. The UK is losing confidence in Qassim's ability to maintain his power. The UK will continue to favor a solution which would result in diminishing the influence of the Communists without unduly augmenting that of Nasser.

16. The Soviets will probably continue to avoid direct involvement in the Iraqi situation, even in the event of Qassim's downfall. They will in any event provide whatever covert support is feasible to the local Communists. If their preferred course of action—the gradual extension of Communist influence in the country—were disrupted, they would probably seek the formation of another pro-Communist, but not openly Communist, regime. In the event of disorder they would seek by threats to discourage any outside power from intervening. If, nevertheless, other powers in the area were to intervene with military force, we believe the Soviets would boost their support of the Communists and other resisting elements, perhaps with covert military assistance, but short of the overt introduction of Soviet military forces.
211. Editorial Note

On December 16, Assistant White House Staff Secretary John S.D. Eisenhower including the following report on United Arab Republic–Iraq relations in his "Synopsis of State and Intelligence Material" reported to the President:

"Nasser is reported to be expressing stronger concern than heretofore that the Qasim regime will fall under the influence of Communist elements.

"On December 11 a Soviet ship delivered the second consignment of arms to the Iraqis under the deal with the Soviet Union. This included antiaircraft and field artillery pieces and vehicles.

"Meanwhile, there are reports that the four Iraqi division commanders have decided to oust Premier Qasim in the near future. They are convinced that he is incapable of controlling the Communists or preventing further disorders. This feeling may have been spurred by the action of the Communist-led mob in Basra on December 8 which besieged the army garrison for a day.

"A report today (December 16) indicates that a foreign office official has told Embassy London that the U.K. still hopes and believes that Qasim will prove able to prevent the domination of Iraq by either Communists or the UAR. The British Chargé in Iraq believes that Qasim has been playing a cautious, skillful game and some time may elapse before his final course is discernible." (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)

212. Memorandum for the Record

Washington, January 12, 1960, 2:30 p.m.

[Source: Eisenhower Library, White House Office Files, Project Clean Up. Top Secret. 4-1/2 pages of source text not declassified.]
213. Memorandum of Discussion at the 432d Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1–5.]

6. The Situation in Iraq (NSC Actions Nos. 2068 and 2160)¹

Mr. Gray briefed the Council on this subject. (A copy of Mr. Gray’s Briefing Note is filed in the Minutes of the Meeting and another copy is attached to this Memorandum).² He then called on Mr. Merchant for the report of the Interdepartmental Group established by NSC Action No. 2068.

Mr. Merchant said the Interdepartmental Group had met on January 12.³ He did not feel it was necessary to go into detail concerning the deliberations of the Group. He might, however, summarize the situation in Iraq as depressing. Kassem’s placement of blame for the assassination attempt on the pro-Nationalist elements had thrown him more heavily into the arms of the Communists for support. Mr. Merchant felt that the best hope for remedying the situation on Iraq lay with the Iraqis themselves. He reported that contingency plans relating to Iraq had been updated and coordinated with the U.K. in deep secrecy. [4 lines of source text not declassified] The Interdepartmental Group would continue to follow developments in Iraq from day to day. In particular, in the near future the Group would be watching Kassem’s program for licensing political parties. Mr. Merchant anticipated that licenses would probably be granted to the Communist, the Kurdish and the Leftist Parties. Summarizing, Mr. Merchant anticipated that the situation in Iraq compared to six months ago was worse, in that Nationalist stock had gone down and Kassem’s dependence on the Communists was greater. Mr. Dulles agreed with Mr. Merchant’s summary of the situation. He said Kassem believes the Rightists will assassinate him. [3 lines of source text not declassified] He added that the situation had been complicated by the Shatt-al-Arab dispute, which brought Iran’s relations with Iraq to a critical state. However, he felt this dispute was now disappearing.


¹ NSC Action No. 2160, approved by the President on December 23, 1959, noted and discussed the oral briefing to the NSC by Bissell (see Document 209), and agreed that the interdepartmental group on Iraq should be requested to keep the Council informed on the status of contingency planning regarding the Iraq situation and should identify any policy issues requiring Council consideration. (Department of State, S/5–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)

² Attached, but not printed.

³ See Document 212.
The National Security Council: 4

Noted and discussed the subject in the light of an oral presentation of a report by the Interdepartmental Group on Iraq established by NSC Action No. 2068.

Marion W. Boggs

4The following sentence constitutes NSC Action No. 2180, approved by the President on January 19. (Department of State, S/S--NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)

214. Telegram 1945 From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, February 25, 1960, 3 p.m.

[Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/2-2560. Secret; Limit Distribution; Nonform. 3 pages of source text not declassified.]

215. Telegram From the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State

Baghdad, February 26, 1960, 9 a.m.


Source: Department of State, Central Files, 787.00/2-2660. Secret. Transmitted in three sections and repeated to Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Dhahran, Ankara, Jidda, Khartoum, London, Moscow, Paris, Rabat, Rome, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Tripoli, Tunis, and Basra.
A. Elements situation:

1. State of political tension continues with apparent weakening Qassim’s prestige and erosion confidence in his leadership among most political groupings including left.

(A) Qassim’s December 2 “State of Nation” speech diffusing blame Kirkuk excesses which he previously attributed Communists and labeling Nationalist students efforts break Communist grip student union in fall elections as part plot against him; continued prominence in his regime outspokenly pro-Soviet officers and officials and his own close association with Colonels Mahdawi, Taher; Leftist control radio TV and most organs press; arrests or exile from Baghdad some active Nationalists have brought discouragement and fear to most “Nationalist” groups.

(B) On other hand, Qassim’s tactics “redress balance” and weaken Communist monolith have become increasingly apparent over past month. Specific acts include covertly sponsoring, supporting, and, finally, licensing as Communist Party small splinter group following legal resumption activity political parties January 6 and subsequent refusal license main body old CPI; intervention in Agrarian Reform to halt efforts introduce collective rather than cooperative concepts followed by dismissal pro-Communist Minister Agrarian Reform and Oil, Ibrahim Kubba; tolerance one hard-hitting anti-Communist newspaper possibly because personal friendliness towards its editor. These plus his moves against them summer 1959 have left Communists and Leftists uneasy. Communist press has increased its criticism regime citing high prices and depression and calling for thorough purge such Ministries as Interior and Foreign Affairs where Leftist influence negligible.

(C) Between extremes Pan-Arab Nationalists and Communists, most groups seem confused by Qassim’s erratic political tactics, discouraged by the lack of concrete evidence progress and disillusioned by his failure give leadership and guidance this faltering state.

(D) Communist power and potential for trouble-making still great. The main Communist Party is well-organized, disciplined and, apparently, financed; it still “controls the streets” in many parts Baghdad, has great influence and varying degrees control Ministries Oil, Municipalities, Guidance, Education, Agrarian Reform and Planning, and in most popular and professional groups. Commander Air Force outspokenly pro-Communist and at least one squadron dominated by pro-Communists; extent which lower ranks army have been penetrated is problematic.

(E) There has been further drop Qassim’s popularity with man in street and within most groups with which Embassy maintains contact.
(F) Reports new plots against Qassim’s life are rife with most in agreement any successful coup must have support significant elements army. Qassim surrounded by increased security at Ministry Defense quarters and in his moves around Baghdad.

2. Economic disorganization and difficulties in reinvigorating development program resulting in increasingly defensive posture on part Qassim regime and more realistic official appraisal economic problems facing Iraq.

(A) Speeches by Qassim and other regime officials increasingly reflect realization socio-economic problems and attempts ease social pressures by promises that cannot be realized in full.

(B) Increased concern over economy now being reflected in efforts create atmosphere conducive developmental progress. These include attempts resolve GOI difficulties with foreign and domestic contractors, decisions which demonstrate reluctance enter into government-to-government deals, over-ruling ex-Minister Kubb’s efforts make USSR sole supplier farm equipment and establish model farm collectives; and easing restrictions which previously inhibited business dealings with west by private sector.

(C) Facts that new development projects are formulated in patchwork manner and regime has lacked managerial competence execute programs when approved have prevented increase in demand for labor and are resulting in increased social pressures on government.

3. Growing disillusionment in public and private sectors economy resulting from limited character benefits derived from east bloc presence in contrast previous great expectations government and people.

(A) Iraqi preference for bargaining element in contracting for development projects becoming manifest. There growing concern over commitments in Soviet aid agreement which many officials fear may not be in accord with Iraq’s best interests or in keeping with attitudes toward government-to-government dealings.

(B) Coupled with instances Iraqi insistence on competitive tenders in projects financed under Soviet agreement is gradually improving climate for western business operations.

4. Iraq’s relations with UAR, Jordan, and Iran have worsened and it is possible that these states may override differences and covertly agreed lend support opposition elements without and within Iraq in effort oust Qassim. Qassim’s recent campaigns for independent Syria, Palestine Republic, and against Shah and government make difficult any rapprochement with UAR, Jordan, and Iran. Relations with rest Arab world correct but not close. Of area states, relations with Turkey have remained best and Turks have exercised some helpful influence in controversy between Iraq and Iran over Shatt Al-Arab.
5. Relations with west seem improved despite continued hostility Iraqi press and radio. Subjectively, most officers of mission feel there has been drop in suspicion western intentions in general and present US policies in particular. Contacts with certain types Iraqi officials easier and more frequent now and some feelers for closer cooperation in military and economic fields have been noted.

6. On political level, relations with Communist bloc continue close with bloc continuing considerable effort make presence felt.

7. Government radio and TV still follow pro-Soviet bloc line as does most of press. Qassim has, however, removed a few most blatantly pro-bloc officials from Ministry Guidance operating level. We still hopeful result will be noticeable.

8. Qassim’s devious tactics and attempts maneuver political forces seem have produced distrust of him among most of these. He still appears maintain upper hand and apparently, wields effective control over army command although persistent reports indicate this will be lost unless he continues show firm attitude toward Communists. Although clearly messianic in outlook, it becoming evident Qassim no Communist but “Qassimist” with his own interests and those of Iraqi nationalism foremost.

B. Conclusions and recommendations:

1. An attempt against Qassim’s life is possible at any time. If successful and military junta (possibly headed by Sovereignty Council President Rubai and Military Governor General Abdi) takes over, transition would be rapid and any disorders controlled. If Communists move install pro-Communist regime, civil war and widespread disorders likely. Intervention from Jordan or UAR would probably be opposed by most of army and masses of population unless invited by an anti-Communist regime which had already achieved some degree of control.

2. While Qassim’s policies have been so erratic that seems unlikely he could rally widespread popular support behind him in near future, continuation trend limit Communist influence would minimize opposition and bring more stability regime. He would still, however, have to solve Iraq’s dilemma of having economic resources but not capability marshalling them to enable rate economic development essential survival his regime.

3. We continue believe in basic soundness current United States policies toward Iraq and believe these beginning pay off in terms improved United States-Iraqi relations. Embassy recommends United States continue efforts restrain attempts by external forces intervene in Iraqi affairs and remain ready consider sympathetically any GOI request assistance.
4. Embassy believes situation has progressed to point where efforts make “American presence” felt appropriate. These would include gradually increased contacts by Americans with official, cultural, and business circles, continuation present accelerated trade promotion program, encouragement American contractors compete for projects in Iraq, propose offer resume training Iraqi military officers in United States military schools, and resumption informational activities in discreet manner following completion current cultural agreement negotiations.

5. In event successful non-Communist coup, United States should stand ready grant prompt recognition and discourage outside intervention. While present situation does not warrant active contingency planning with regional allies, we should maintain inventory resources which we could use attempt counter pro-Communist take-over in event coup.

6. While my staff and I do not believe assistance program similar pre-revolution USOM program in Iraq would be acceptable or appropriate in future, consideration should be given immediate measures that could be taken assist new anti-Communist regime or meet requests for advice or assistance from Qassim’s Government. Discreet advice on how move ahead on stalled development program or on basic developmental planning could be major factor determining orientation GOI in future.

7. We remain convinced Iraq faces continuing political instability and prolonged economic difficulty.

Service Attachés [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] concur.

Jernegan
216. Memorandum From Evan M. Wilson of the Policy Planning Staff to the Director (Smith)


SUBJECT
Iraq

At today's meeting of the Iraqi Action Group,\(^1\) Lewis Jones gave a summary of the present situation in Iraq and of present policy which I think worth reporting to you.

Jones said that among relatively favorable developments recently had been (1) the licensing of political parties and the split in the Communist Party; (2) the development of relative internal stability including certain changes in government personnel; (3) favorable economic developments including better treatment of US contractors and evidence that the Soviet economic offensive is not going well; (4) favorable developments in the cultural field including the Iraqi request for American professors, the granting of access to our USIS premises and Iraqi interest in negotiating a cultural agreement with us; and (5) continuing good relations with Turkey together with an improvement in relations with Iran.

Among unfavorable factors, Jones listed (1) the possibility that there could be a coup at any time; (2) the fact that Qassim is becoming more of an enigma and more withdrawn; (3) the continued activities of Colonel Mahdawi and his Peoples' Court; (4) the presence of Communists in several government departments and the continued political activity of the Communists; and (5) the fact that Iraq is isolated from its Middle Eastern neighbors with the exception of Iran and Turkey.

Jones said that he was convinced our present policy, which he described as being "friendship and non-involvement," has been sound. He thought that we should continue to be receptive to any Iraqi requests for aid, resume a modest USIS program and a cultural program, train Iraqi military officers in this country if requested, look into the possibilities of trade promotion, encourage American contractors to remain in Iraq, and give aid under PL 480\(^2\) if famine conditions should occur as is possible. He pointed out that programs along the foregoing lines were not aimed specifically at Qassim, but would probably be welcomed by any likely successor regime.

\(^1\) Committee of the Interagency Group on Iraq.
\(^2\) 68 Stat. 454.
The representatives of other agencies present, including CIA, Defense and USIA, indicated their general agreement with the analysis offered by Lewis Jones. It was agreed that a report would be submitted by the Secretary to the NSC, along the lines of the attached draft, with the changes noted. It was the consensus of the Group that this report simply be circulated to the members of the NSC for their information and should not be formally presented to the NSC.

I am inclined to agree with Jones that our present policy toward Iraq is sound.

217. Memorandum of Discussion at the 438th Meeting of the National Security Council


[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1–5.]

6. The Situation in Iraq (NSC Actions Nos. 2068, 2160 and 2180)\(^1\)

Mr. Gray said the next item was a report on the situation in Iraq by the Interdepartmental Group on Iraq established by NSC Action No. 2068, approved April 22, 1959. The last report by the Group was made on January 14.\(^2\) Secretary Herter said the Interdepartmental Group had met on March 18 and prepared a report which he would read. (A copy of the report read by Mr. Herter is attached.)\(^3\) The President asked whether the Interdepartmental Group had considered relations between Iraq and Iran. Secretary Herter believed the situation between these two countries had improved considerably with the withdrawal of Iranian troops from the border. The President said that when the Iranian Ambassador had presented his credentials the other day, he (the President) had observed that the situation between Iraq and Iran was much improved. However, the Iranian Ambassador did not agree. Perhaps the

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\(^1\) See footnotes 1 and 4, Document 213.

\(^2\) See Document 213.

\(^3\) See attachment.
Secretary of State might talk to the Iranian Ambassador about this situation. The Ambassador is a son-in-law of the Shah and should be able to reflect the Shah’s thinking. Mr. Dulles said that the Ambassador was a very able man and was also the son of the man who had led the coup against Mossadeq.

Mr. Dulles said he had been about to report as an item of late intelligence that Khrushchev had recommended revival of the Franco-Russian alliance. However, he had just had a flash which cancelled that information.

*The National Security Council:*\(^4\)

Noted and discussed the subject in the light of an oral presentation of a report by the Interdepartmental Group on Iraq established by NSC Action No. 2068.

Marion W. Boggs

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[Attachment]\(^5\)

**Report by the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Gray)**


**DRAFT REPORT BY SECRETARY TO NSC ON IRAQI SITUATION**

The Inter-Agency Group on Iraq met on March 18 to review developments since the first of the year. It found the situation has not fundamentally altered from that described by it earlier. However, two parallel trends were noted which, at least, in the short-run, are encouraging from the U.S. viewpoint. The first is the series of measures taken in recent weeks by Kassem to limit the power and political effectiveness of the Iraqi Communists. A concomitant development is an improvement in the attitudes of Iraqi officials towards the U.S. This has been evident in the economic and commercial field and apparently stems to a considerable degree from a growing appreciation of Iraq’s dependence

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\(^4\) The following sentence constitutes NSC Action No. 2202, approved by the President on March 31. (Department of State, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)

on foreign technical assistance and managerial advice and the realization that results of the Soviet economic assistance agreement have not lived up to earlier expectations. It has also been evident in the cultural field.

The Group concurred in the substance of Ambassador Jernegan's recent assessment of the situation in Iraq and agreed that, although the situation continues to bear close watching, our current policies are basically sound. It was further agreed that we be prepared to consider favorably Iraqi requests for our assistance. Specific steps which are either underway or contemplated for the near future include the negotiation of a cultural agreement, the forthcoming visit to the U.S. by the Iraqi Minister of Education, an earnest attempt to recruit American professors for Baghdad University, increased commercial representation and expanded contacts with Iraqis on the part of our officials in Baghdad, proposed offer of military training slots to Iraqi officers, consider on a case by case basis Iraqi requests for purchase of reasonable amounts of military supplies and spare parts.

218. Editorial Note

On April 7, at the 440th Meeting of the National Security Council, the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, General Charles P. Cabell, included in his briefing on "Significant World Developments Affecting U.S. Security" the following on Iraq:

"Turning to Iraq, General Cabell reported that the army, with the support of Kassem, was spearheading a tougher policy toward communism. Kassem had made a number of moves against communism and was resisting communist demands. He had commuted some death sentences desired by the communists and had postponed some executions. Kassem had rejected a communist bid for the licensing of the Communist Party, had forcibly suppressed certain communist strikes, and had refused the communists permission to demonstrate. The army has increased its security precautions and its discipline had improved. General Cabell felt that the army was now the mainstay of the regime in Iraq, with Kassem's dependence on the army steadily increasing. Recently Iraq has been showing some improvement in its attitude toward the West, with Iraqi officials becoming more friendly toward Western diplomats, and Iraq seeking bids by Western firms on its development program. The Soviet effort to counter this trend favorable to the West consists of Mikoyan's visit to Baghdad, beginning tomorrow, in connection with a trade fair. Mikoyan will be the highest Soviet official ever to visit the Arab world. He is reported to be bringing with him an offer of assistance to Iraq." (Memorandum of discussion by Boggs, April 7; Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)
219. Memorandum of Discussion at a Meeting of the Operations Coordinating Board


[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]

1. Briefing on Iraq

Ambassador Jernegan briefed the OCB on current developments in Iraq. In response to a question from Mr. Dulles (CIA), the Ambassador said Iraqi oil production was higher than before the revolution, although there were discussions relating to a cutback in production. Ambassador Jernegan said that he was bringing no great problems to the OCB, but he wished all agencies to remain alert to take advantage of any opportunities that may present themselves in Iraq. He noted that although the attitude toward the US has improved greatly the current climate was not conducive to large US programs; but, if a favorable opportunity should arise, we must be prepared to move quickly.

The internal Iraqi political situation has deteriorated. He noted the decline in the influence of the Iraqi Communists as well as in the position of Prime Minister Qasim, who is now distrusted by nearly all elements but who has not lost control of the government and has no apparent rivals for power. The Ambassador noted the situation in Iraq could change very quickly.

Mr. Gray raised the subject of Soviet shortcomings in the field of foreign assistance. Ambassador Jernegan spoke of a number of reports indicating that the Soviets were not as effective as some have credited them with being. Mr. Merchant noted recent estimates that the number of Soviet technicians abroad, i.e. 6,800, approximated the number of US technicians although Soviet efforts were more concentrated. Ambassador Jernegan observed that in many ways the Soviets had overplayed their hand in Iraq.

There followed brief discussions of the Iraqi foreign exchange position, the ICA program, the position of the British in Iraq and the availability of MIG 19s to the Iraqis.

[Here follows discussion of unrelated matters.]
220. Memorandum of Conversation

SecDel/MC/88


SECRETARY’S DELEGATION TO THE FIFTEENTH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, September 19–October 8, 1960

PARTICIPANTS

U.S.
G. Lewis Jones

Iraq
Hashim Jawad, Foreign Minister of Iraq

SUBJECT

Iraqi Foreign Minister’s Views regarding Relations with the United States

I entertained Foreign Minister Jawad alone at lunch today. He seemed to appreciate this attention, making himself available at very short notice, and to be more self-assured than when I had seen him a year ago. The following emerged:

King Hussein

Jawad said that King Hussein had “very few friends” among the Arab delegations since he had made his “unfortunate” speech. ¹ When I asked why the speech was “unfortunate” he replied that the King was most ill-advised to have publicized his dispute with Nasser in the United Nations. Jawad said the United Nations was not the forum for disputes of this kind. Had Iraq wished to do so, it could have done the same thing last year and the year before. What the King had done and what upset the Arabs was the fact that he had broken ranks with the other Arabs and had “washed his dirty linen in public.”

Note: The King’s crime—i.e. a lapse from solidarity is widely commented upon among the Arab delegations. Jawad said that even the Jordanian delegation was divided on this subject. Surprisingly, the Afghan Ambassador told me that his delegation had found the speech a “bad one” since the King had elected to expose his unfortunate dispute.

¹King Hussein gave the speech before the General Assembly on October 3 that attacked communism and to a lesser extent Nasser.
Iraq–Jordan Relations

Jawad confirmed the statement of the King of Jordan regarding a rapprochement between the two countries. He said the umbrage was all on the Jordan side: relations could have been resumed at any time. However, the King and he have been able to reach an agreement and he thought diplomatic relations between the countries might be resumed in the fairly near future.

U.S.-Iraqi Relations

In response to my question Jawad said he thought U.S.-Iraqi relations were moving in the right direction but because of the bombardment by the Communist radio he could only move so far, so fast in improving these relations. For example, one of the latest charges used to prove that the United States is a reactionary imperialist power is the U.S. stand on Algeria. Iraqi public opinion is persuaded in Algeria if the United States would only take a strong line with France. He said it was incredible to the Iraqis that so many countries south of the Sahara should be ready for independence and Algeria not ready. He hoped that the United States could take a more forthcoming attitude regarding Algeria this year: the stand in the past really hurt the United States in the Arab world. As best I could I explained the difficulties confronting us in connection with the Algerian problem and got him to admit that General de Gaulle, and only General de Gaulle, is capable of solving it. I also mentioned the necessity for European solidarity at a time when the Berlin problem seems likely to be resurgent. Jawad opined that France was probably closer to a revolution or a coup d'état than most people thought: he cited the demonstrations in Paris yesterday as evidence of this.

Iraqi Jews

I asked Jawad how many Jews remained in Baghdad. He replied that he thought there were about 6,000—mostly members of the wealthier families. He said that they were subjected to no persecution or other difficulties and that the new government had repealed the anti-Jewish laws initiated by Nuri Said. Jawad spoke regretfully of the persecution of the Iraqi Jews, saying that this had been instituted artificially by Nuri as a political measure and that some unscrupulous Iraqis had attempted to benefit from the exodus of the Jews—taking away their money, etc.

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2 On October 2 after a meeting between King Hussein and Iraqi Foreign Minister Jawad in New York, Jordan recognized the “form of government” in Iraq while Jawad denounced the assassination of the late King Faisal. (Telegrams 553 and 561 from Amman, October 2 and 3; Department of State, Central Files, 787.02/10-260 and 787.02/10-360)
A-B-C Case

I thanked Jawad for having settled this matter.

Iraqi Development

I got Jawad to talk about the economic development programs in Iraq which according to him were moving ahead much as they had under the old regime. "We are still paying our bills", he said.

Five Power Resolution

Jawad brought up this subject and readily agreed when I pointed out the futility of a two-man meeting which could not settle anything. I referred to Mr. Khrushchev's position with regard to the President published in the papers today and suggested that in the circumstances the best plan would be for the five sponsors to let the resolution drop, i.e. say no more about it. Jawad agreed with this analysis and I got the impression that he would counsel along these lines. He did not mention the Australian resolution.

Seeing the Secretary

Jawad said that he would like to pay a "courtesy call" on the Secretary if the Secretary could find time to receive him. I said that I thought this could be arranged.
221. Memorandum of Conversation

SecDel MC/113

New York, October 7, 1960, 9:30 a.m.

SECRETARY’S DELEGATION TO THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, October 3–7, 1960

PARTICIPANTS

U.S.
The Secretary
G. Lewis Jones, Assistant Secretary
for NEA
A. Guy Hope, Adviser, U.S.
Delegation to UNGA

Iraq
His Excellency Hashim Jawad,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Iraq

SUBJECT

US-Iraq Relations; Algeria

The Foreign Minister stated that he was calling to pay his respects. The Secretary expressed pleasure, saying he had been unable to get around among his colleagues at the UNGA as much as he wished and especially appreciated Mr. Jawad’s gesture.

Minister Jawad stated that he thought relations between Iraq and the United States were showing improvement, and that Iraqi public opinion now had somewhat more favorable view of the United States. The Secretary agreed that there is always some hesitation when a new Government comes to power about its motivations and reactions. He hoped our relations would continue to improve.

The Foreign Minister said that the one remaining difficulty, about which public opinion in Iraq was very strong, related to “an Arab matter”, the problem of Algeria. Mr. Jones commented that Mr. Jawad had spoken to him very emphatically about this point at a recent luncheon meeting.¹ Mr. Jawad inquired whether the Secretary thought there was any prospect of progress on the Algerian problem in the present session of the General Assembly. The Secretary replied that the problem is a very difficult one. We did not know whether General De Gaulle would take any further steps along the lines of his conciliatory statement of mid-September, and there seemed some doubt that the Algerian “provisional Government” group would respond favorably even if he did. The

¹ See Document 220.
Secretary explained that from our own history and experience, the American people were happier not being drawn into problems of this kind. The French were extremely sensitive about the issue and we seemed to be caught in the middle no matter how things went on the Algerian question.

Mr. Jawad, speaking of Mid-East problems in general said that while Iraq was fortunate in having some material resources, some of its neighbors were very poor and needed many things desperately. He was well aware that "the Russians are not helping those countries for innocent purposes". Iraq understood the Soviets, he said, and knew how to deal with them. He hoped things would be better in the area eventually.

The Secretary expressed his gratitude to Mr. Jawad for his personal help in getting the indemnities for the families in the ABC case. The Foreign Minister apologized for the delay in settling the matter, and expressed his hope that the families were satisfied with the indemnification. The Secretary said one of the cases had specially tragic overtones because of the large family involved.

The Secretary expressed the full confidence of the United States Government in Ambassador Jernegan and urged the Foreign Minister to call on him and the Secretary in any problem where we can help. Mr. Jawad expressed appreciation and thanked the Secretary for his courtesy in receiving him.

222. National Intelligence Estimate


THE OUTLOOK FOR IRAQ

The Problem

To estimate the outlook for Iraq over the next year or so.

Conclusions

1. On balance, we believe that the Qassim regime’s lack of political dynamism, Qassim’s intermittent reliance on the Communists, and his

Source: Department of State, INR–NIE Files. Secret. A note on the cover sheet indicates that this estimate, submitted by the CIA, was prepared by CIA, INR, the intelligence organizations of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff. All members of the USIB concurred in this estimate except the representatives of the AEC and FBI who abstained on the grounds that the subject was outside their jurisdiction.
failure to make a convincing show of social and economic progress will sooner or later lead to his removal, most likely by nationalist-minded army officers. A coup attempt could occur at any time. However, given the ineffectiveness of the opposition so far, we consider that the chances are about even that Qassim will succeed in retaining power over about the next year. The ability of the Iraqi Communist Party to seize power has diminished over the past year and will probably remain low for the next year. (Paras. 10, 13, 25)

2. Iraqi economic conditions have deteriorated seriously in the past two years, and the one promising development program has virtually come to a halt. We do not believe, however, that economic stresses will of themselves precipitate political upheaval. Oil revenues will probably be sufficient to operate the government, pay for needed grain imports, and provide for some development projects. (Paras. 14–17)

3. Iraq continues to rely heavily on the Bloc for military and economic assistance. The Soviets will probably strive to maneuver Qassim into increasing dependence on them—without seeking an early Communist takeover. The UAR will give support to anti-Qassim groups, but is not likely to commit itself to an all-out effort to overthrow the regime. The Qassim government’s attitude towards the Western powers, once hostile, has gradually improved. This trend is subject to sudden reversals, and while it may continue, it is not likely to be carried very far. (Paras. 18–19, 21)

Discussion

4. Since coming to power in 1958, the Qassim regime has survived three major coup attempts (one involving rebellion by portions of the army), a near-successful assassination of the Prime Minister, and a number of serious breakdowns of public order involving street rule and local massacre in major cities. Nasser has actively supported some of the conspiracies, while Jordan’s Hussein, backed at times by Iran, has had occasional hopes of a Hashemite restoration. The capitals of the UAR, Jordan, and Lebanon are littered with committees of Iraqi exiles, supported by one or another foreign government, plotting ways and means of returning to power. The formerly promising economic development program has virtually come to a halt, sizable wheat shortages have arisen, the once-thriving Iraqi economy is stagnant, and the government is relying increasingly on oil revenues to meet current expenses.

5. Qassim remains Prime Minister and “sole leader” of Iraq chiefly by default. Despite considerable discontent, no person or group has been able to marshal the forces of dissatisfaction into a cohesive opposition. Movements aimed at seizing power by direct action have been demonstrably unsuccessful and their failures have given pause to the regime’s opponents. The pillars of the old regime are either in jail or
abroad seeking help from their erstwhile friends; the military have been chastened by the execution of the Mosul rebels; the Communists overreached themselves in the Kirkuk massacres; the Baathists lost substantially by their bungled attempt on Qassim’s life; and the civilian nationalists¹ do not appear to have sufficient cohesiveness to be effective. This is not to suggest that Qassim is in full control of the field, but rather that his opposition is disorganized, mutually suspicious, or intimidated. Plotting against him has been more or less continuous and still goes on.

6. Qassim has displayed little constructive political talent. He has, however, been skillful in keeping the political forces of the country balanced off. For example, in the licensing of political parties, he has permitted some to operate openly, but not the best organized ones or those most hostile to his regime.² He checked the Communists by refusing to license the orthodox Communist Party of Iraq and encouraging the splinter faction of Da’ud Sayigh. He similarly encouraged separation of the National Democratic Party into two legal parties. Licenses were denied the militant right-wing groups and the Baath. Out of this superficially haphazard approach has developed a situation in which (a) some moderate elements have official standing; (b) considerable latitude is given to both licensed and unlicensed groups to express their views in the press, though excesses are curbed from time to time; and (c) no serious action is taken to break up the organization of nonlicensed parties. The latter may not function publicly but are not prevented from carrying on their activities discretely.

7. The Qassim regime has taken no steps in recent months to turn back the government to civilian control. Little has been heard lately about drafting a new constitution or electing a national assembly, though Qassim promised both by the summer of 1960. There has been

¹ In this memorandum, we use the term “nationalist” to describe a varied array of Iraqi elements whose chief common quality is that they are not Communist or pro-Communist. They range from the left-of-center National Democratic Party and the socialist Baath to more conservative groups and from proponents of Pan-Arabism to advocates of a more narrow Iraqi nationalism. [Footnote in the source text.]

² The following parties have been licensed: United Democratic Party of Kurdistan—leftist-led Kurdish nationalist group dating at least from the mid-forties; National Democratic Party (NDP)—long-time socialist party headed by Kamil Chadirji; National Progressive Party—an offshoot of the NDP headed by Muhammad Hadid; Communist Party of Iraq—Da’ud Sayigh’s splinter group, founded in 1960; Islamic Party—recently founded group standing for traditional Moslem society.

Unlicensed parties are: Ittihad al-Sha‘b—the orthodox Communist Party, in existence since the mid-thirties; Istiqsal Party—relatively conservative, nationalist group long in opposition to Nuri; Tahrir Party—right-wing Islamic Party; Baath Party of Iraq—Pan-Arab socialist party associated with the parent organization in Syria; Qawmiyyin al-Arab—Arab nationalist group; Arab Socialist Party; Republican Party—Communist front. [Footnote in the source text.]
no lessening of military control, which includes martial law in the entire
country. Military officers occupy half the cabinet posts, numerous pro-
vincial governorships, and many important administrative jobs, e.g.,

8. Qassim’s continuance in office rests on several factors. The prin-
cipal one is the army. While the armed forces are not enthusiastic for
Qassim, no military elements have attempted a move against him since
the Mosul revolt of February 1959. Many dissident officers have been
removed from the forces. The armed forces have received some $170
million worth of Bloc weapons and equipment, though dissatisfaction
concerning their quality is being expressed at high levels. Pay raises and
improved housing have helped morale, especially of enlisted grades,
which tend to be more favorable toward Qassim than are the officers.
The armed forces in general will probably continue to support Qassim
as long as they reap benefits from association with him. The removal of
ranking officers at the time of the July 1958 coup and in subsequent
purges has raised many of the survivors to positions of importance
which they might not have attained for another 10 to 15 years under the
old regime. Senior officers feel that in most important respects they are
running the country, a belief which helps account for their acceptance of
Qassim. The bulk of upper-level officer sentiment is Iraqi nationalist
and anti-Communist; the latter sentiment is reflected in steady repres-
sion of the Communists by military commanders in the provinces.

9. Qassim is also helped by the support which he enjoys among
younger politically conscious elements which feel they are now actively
participating in the affairs of Iraq, and among minorities that he has cul-

tivated. While this support has markedly waned with the regime’s fail-
ure to make appreciable progress in solving Iraq’s problems, conditions
are not bad enough to stimulate a drastic reaction. Unrest in the farming
areas and in the tribal countryside will persist, but it is unlikely to be
widespread enough to pose a serious threat to the regime.

10. In a curious way, the Communists also shore up the Qassim re-
gime. In the first year after the revolution, the Communists were able,
thanks to efficient organization, to make heavy inroads in many sectors
of the country, and at one time appeared to be on the verge of assuming
control. Following the Kirkuk massacres of July 1959, public opinion
turned against them, they were severely checked by Qassim, and the na-
tionalists began to assume greater importance. The Communists now
probably believe that they would be worse off under any foreseeable
successor to Qassim, and ride along with him as their best bet in the cir-
cumstances. On the other hand, the various rival nationalist groups are
restrained from action against Qassim by their fear that his overthrow
could be exploited by the more disciplined and better organized Communists.3

11. Qassim does not appear committed to any particular political system or philosophy and has failed to provide vigorous leadership or to dramatize a program in the way that Nasser has done in Egypt. One of Qassim’s chief characteristics is an ability to keep his own counsel (an ability which was a principal factor in the success of the July 1958 revolution), and to operate on his own without benefit of consultation with his ministers or the government bureaucracy. His propensity for ignoring advisers has alienated much of the civilian talent he so badly needs. His view of Iraq’s affairs tends to come almost completely through a small coterie of military associates, no better versed in government than himself. He shows a poor grasp of the complexities of government and scant appreciation of economic factors.

12. Thus the chance of the regime’s developing a forward momentum that would allay discontent seems slight. Qassim is primarily concerned with trying to ensure that no political grouping, whether of right or left, develops sufficient strength on its own to oust him from the position of “sole leader.” He will persist in his balancing efforts, probably with considerable skill. However, the growing resentment of the various nationalist factions at Qassim’s intermittent use of the Communists is reducing his room for maneuver.

13. While Qassim has so far managed to keep both nationalists and Communists within bounds, he runs the continual risk of miscalculation. There is a possibility that one or another group may build its strength to the point where he cannot cope with it, though at the moment no group seems to have leaders resolute enough to risk a coup. To overthrow Qassim and consolidate a new regime, any civilian movement would need to have military backing, particularly among units around Baghdad. The Communists are not likely to gain such support. The civilian nationalists, although divided into a number of factions, have a substantially better chance of getting it. On the whole, however, we believe that the initiative for any successful coup is most likely to come from the military. In these circumstances, Qassim will probably continue both to cultivate the army and to keep it under close scrutiny.

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3 On November 14, John S.D. Eisenhower included in his list of intelligence items reported to the President the following on Iraq: “The Qasim regime has dealt the Iraqi Communist party another blow by arresting the prominent Communists, including at least one central committee member. This move, following the harsh suppression of Communist-inspired riots from 5 to 7 November, is likely to induce other key members to go underground. If Qasim endorses this action, this may placate dissatisfied anti-Communist elements who have felt that his recent policies have been too favorable to the Communists.” (Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries)
Economy

14. The economy of Iraq has undergone severe strains in the past two years. The coup leaders were inexperienced in the ways of government and deprived (by their own action) of the cadre of experienced senior civil servants. The development program lost momentum and focus as the neutralist regime terminated many Western-backed development projects of the Nuri government and accepted Bloc offers of assistance. The USSR has extended a $137 million line of credit for 27 development projects, very little of which has been used as yet. Most recently, the USSR has advanced an additional $45 million to rehabilitate and convert the Baghdad–Basra railroad to standard gauge. The Iraqis have also signed an agreement with Czechoslovakia for some $33 million in economic and technical aid. Qassim has announced a $1.12 billion four year development program, but neither plans nor sufficient funds for it are available. Publicizing of this program was largely a political gesture, and it impressed few.

15. Iraq derived $242 million from oil revenues in 1959. Even though oil production facilities have grown, annual oil revenues will probably stand near this level for the next year or two. This prospect results from a combination of lowered posted prices and of reduced production in the southern fields, the latter owing to Iraq's imposition of exorbitant port dues. Revenues could decline still further unless present disagreements with the Iraq Petroleum Company are resolved. More than half of Iraq's oil income goes for government operating expenses. While the remainder could not pay for Qassim's grandiose schemes, it is adequate for a modest development program. In any case, the principal problem hampering development is not lack of funds, but lack of planning and administrators. Consequently, the development program is not likely to get back on track in the next year or two.

16. The slowdown of the development program has increased unemployment, lessened the purchasing power of the populace and, coupled with the civil disorders of 1959, caused a virtual stagnation of the economy. Land reforms and drought have caused serious declines in wheat production for two consecutive years. Iraq, normally a net exporter of wheat, has had to import 400,000 tons a year for domestic consumption and is likely to have to continue imports on this scale for the coming year or two. The communications network, never good, is deteriorating even further due to poor management and upkeep. Serious transportation difficulties will continue to plague the country for at least the next two to three years. Depressed conditions in the countryside have accelerated population drift to urban centers, compounding problems of unemployment and housing.

17. Nevertheless, economic conditions in Iraq are not likely of themselves to precipitate political upheaval. So long as oil revenues
remain at approximately their present levels, the government will be able to supplement food deficiencies by foreign purchase and to pay the armed forces and civil service. Accordingly, economic hardships are not likely to approach the point where they could cause widespread disorder. The development program will probably manage somehow to keep enough projects going to make some show of progress, particularly in such fields as urban housing.

Foreign Affairs

18. The revolutionary reaction against British and American influence in Iraqi affairs appears to have largely spent itself. The US and UK are no longer repeatedly accused by the government of fomenting plots against Iraq, and harassment of US personnel and facilities has about ended. Relationships with other Western countries are generally correct, though diplomatic relations with France have not been resumed since the Suez crisis. Western goods are reappearing on the Iraqi market in substantial quantities. However, Qassim has made virtually no effort to regain Western military and technical aid, and his regime continues to rely heavily on the Bloc for military and economic assistance. Iraq has diplomatic relations with all Bloc countries. It has signed trade agreements with most of them, though these agreements have not thus far resulted in a significant volume of trade, nor are they likely to do so so long as oil accounts for the great bulk of Iraqi exports.

19. Despite some setbacks, the USSR has established a fairly strong position of influence in Iraq. The Soviets will probably push for further penetration of Iraq through economic and military aid and strive to maneuver Qassim into increasing dependence on them; they will probably not seek to establish an openly Communist regime. The Iraqi Communist Party appears to follow the strategy of Moscow more closely than that of Peiping. In the case of an Arab-sponsored attempt to overthrow Qassim, the Soviets would probably not undertake armed intervention, since such a move would involve serious adverse reactions in the Arab World and the Afro-Asian areas as a whole. Soviet policy will face difficulty in supporting Qassim without alienating Nasser, since conflict between the two Arab leaders is almost certain to persist.

20. Iraqi's relations with its non-Arab neighbors are now quiet. The new government of Turkey will probably continue to show minimal interest in Iraq, unless Iraq should veer strongly toward the Communist camp. Relations between Iraq and Iran will be troubled by the continuing dispute over the Shatt-al-Arab boundaries, but the hostility of Qassim and the Shah toward Nasser will contribute to keeping the two countries on speaking terms. Moreover, the Shah has become less fearful of Communist influence in Iraq.
21. Tensions between the UAR and Iraq will continue, albeit with variations in intensity. Traditional Egyptian-Iraqi rivalry will cause Nasser to desire the downfall of any independent Iraqi regime even when he is not actively pressing for it. However, Nasser has been burned in sponsoring earlier coup attempts against Qassim, and probably will not directly commit the UAR to an all-out effort to unseat him. The UAR will continue to support Iraqi exile groups and to channel aid to anti-Qassim elements, notably the Baath and pro-Nasser nationalists within Iraq.

22. The ill-feeling between Iraq and the UAR is likely to project itself—as it often has in the past—upon Syria. Anxious to break out of a Nasser-imposed isolation, to assert area leadership, and to provide a diversion at home, Qassim will seek to exploit discontent in the Syrian region. Conversely, Nasser's pressures on Iraq will vary in intensity with his concern over his northern province.

23. Although King Hussein and Qassim share a common hostility toward Nasser, which has recently led them to agree to resume diplomatic relations, Jordan will continue to provide a haven for Iraqi exiles and will be tempted to aid groups that promise a more congenial regime in Iraq. Hussein and Nasser are at cross purposes in this regard, since each wishes to eliminate the other's influence in that country. However, Hussein is likely to remain under greater pressure from Nasser than from Qassim, and at least as long as this is so, Hussein is not likely to take active measures to overthrow Qassim.

24. We believe that the various Iraqi exile groups in the Arab capitals are rapidly losing vitality. The chances of their playing a significant role in the future are small and will continue to decline.

25. On balance, we believe that the Qassim regime's lack of political dynamism, Qassim's intermittent reliance on the Communists, and his failure to make a convincing show of social and economic progress will sooner or later lead to his removal, most likely by nationalist-minded army officers. Moreover, assassination is an ever-present possibility. It is impossible to predict when a coup attempt might be made, and it could come at any time. However, given the ineffectiveness of the opposition so far, we consider that the chances are about even that Qassim will succeed in retaining power over about the next year.

26. In the event of Qassim's removal, the successor regime would probably be nationalist and would probably continue a broad policy of neutralism as between East and West. It might seek better relations with the UAR than has Qassim, but would remain loyal to Iraqi nationalism rather than turn to a Pan-Arabism dominated by Nasser.
OPERATIONS PLAN FOR IRAQ

I. Objectives

1. Following are the objectives of U.S. policy in the Near Eastern area:

   a. As of paramount importance, continued denial of the area to Soviet domination.
   b. Continued availability of sufficient Near Eastern oil to meet vital Western European requirements on reasonable terms.
   c. Peaceful resolution as early as possible, in whole or in part, of the Arab-Israeli dispute.
   d. Continued availability to the United States and its allies of rights of peaceful passage through and intercourse with the area in accordance with international law and custom and existing international agreements.
   e. Political evolution and economic and social development in the area to promote stable governments, popularly supported and resistant to Communist influence and subversion.
   f. Continued availability to the United States and its allies of important strategic positions, including military overflight, staging and base rights in the area.
   g. The expansion of U.S. and, where appropriate, Free World influence in the area, and the countering and reduction of Communist influence.

2. The need for achieving all the foregoing objectives has been taken into consideration in determination of U.S. courses of action for Iraq although paragraphs (d) and (f) are of relatively less significance than the other objectives.

II. Operational Guidance

U.S.-Iraq Relations

3. Notwithstanding the extended period of outward political calm, we continue to be confronted in Iraq with a basically unstable political situation in which violent changes are an ever present possibility. The principal recent developments and current factors which have
significant bearing on U.S. policy objectives in the area are: the pronounced polarization of the country into a well-organized and highly vocal Communist minority and a strongly anti-Communist but faction-ridden majority; the widespread loss of respect and popular support for Qassim; public and official disenchantment with Soviet Bloc economic and technical assistance activities, which has been at least partially offset by new Soviet initiatives and corrective efforts; some improvement in Iraq-UAR relations, partial resumption of relations between Iraq and Jordan, and the return of Iraq to Arab League councils; continued harmonious relations with Turkey and more tranquil relations with Iran, despite the lack of basic progress on the Shatt-al-Arab dispute; continued sluggishness in Iraq’s economy and the absence of any real progress in economic development. Iraq continues to depend on the predominantly British Iraq Petroleum Company for development and exploitation of petroleum resources but has taken greater initiative in petroleum matters in the face of recent price cuts and is currently pressing for revisions in the existing concession agreement.

4. While the scope of U.S. initiatives to improve U.S.-Iraq relations or strengthen the Western position with Iraq remains limited, there has been a quiet but nonetheless significant improvement in U.S.-Iraq relations during the current year. While we continue to labor under the disabilities resulting from our position on the Arab-Israeli and Algerian issues, Qasim himself has stated we are “no longer hated” in Iraq. Despite continuing efforts by the pro-Communist minority to keep alive Iraq mistrust of U.S. “imperialism”, suspicion regarding our motives in Iraq has abated in the absence of any action on our part to which our enemies could convincingly point as evidence of hostile U.S. intentions. Despite continued security surveillance of the Embassy compound (and, on occasion, of Embassy officers) there is no unusual interference in normal operations of the Mission, and the USIS is now permitted to conduct a modest cultural and informational program. The ICA participant training program, under which substantial numbers of Iraqi government officials and employees are being sent to the United States and third countries for specialized training, is functioning with growing effectiveness and public acceptance.

Guidance

5. The U.S. should continue efforts to develop firm but friendly relations with the Iraq Government. We should conduct our relations with Iraq in a normal and friendly way, ceremoniously as well as substantively.

6. As Iraqi suspicions continue to diminish, we should make every effort to develop contacts, both official and unofficial, with personalities of the regime and other individuals of potential political importance.
7. If Iraq requests U.S. cooperation in constructive programs, U.S. agencies should be prepared to give prompt and friendly consideration in the light of the then existing situation and outlook in Iraq.

8. Our information program should emphasize those activities most conducive to restoring the confidence of the Iraqi Government and people in the U.S. USIS should concentrate on personal contacts and cultural activities, particularly English-teaching and exchange of persons programs. The USIS effort should be discreet and unostentatious. Upon signature of the recently negotiated Cultural Agreement (or sooner, if signature is long delayed) USIS should activate its Baghdad library, and expand appropriate informational activities.

9. Should shifts in the internal power structure in Iraq take place bringing into existence a regime seeking closer relations with the Free World, the U.S. should be prepared promptly to support it and to take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen its position in the area.

Iraq-Soviet Relations

10. Soviet Bloc efforts in the propaganda field are assisted by the existence of a number of Communist and pro-Communist newspapers and by Communist infiltration in the Ministry of Guidance and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Education. On the other hand, there has been a growing chorus of criticism of Soviet Bloc policies and of international Communism in the nationalist press. Despite growing Iraqi doubts about the disinterestedness of Soviet Bloc military and economic assistance, Qasim recently decided to accept supplemental Soviet assistance for the rehabilitation of the Basra-Baghdad railway, and there are reports that Iraq will also receive additional Soviet military equipment, including MIG 19 aircraft. Iraq has also concluded an aid agreement with Czechoslovakia. The well-organized (but still unlicensed) hardcore Communist Party has made effective use of the relative freedom of action which has been permitted to it, and in terms of leadership, organization and capacity for street action in Baghdad is unrivaled by any nationalist group with the possible exception of the (also unlicensed) Baath Party. Despite some changes in personnel of the Ministry of Guidance and Broadcasting, Baghdad Radio and TV still tend to favor the Communist point of view. The Communists still control most of the “popular” organizations and many of the professional associations. Although the Iraqi Federation of Labor belongs to the Communist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions, the Communists have lost control of a large number of Iraqi trade unions in recent elections.

conducted under the watchful (and distinctly anti-Communist) eye of the Iraqi administrative and security establishments.

Guidance

11. We should use every appropriate opportunity to bring home to Iraqi leaders and people the threat posed by international Communism to the goals of independence, neutrality, and national dignity which the Iraqi regime has set for itself.

12. As much information as possible should be obtained on the details of the Soviet economic thrust in Iraq. Whenever possible, such information should be turned to the advantage of the U.S. and other free world states, and to Soviet Bloc disadvantage.

13. To counterbalance the effects of Iraqi labor’s affiliation with the WFTU, the U.S. should develop friendly relations with the Iraqi Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. The UN’s International Labor Organization should be encouraged to revive its labor mission in Baghdad.

Iraq’s Relations with States in the Area

14. While Qasim remains highly suspicious and jealous of Nasser and extremely sensitive to UAR propaganda attacks and support of Iraqi political émigrés tensions between Iraq and the UAR have diminished. This appears to have been furthered by the Arab League Foreign Ministers conference held in Lebanon in August 1960. The subsequent discontinuing of the “Voice of Free Iraq” clandestine broadcasts from the Syrian region removed an important source of irritation to Qasim. Qasim for his part has desisted from his earlier public invitations to the Syrians to dissolve their union with Egypt and associate themselves with Iraq. Qasim nevertheless remains apprehensive of Nasser’s longer range pan-Arab ambitions and envious of Nasser’s popularity and prestige.

15. Common dislike of Nasser by Qasim and Bourguiba continues to be the basis of cordial relations between Iraq and Tunisia. Iraq is also wooing Morocco in various ways and taking every opportunity to cement its relations with Lebanon in the interest of offsetting UAR influence there.

16. King Hussein’s and Qasim’s common suspicion and fear of Nasser have contributed to an improvement of relations between Iraq and Jordan. Recent negotiations between representatives of the two governments led in September to a Jordanian Government announcement of recognition of the current regime in Iraq. Resumption of diplomatic relations is expected in the near future. Iraq’s relations with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have improved somewhat with diminution of the prospect of a Communist-controlled regime in Iraq.
17. Iraq's harmonious relations with Turkey have continued undisturbed by the change of regime in the latter. Qasim was prompt in expressing his good wishes to the new Turkish Government and reiterating his policy of non-interference in Turkish affairs. Cultural exchanges under a pre-revolution agreement have been continued and a trade agreement is under consideration.

18. Iraq-Iran relations, though recently more harmonious, are subject to periodic disturbances by possible developments in several issues of significance to both countries: control of navigation on the Shatt-al-Arab, division of water from rivers flowing into Iraq from Iran, curtailment by Iran of pilgrim travel to Shi'a shrines in Iraq, sporadic border incidents, and mutual suspicion of intrigues among the Kurds.

Guidance

19. We should counsel Iraq's neighbors, particularly the Iranians, against interference in Iraq's affairs and other provocative measures which tend to push Iraq into closer relations with the Soviets.

20. We should, without involving ourselves in the substance of disputes, encourage Iraq and Iran (or any other friendly state with which Iraq may develop a dispute) to seek a mutually acceptable solution through direct negotiations, or other peaceful means.

21. We should continue, as circumstances warrant, efforts to use other area states, including friendly Arab states, as channels for the exercise of constructive influence of Qasim. We should, as appropriate opportunities arise in official contacts with Iraqis, make clear our satisfaction at improvements in Iraq's relations with its neighbors.

Iraq's Relations with the UK

22. Although the British economic position in Iraq, which was paramount before the revolution, is being steadily whittled away it remains substantial. The UK has the largest financial interest in the IPC and retains its traditional control of management. Iraq's political and cultural relations with the UK remain satisfactory though not particularly close. A UK-Iraq Cultural Relations Agreement has been signed.

Guidance

23. We should seek the continuing exchange of information and views on Iraq with the UK.

24. Although we should leave the initiative on petroleum matters to the UK, we should follow developments closely and consult with the UK regularly.

Economic

25. Iraq's efforts to restart and reshape its development program following the revolution have largely failed because of the centralization of authority in the hands of the Prime Minister and the latter's fail-
ure to define objectives in terms of realizable economic programs. Iraq’s economic development difficulties are compounded by general stagnation in the public and private investment sector, drastic reductions in grain production due to drought and the disruptive effects of the Agrarian Reform Law, and a near-breakdown of planning and managerial functions of the government. The economy of Iraq can, however, be maintained, albeit at a reduced level of activity, as long as oil revenues continue to accrue at approximately the present rate. Moreover, the country had substantial foreign exchange reserves upon which it can draw.

Guidance

26. The possibilities of failure in the Iraqi development effort or of Iraqi disillusionment with Soviet Bloc aid should be continuously appraised as a guide to U.S. action.

27. Although requests from the Iraqi Government for direct U.S. economic or technical assistance seem unlikely under present circumstances, the U.S. should be prepared to respond promptly to requests for technical assistance which may be made. The U.S. attitude towards any requests for economic aid should be one of prompt and openminded consideration in the light of then existing situation and over-all U.S. interests. However, official Iraqi sensitivity to foreign investment and to U.S. assistance requires that initiative in these fields be left entirely to the Iraq Government. The increasing Iraqi tendency to seek educational assistance and technical data from U.S. agencies, both public and private, should be encouraged, as should be the interest of Iraqi officials in travel to the U.S. UN agencies should also be encouraged to offer technical advice and assistance to Iraq as an alternative to increased dependence on the Soviet Bloc.

28. Every effort should be made to have U.S. products and firms given impartial and competitive consideration in Iraqi trade and developmental undertakings, official or private. American firms now on the scene should be encouraged to remain, and both old and prospective new firms should be given every possible assistance in extending their operations and avoiding or minimizing disputes or causes for dispute with the Government of Iraq. Embassy efforts to facilitate U.S. private economic activity, however, should be discreet, and should take into account the suspicion with which Americans and those with whom they freely associate are widely regarded.

Military

29. The termination of the Mutual Security Agreement of 1954, which was taken at the initiative of Iraq in May 1959, removed the exist-

\(^2\) 5 UST 2496.
ing basis for U.S. grant aid military assistance. Subsequently, approval was given for sale of U.S. military equipment (chiefly, spare parts) on a case-by-case basis. Since the revolution, negotiations for the purchase by Iraq of British military aircraft, armored vehicles, and artillery bogged down over the issue of price and appear to be dormant. Iraq has recently expressed interest in the purchase of British jet trainer aircraft, however. Provision has been made in the FY 1961 military assistance training program to train a small number of Iraqi military personnel in the U.S.

Guidance

30. Requests by Iraq for commercial or military sales of U.S. military equipment, including spare parts and replacement items, should in each instance be considered on their merits in the light of U.S. interests. In the event that Iraq requests or exhibits serious interest in expanded training of Iraqi military personnel in the U.S., we should respond affirmatively if possible.

U.S. Personnel Overseas

31. The acceptance of the presence of official U.S. personnel on foreign soil directly affects our capability to achieve our national security objectives. To this end, programs should be developed and improved to encourage and strengthen the natural inclination of the individual American to be a good representative of his country and to promote conduct and attitudes conducive to good will and mutual understanding.

32. The OCB has prepared a comprehensive document which serves as a guidance for senior U.S. representatives overseas:

"Report on U.S. Personnel Overseas" (July 1959), including a Statement of National Policy and a Presidential Letter as well as a reprint of the Conclusions and Recommendations of a 1958 report.

Guidance

33. Hold the number of U.S. official personnel in Iraq to a strict minimum consistent with sound implementation of our programs.

Note: See: NIE 36.2–60, Outlook for Iraq, November 1, 1960. NIE 30–59, Main Currents in the Arab World, August 25, 1959.3

[Here follow Annexes A “Arrangements or Agreements with the U.S.” B “Statements of Agency Programs in Iraq,” and C “Sino-Soviet Bloc Activity in Iraq,” and a Financial Annex and Pipeline Analysis–MSP.]

3 Documents 222 and 71.