

The Ba'th and Palestine

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1. Preface:

One can hardly specify the year 1948 as a date to mark the beginning of the Palestine question, although it witnessed the outbreak of war between the Arabs and Zionist gangs and marked a prelude to the British and U.S. supported Zionist grip of Palestine and emergence of the Zionist entity, so-called the "State of Israel." the Palestine question dates back to a preceding date, although Palestine was slaughtered in 1948.

As universally admitted, Britain, which controlled most of the world trade, especially that of Indian spice supplies, spared no effort to secure safe and uninterrupted lines of communication, with the Arab area considered as an indispensable link. To the British Government which sought exclusively hazardless navigation for its commercial vessels, looked upon the Arab area, notably after the excava-

tion of the Suez Canal, with a special respect. The waterway between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea provided a short cut for the British vessels and consequently prompted a firmer grip over the Arab area where, notwithstanding the Ottoman domination, any tendency towards unity and integration could in no way be tolerated. This concern on the part of Britain became all the more obvious when Muhammed Ali Pasha and his son Ibrahim Pasha, the ruler of Egypt, put forth at the close of the 19th century an Arab Unity Plan, and started to prepare an army for the unification of the Arab orient with Egypt. Britain soon reacted by colluding with the Ottoman monarch, Sultan Abdul Hamid, to detach Palestine and establish a new state on its territory. Viscount Palmerstone, the British Prime Minister at the time, in a confidential message to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, elaborated the aims of stepping-up Jewish immigration to Palestine with the encouragement of the Ottoman Sultan. "The encouragement of the Jewish people to return, under the approval, protection and incentives of the Sultan would create a barrier against any prospective

devilish schemes of Muhammed Ali or his successor*,” he said.

Although the Ottoman Sultan turned the British appeal down, the British Government resolved to open its first Middle East Consulate in Jerusalem, with a view to serving the following purposes:—

1. Implantation of an alien entity into the Arab homeland which had witnessed the most glorious phases and epochs of history and from which original civilisations had provided Europe with scientists, scholars and men of letters, notably in the fields of science, medicine, astronomy and geography. That alien entity, later known as “Israel,” could then enfeeble the Arab integrity and keep the Arab nation so vulnerable to disruption as to permit fragmentation, colonialisation and dependence, hence unable to restore its past glory.

2. Creation of a constant source of tension

* Al-Kayali, A. Wahab: Readings on Palestine, p. 134.

in the Arab area, whereby the big powers would feasibly enhance their interests and interference, under the guise of trying to arrange a settlement.

3. Creation of a status quo in the Arab area whereby political, ideological and factional differences could bring about such small Arab entities around "Israel" as would be unable to carry out any major changes against the Zionist or big powers' interests.

To put these objectives into effect, Britain acted intensively towards the encouragement of Jewish immigration from Europe to Palestine, with a view to:

1. Achieving a balance in the population structure in Palestine whereby the Jewish population could have an equal magnitude to the Arabs' in case an international commission would conduct a population-wise division;
2. Purchasing Arabs' lands through tempting

material offers, to establish Jewish settlements.

3. Forming armed gangs for the confrontation of any possible Arab uprising.

Those British measures provided a favourable background for the first Zionist conference held in Basle, Switzerland in 1897 to define the aim of the world Zionist movement as considering Palestine a “national homeland for the Jews.”

During that period the Arabs sustained a state of stagnation and under-development which stemmed from the conditions brought about by the four century-long Ottoman rule, with the Western powers having utilized the weak position of the Ottoman empire, termed at the time as the “sick man,” to enhance their interests in the Arab area, hence the division of the Arab homeland into zones of Western influence. In the meantime, notwithstanding its wavering grip, the Ottoman Government continued to impose a political and ideological isolation on the Arabs, and en-

couraged feudalist and tribal trends, with a view to precluding the possibility that the toiling classes could rise against the wornout Ottoman domination.

In the wake of the 20th century, when principles of the French Revolution, coupled with the national upsurge in the West, began to affect the peoples of the Ottoman State, Turkish groups emerged calling for national resurrection and renovation to restore the "youth" of the Ottoman State and give rise to the "Young Turkey" on modern national bases. However, that modernising appeal remained handcuffed with a racist faction discrediting other nationalities as only eligible for assimilation into the Turkish national melting-pot, hence the Turkishisation policy adopted vis-a-vis the Arabs and the ensuing anti-Arab persecution to suppress Arab national feelings*. This state of affairs induced the formation of parties and organisations to attend to Arab causes and get rid of the Ottoman colonisation.

* Al-Aisami, Shibli: The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party in the 1940s. p. 10.

These developments gave rise, during the second decade of the present century, to the Arab leader Al-Sharif Hussein in Hijaz (the Arab Peninsula) and his son Faisal in Syria, with the former having resolved to deliver the Arab homeland from the Ottoman domination and realise Arab independence.

As preludes to the World War I were gathering momentum, Britain contacted Al-Sharif Hussein for a deal to uprising against the Ottomans who had sided with the “Axis” against a promised post-war independence for the Arabs.

However, before the war ended Britain and France had concluded the agreement of Sykes-Picot of 1916 (named after the Foreign Ministers of the two countries) to divide the Arab world between themselves. Thus, instead of meeting her pledge to Al-Sharif Hussein, Britain brought under her domination the Arab regions of Palestine, Jordan, the Arab Peninsula, Southern Yemen, the Sudan and Egypt, whereas France dominated Syria, the Lebanon,

Djibouti, Somalia, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

By the above assignment, Britain sought to secure the routes of her trade with India, through the Straits of Eden, the Red Sea and the Suez Canal on the one hand, and to pave the way before the Jews to establish the “promised” state of Palestine. Shortly afterwards, Britain disclosed her ill intentions vis-a-vis Palestine, for on November 2, 1917, she promised the Jews a state on the territory of Palestine, within a declaration addressed by the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, Balfour, to Lord Rothshield a leader of the world Zionist movement.

The Declaration read:

“Dear Lord Rothshield,

It pleases me extremely to inform you, on behalf of H.M.’s Government, of the following declaration which expresses sympathy with the Zionist aspirations of the Jews. It has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet.

H’M.’s Government look with sympathy on

the establishment of a national Jewish homeland in Palestine, and will do her best to attain this aim, provided that it be clearly understood that nothing should be made to prejudice the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish groups of palestine or affect the rights or political status of the Jews in other countries.*"

Besides indicating the hostile attitude adopted by Britain to the Arabs, the declaration involved:—

1. Overlooking the presence of the Palestinian people on their homeland, i.e., more than 96 per cent of total inhabitants. (The declaration gave no consideration to the millions of Palestinians and thus violated the principles of international laws and human rights.

2. Confirming Britain's bias in favour of the Zionist movement (H.M.'s Government looked with sympathy upon a Jewish national homeland in Palestine).

* Quoted from the text published on the Palestinian Diary of 1973.

3. Designating the people of Palestine as “non-Jewish groups.” While calling for preservation of their national rights, it confirmed the security of Jews in the Arab countries, hence facilitating their immigration to Palestine to raise their proportion as a preliminary step for the establishment of the Jewish state.

Britain took no heed of the prerequisite of keeping her “colony” intact nor did she evince any respect for the national aspirations of the Palestinian people. The British colonial authorities suppressed the Palestinian people’s uprisings of 1920, 1922, 1925, 1929, 1930 and 1935, which set the scene for the 1936-1939 Revolution. In a manoeuvre to contain the revolutionary upsurge in the wake of World War II, Britain gave the Arabs in Palestine a promise of independence and an Arab Government. This promise was incorporated in the White Paper of 1939 which was categorically rescinded by the Black Paper of 1944, whereby Britain confirmed the necessity of keeping up the pace of Jewish immigration to Palestine, especially after the Zionists had supported the allies in the war. The conspiracy was finalised

by the U.N. General Assembly's resolution of dividing Palestine*.

* Al-Kayali, Abdul Wahab: Modern History of Palestine.

II. Phase Preceding the Party's Foundation:

The stages through which the Palestine question developed, hence the ordeal inflicted on the Arabs, involved the following conditions:—

1. The division of the Arab homeland into two groups of states under British and French mandates brought about artificial frontiers and borders, and imposed a state of political and ideological fragmentation.

2. The ensuing disruption of the Arab homeland provided appropriate conditions for the emergence of political parties and trends, especially including:

a. The fanatic nationalist current which came about as a reaction to the Turkish national

fanaticism during the closing period of the Ottoman reign. The emerging current exclusively adhered to Arab nationalism and overlooked the aspects of Arab social conditions.

- b. The Marxist current represented in the Arab Communist Parties, which went in the other extreme direction in stressing the social aspect, while discrediting the important national character of the Arab nation which was suffering from disruption and anti-national colonial intrigues.
- c. The religious current which was self-confined, rejecting any renovation or interaction with contemporary developments, and sticking to the verbal texts of the Koran without comprehending the real essence of the Islamic mission.

Amid the tumult of these currents and other national parties which existed in certain Arab countries, there emerged the Ba'th resurgence idea, as the founder of the Ba'th Party realised that all the above-mentioned currents

did not provide a solution for the problems from which the Arab nation was suffering, nor did they manage to encounter the imperialist challenges posed to the Arabs and their homeland.

Therefore, Mr. Michel Aflaq, the founder of the Ba'th Party, who has been the Party's Secretary General, found it imperative, in order to meet the national aspirations of the Arabs, to come out with a new concept that would give priority to the nationalist-socialist-human thought, hence specifying the Ba'th objectives in the following trio: Unity, Liberty and Socialism.

The ordeal of the Arabs was that they were weak and divided under the impact of the imperialist conspiracy involved in the Sykes-Picot agreement. Therefore, the proper answer would be the call for unity. Another source of suffering was the Arabs' cultural and educational under-development coupled with their acute poverty, as a result of the imperialist domination which had denied them the simplest aspects of a dignified life, notably educa-

tion and enhanced the exploitative grip of feudalism and capitalism with the ultimate aim of preserving imperialist interests. The proper answer was the realisation of socialism, whereby the role of exploitative groups would be eliminated. The third foundation of the Party's doctrinal belief was the principle of free belief and free expression.

Thus, the Ba'th Party came into being in 1947, while the final touches of the conspiracy against Palestine were being made, to mark the beginning of an intensive attention to the Palestine question.

III. The Party's Attitude to Israel and the Partition Resolution:

1. Proceeding from the standpoint above in respect to the development of the Palestine question, the Party considered the conspiracy over Palestine as posing a real threat to the Arab homeland and the Arab nation as a whole, involving every aspect of life and every prerequisite of national survival.

2. Given the fact that Palestine had always been an Arab homeland, for a period of fourteen centuries, where the Arabs had continuously lived, except for a period of 200 years during which the Jews established a Jewish state, a solution for the Jewish question should in no way be made at the expense of the Arabs. The European countries which sought to eliminate the Jewish influence on

their respective economies, should have sought a local solution for their respective national problems.

The Party, in a statement, issued in 1945 demanded that Britain should deal with the Palestine question from the roots and reconsider the Belfour Declaration. "should the U.S. President and British Foreign Minister ever think of relieving the Jews from their miseries in Europe, or provide a "human" remedy for their problem, then they should have maintained a realistic regard for Zionism, whereby they would realised its aggressive-oppressive nature. The U.S. and Britain should resolve immediately to remove the injustice caused to the Arabs and assure that Palestine, the Arab country, should enjoy independence and freedom through self-rule within the Arab group*, the statement said.

3. The implantation of a racist entity in the Arab homeland constituted a national

* The Ba'th struggle, Part I, p. 83.

danger and involved a nationalist hazard connected with the feeling of every Arab individual towards a matter of national destiny and a question of historical affiliation. This is more so in view of the fact that Palestine held a central location in the Arab homeland, linking Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Trans-Jordan, Egypt and Hijaz together. The detachment of Palestine from the Arab homeland involved the disintegration of the Arab nation, disruption of the Arab ranks and abortion of the endeavour to establish the Arab nationalist entity, with the overall Arab question being exposed to a disadvantage. The independence of all Arab states was hampered by the fact that the Zionist scheme had only constituted a springboard through which the Zionist aim would be attained in extending their national homeland from the Nile to the Euphrates*.

4. The existence of a racist entity in the heart of the Arab homeland posed a social and economic threat to the Arabs who constituted

* Ba'th Newspaper, No. 214 of Dec., 1947. This was confirmed in 1967 when the Zionists moved out to occupy further Arab territories.

one nation and maintained uniform traditions, habits, modes of thinking and ways of life, hence their genuine Arab identity, unlike the Jews who had a wide spectrum of heterogeneous habits, traditions and ways of life, all of which ran counter to those of the Arabs. Therefore, the implantation of those alien traditions into the Arab environment would bring the corruption the Jews had always delegated, upon the Arab society and consequently encroach upon the Arab sanctities through the dissemination of immoral manners and creation of mental and psychological disorders. This would expose the emerging Arab society to disintegration and collapse.

Besides, the Zionists maintain a strong economic potential through their efficiency in practicing usury and exploitation, whereby they have accumulated a huge fortune all over the world. Accordingly, the Zionist Jews in Palestine would endeavour to flood the Arabs market with their products and consequently undermine the Arab economy and submerge the Arab economic integration*.

* Nidhal Al-Ba'th (Ba'th Struggle), Part I, pp. 216-217.

5. The existence of a racist Zionist entity in the "heart" of the Arab homeland constituted a strategic base for the world imperialism which created it*.

For all the above considerations, the Party categorically rejected the Partition Resolution of the U.N., issued on November 29, 1947, which was adopted in a throttling atmosphere of pressure and bribery; each of the powers which had envisaged the adoption of the partition plan inspired its satellites to support it and vote in its favour. The Philippines, for instance which had condemned the partition scheme in the meeting which preceded the voting session changed its attitude and voted in its favour**. And so did Haiiti and Liberia whose last-moment approval contradicted their previously declared attitude against the partition. The Arab envoys were astounded at seeing the

* Ibid: the Ba'th's anticipation came true, as "Israel became and advanced base of the U.S. in the Arab area, with the two countries having concluded a strategic cooperation agreement in 1981 to carry out the anti-Arab schemes in full.

** From the Palestiaian Diary, 1973.

representative of Haiti announce his government pro-partition attitude with tears in his eyes. "I still maintain my personal belief, but being my government's representative, I have to abide by her instructions to vote in favour of the partition," he said. Liberia, on its part, had to succumb to the will of rubber merchants, especially Firestone Company, for rubber constituted the main source of public revenue. Thailand had to replace her envoy who stood against the partition, with the Zionist-inspired excuse that he did not support the new government which took over following a coup d'etat*.

As a result of the contacts made by the imperialist powers with the small countries, the partition resolution was passed by a majority vote, with the following countries having voted in its favour: The United States, the Soviet Union, Sweden, Norway, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada, South Africa, Bolivia, the Dominican, the Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama, Haiti, Guatemala, Paraguay, Ukraine.

* Ibid.

Poland, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Holland, Australia, Ireland, Brazil, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Peru, Costa Rica, Liberia and the Phillippines (the total being 32 countries).

The countries which voted against the resolution were: Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Yemen, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Iran, Cuba and Greece (the total being 13 countries).

The countries which abstained were: Britain, Mexico, El-Salvador, Argentine and China; Thailand did not attend.

IV. The Party's Attitude During the 1948 war:

Following the partition declaration, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party maintained the attitude of considering the question of Palestine as a central issue, thus deserving utmost priority in its attention and activity. The Party maintained that the Palestine question had become so serious as to tolerate no other alternative than embarking upon armed struggle to save it, especially as the anti-Arab collusion had become too obvious to over-look. The Party stressed the necessity of such a standard of serious mobilisation as to subordinate armed struggle by economic, cultural and political boycott of the countries which supported Zionism; it also proposed that oil should be used as a weapon in the battle, proceeding thus from the conviction that the emergence of "Israel" would undermine the aim of Arab

unity and endanger the independence of the Arab countries.

Early in 1948, the Party established the "Permanent Palestine Bureau" to confirm its attention to this central issue and escalate its activity in its favour. By the middle of January, 1948, the Party's Council, which was convened in the Syrian city of Homs, resolved to mobilise all its members to participate in the armed struggle and war effort, and to send volunteers to Palestine under the leadership of its executive committee. A number of Ba'thist volunteers met their martyrdom including Ma'moon al-Bitar from Damascus and Sulaiman Kredi from Swaida*.

* Al-Aysami, Shibli: the Arab Ba'thi Socialist Party in the 1940s, pp. 58 & 59.

V. The Party's Attitude to Settlement Proposals:

Proceeding from its doctrinal attitude of rejecting the partition resolution as prejudicial to the Arabs, placing the Zionist Jews in such a position as to pose danger to the Arab area as a whole, the Party confronted all the schemes and proposals which overlooked the rights of the Arab people of Palestine or granted the "State of Israel" new gains or favourable positions on the Arab territory. This was in no way an attitude of pointless opposition, but a recognition of the solid fact that the proposals put forth after 1948 failed to deal with the origins of the Palestine problem nor did they provide radical formulae to stop the "Israeli" aggression; on the contrary they secured further concessional advantages to "Israel" on the Arabs' account.

1. The Party rejected the Johnston plan which envisaged the settlement of the Palestinian refugees in the Arab countries to which they had immigrated following the 1948 conspiracy, with a view to arranging a “permanent” reconciliation between the Arabs and “Israel”. The Party considered the Plan as exclusively biased to the Zionists and detrimental to the rights of the Palestinian people who had been displaced as a result of the imperialist-Zionist conspiracy.

2. The Party exposed the aims of the Dallas proposals of 1954 to establish Arab-Zionist relations under the pretext of removing the complex of reciprocal fear, as having overlooked reference to the question of the homeless Palestinians.

3. The Party rejected the U.N. security Council’s Resolution No. 242 of 1967 as failing to recognise the Arab people of Palestine or provide a just settlement of their legitimate rights.

4. The Party and its Revolution in Iraq stood firm against the lopsided reconciliation

agreements of 1978 between Egypt and “Israel”, as aiming at :—

- a) Isolating Egypt, the biggest Arab country, from the Arab unanimity, so as to release a free-hand for “Israel” to deal with the other fronts.
- b) Securing a potential opportunity for “Israel” to extend a political, social and economic control over the Arab countries.
- c) Providing further opportunities for “Israel” to enhance its aggressiveness.
- d) Providing the United States with an opportunity to secure her military presence in the Sinai peninsula to carry out surveillance operations and enhance direct interference in the internal affairs of the Arabs.
- e) Disrupting the Arabs’ effective confrontation* with a view to forcing them to give in to “Israel’s ” interests.

* Hussein, Saddam: “Effective Belief, Secret of Success”

VI. Attitude of Ba'th Revolution in Iraq to Palestine:

As the Party had, ever since its foundation, considered the question of Palestine a central issue, the Revolution led by the Ba'th in Iraq on July 17, 1968, regarded the issue as being worthy of utmost priority and placed it on top of the issues of urgent concern to the leadership as occupying a central position within the context of Arab struggle. The Party's attention to this issue was more urgently prompted by the Zionist aggression on the Arabs on June 5, 1967 which resulted in the occupation of new Arab territories in three independent and U.N. member Arab states. The aggression contributed effectively to the exposition of the danger inherent in the presence of the Zionist entity and its collusion with imperialism

against the Arab homeland and the Arab struggle for liberation, unity and socialism.

The Party's doctrinal attitude to the Palestine question and to the Arab-Zionist conflict can be summed up in the following points:

1. To start with, it should be confirmed that the enemies of the Arab nation have always utilised "Israel" as a spearhead to launch a constant war on the Arabs, against their interests and beyond their control. The Arabs, like many other peoples of the world, have been subjected to war lest they should concentrate on their self-identity and revive their civilisation to reconstruct their socialist-democratic society. The enemies are fully aware that the Arabs, during their unity power, had had a glorious history and pioneering civilisation which furnished the world, including the European nations, with a constructive civilisational role in the constitution of the world's scientific progress. Should the Arabs be immune against exogenous conspiratory factors, they would be able to shift into a new era that might supersede their past position in terms of prolific contribution.

Proceeding from this conception, the imperialist powers acted towards the disruption of the Arabs and partition of their homeland. The conspiracy which was drawn up in 1916 has been so systematically put into effect as to involve the implantation of "Israel" on the territory of Palestine to pose a serious threat to the Arab's survival and bid for modern technology. This has been evident in the "Israeli" aggression on the Iraqi nuclear installations near Baghdad on June 7, 1981, with Menachem Begin, the "Israeli" Prime Minister, having declared the intention to destroy any nuclear installations everywhere in the Arab world on the grounds that they would potentially endanger "Israel". In this respect it should be noted that while Iraq was among the countries which signed the agreement against the proliferation of nuclear arms, "Israel" refused to sign it and declined to have its nuclear installations inspected.

Moreover, "Israel" has persistently interfered in the Lebanese affairs, occupied parts of Southern Lebanon and created a factional entity commanded by secessionist Sa'ad Haddad.

The above two examples shed light on the "Israeli" policy of aggression vis-a-vis the Arabs, confirming the inevitability of war to curb the Arabs' bid for their legitimate rights reaching a certain point.

2. Based on the concept that imperialist Zionism involves danger to the vital interests of the Third World nations, the struggle launched by the Arab nation against the imperialist-Zionist collusion is bound to serve the purpose of the world-wide national struggle for peace and progress, conducive to the triumph of right over injustice, of civilisational values over the forces of oppression, of peace over war and of self-determination over aggression, usurpation and illegitimate domination*.

3. The Western powers bear the exclusive responsibility for the Palestine question. As previously stated, right from the beginning, i.e. since the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the European countries have always moved in the U.S. orbit, notwithstanding a relative improve-

* Farah, Dr. Elias: The Arab homeland and neo-fascism, p. 125.

ment in their attitudes, thus failing to provide such a solution for the problem of Palestine as would exonerate them from the crimes they had committed against the Arab people of Palestine. Despite the progress marked in recent years towards a better European understanding the proposals so far put forth are still short of meeting the just demands of the Palestinian people. Moreover, the European information media and fact-finding missions have been unable to rise to the level of admitting the European responsibility for dividing the Arab nation, creating the Zionist entity and impeding the Arabs' social and economic progress. They should have enlightened the European public opinion that all the above atrocities of the West had been the coercive outcome of the so-called guilty feeling maintained by Europe towards the Jews as a result of Hitler's policies and practices, with the Zionist occupation of the Arab territory and displacement of millions of Arabs to be depicted as a source of guilty feeling to Europe! *

* Hussein, Saddam: "Our Struggle for the Arabs and Humanity." An address to the Arab-European Press Dialogue Seminar, Baghdad, February 1980.

4. The party and its Revolution in Iraq realise that imperialism and Zionism maintain an intensive attitude of hostility to the Arab world, prompted thus by two factors:

- a) The international situation which is currently experiencing a temporary upper-handedness of the imperialist-capitalist system led by the United States, reflecting a technological superiority and involving domination-oriented techniques.
- b) The strategic significance of the Arab homeland which abounds with natural resources, perceived by world imperialism and Zionism as a potential source of revolutionary progress of the Arab nation.

The imperialist-Zionist scheme has envisaged undermining such potential progress, and resolved to impede its effective realisation in the long run, hence the introduction of such techniques as would secure for imperialism a confrontation with the Arabs in the domains and at the times it chose*.

* Aflaq, Michel: The Ba'th and Challenges of the Future. p. 30.

5. The Party and its Revolution in Iraq are well aware that the U.S. in her duel with the Soviet Union in the Arab area and the world, endeavours to come out with compromise solutions, basically falling within her usual frameworks, on the bases of the following considerations:—

- a) Avoiding any commitment to the effect of an “Israeli” withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories;
- b) Bringing about a temporary end for the Arab-Zionist conflict, involving partial settlements, through such arrangements as would guarantee an easy “Israeli” re-occupation of any “relinquished” area, in case of any developments hampering U.S. interests. In this respect, “Israel” has always meant a firmer guarantee for the American interests in the Arab area.
- c) Inducing the Arab countries whose territories were occupied in 1967 to conclude individual settlements with “Israel”; this form of settlement would disrupt Arab

ranks and aggravate their weakness*. On this basis the U.S. could in no way provide a fair settlement for the Palestine question, and the U.S. manoeuvres in that direction would always be governed by the U.S. and Zionist strategic and economic interests in the Arab area.

6. To rectify the belief implied in certain enquiries that Arabs would always seek to go on war for the settlement of the Palestine question, President Saddam Hussein said, "I do not believe that war will always provide the best means of settlement, but I believe in the significance and essentiality of war when all other alternatives become futile." President Hussein, then, wonders why the same enquiry is not addressed to "Israel": "The irony lies in asking those on the defensive if resort to arms would be the best solution, while the offensive usurper would stand no questioning about his vicious acts. The Arabs have neither now nor before or after 1948

The Political Report of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party
Regional Leadership of Iraq, mid-November, 1972, p. 20.

been in the position of an aggressor-usurper; before 1948 they were on the defensive side, having had to resort to arms against the usurping aggressor. As differences develop within the context of politics and political dialogues, the use of arms would be impermissible, but when the situation requires a destiny involving self-defence against those who are using arms against us, then resort to arms would be inevitable*.

7. The secret behind the power and capability of "Israel" to occupy Arab territories, despite the vast discrepancy in the figures related to the population of both sides, lies in the fact that the present demographic structure of "Israel", far from being equivocal with conditions evident in the neighbour areas, presents an integrated mixture of the developed technical, scientific and social human resources originating in West Germany, Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States, France, Poland etc., where scientific and technological

* Hussein, Saddam: Statement to Der Spiegel newspaper of West Germany: "Our Policy, a Personification of the Nation's Present and Future." p. 16.

progress has far superseded that of the Arabs by virtue of the latter's long term suffering under the yoke of the Ottoman colonialism and European imperialism, hence their under-development.

Thus, by implication the Arabs are confronted, within the context of their war against "Israel", by some of the most developed technologies of the world, transferred to "Israel" through the Jewish immigrants. This confrontation involves all the Arabs, though currently divided and consequently unable to accomplish uniformity in means and techniques, for the Zionists in their counter-activity aim at the Arab nation as a whole.

8. The concept maintained by the Party and Revolution of Iraq in respect of the Jews is based on the assumption that those believers in the Jewish faith who leave their homelands, drop their nationalities and settle on a usurped territory are Zionist-indoctrinised, constituting the tools by means of which the Zionist entity is confronting the Arabs. Apart from these, the Jews who feel proud of their nationalities and patriotism in Germany, Bri-

tain, the Soviet Union and the United States, thus refraining from immigration and declining to rob other peoples of their right to nationhood, are regarded with respect. In fact, the conflict is far from being between the Arabs and Jews; it is between the Arabs whose rights have been usurped and the Zionists who have maintained an expansionist outlook and have occupied the Arab land*.

9. Although the Arab nation is divided and disintegrated, it has always maintained a common objective envisaging a common destiny; moreover, the world has always looked upon the Arab nation as cohesively integrated, thus being uniformly aimed at by the imperialist powers. Accordingly, the world's attention to the Palestine question and the Arab nation as a whole implies that the Arab-Zionist conflict has had an international implication, reflecting the interchange of influence between the Arab nation as a whole and the world*.

10. The compromises currently under way

* Ibid: pp.

* Tawalba, M. Hassan: Israel Impasses, p. 98.

to end the Arab-Zionist conflict in favour of the imperialists and Zionists have been counter to the Arab interests, although they have been accepted by certain Arab governments, these compromises have always envisaged fostering the interests of the imperialists most in the Arab area. Besides, the Zionist entity does not only pose danger to the Arab nation, but also hampers world peace and security: the conflict between the Arab nation and Zionism is significantly a question of survival, for the Zionist community which is founded on aggression and usurpation involves a premediated and deep-rooted persecution of a comprehensive non-class pattern. The Zionist farmer has premeditatedly resolved to occupy the land of the Palestinian farmer and the Zionist worker, acting through the Histadrut, resolved to deny the Arab worker all forms of employment opportunities, resorting thus to various means of pressure and intimidation. The Zionist genocide against the Arabs have always involved an attempt to annihilate the people of Palestine after having robbed them of their rights and nationhood.

11. Any “prospective” settlement of the Palestine issue will run into a dual-pronged critical impasse: An “Israeli” dilemma whereby the Zionists, even though a comprehensive settlement were reached with all the Arab parties, would have to live on a small area not exceeding one thousand square kilometres, and this area would in no way allow the Zionist expansionist aspiration to bring in the world Jewry; besides, the predominantly agricultural economic resources of this area would fall far short of meeting the overall requirements of the “expansive” state.

Although “Israel” has managed to develop a number of civil and military industries, its growing need for technological development would in no way be indefinitely met by Washington. Secondly, a Palestinian dilemma whereby the spot of land to be allocated for the proposed “Palestinian State” would be insufficient to support three million Palestinians, for its economic resources would be too meagre to meet the fundamental needs of the people of Palestine. Hence, any settlement within such framework would be highly vulner-

able to explosion under the pressure of prospective living prerequisites.

Iraq's Initiatives, Practical Plans:

In a fundamental aspect, July 17-30 Revolution in Iraq brought about a retaliation to the June 5 setback, as we have previously stated. To turn Iraq into a robust base for the Arab liberation oriented struggle, the Revolution put forth a number of initiatives to raise the situation in the Arab world from the depression it had sustained to the level of confrontation, involving the mobilisation of Arab human and economic potentials for a proper encounter to the challenges posed by the U.S. imperialism and Zionism.

* At the Arab Summit Conference held at Rabat in December, 1969 and the first confrontation states' conference held in Cairo in August, 1969, Iraq proposed a confrontation plan against the Zionist enemy, which called for the re-deployment of military forces along the Arab-Zionist front-lines.

* At the Tripoli Summit of June, 1970,

Iraq proposed a 10-point plan confirming the integrity of the Arab confrontation through the unity of Arab armies and their command, proceeding thus from the fact that the Arab homeland enjoyed a strategic depth which the Zionist enemy did not have. The plan called for the removal of regional barriers between the Arab states and redeployment of armed forces regardless of their country-wise affiliation, so as to undertake interceptive rather than defensive tasks.

* IN 1972, despite the then unfavourable circumstances, Iraq called on Syria and Egypt to enter into a struggle oriented unity with it, against imperialism and Zionism. Mr. Saddam Hussein led an Iraqi delegation to Damascus and Cairo for that purpose, but the two governments turned the Iraqi proposal down.

The plan envisaging unity between Iraq, Syria, Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would have achieved a high standard of homogeneity in the geographical, demographic and economic structure of the unity state, to serve as a positive prerequisite

of confrontation against the enemies. Moreover, the plan envisaged other Arab states would join in, as the unity would provide a nucleus for a healthy expansion through the objective awareness on the part of all Arab countries of their common interests and destiny.

* At the Joint Arab Defence Council's Meeting of January 27, 1973, Iraq reaffirmed the significance of Joint Arab Action to confront world imperialism and Zionism in the area.

Having accomplished victory in the nationalisation battle against the monopolist oil companies on June 1, 1972, hence enhancing the potential of anti-imperialist confrontation, Iraq suggested that:—

1. The Zionist entity would have refrained from committing the June 5, 1967 aggression on the Arabs had it not been for the support and approval of the United States, and
2. The Arabs' battle against the enemy was

not merely a military encounter, but an economic and civilisational duel as well.

These attitudes were vividly expressed in the Iraqi proposal to the Arab Defence Council, as per the Iraqi Foreign Minister's message to the Arab League Secretary General on January 1, 1973, which referred to the experience of the five-year period subsequent to the June aggression of 1967. "The Government of Iraq," the message said, "believes that resort to conventional military encounter alone would fall short of providing the Arab nation with the prerequisites of victory; it may result in another military set-back which the Arab masses could not endure."

Within this context, Iraq proceeded from:—

1. Any development in the Arab armament potential would be encountered, or even outweighed, by an increase in the enemy's military might. This tendency has been confirmed by developments since the aggression of 1948 up to-date.
2. The Arab countries, as a whole, are still

not importers of arms, with no local military industries in sight; their imports are conditional by their political relations and alliances, whereas "Israel" receives regular and constant supplies of arms. Besides, "Israel" has been producing various arms, military equipment and ammunitions of effective combat potential. "Israel" has developed its own military industries to deal with any possible shortage of foreign supplies; it might have developed its own nuclear weapons which enhanced its strategic position in the area after the occupation of Sinai, the Golan Heights and the West Bank of River Jordan.

"Accordingly, the Government of Iraq Republic consider the effective means of confronting the Zionist enemy and forcing the U.S.-led imperialism to change its current policies of exclusive support to the enemy on the one hand, and induce the other pro-Israel continues, especially in Western Europe to change their attitudes, lies in the utilisation of all Arab arms in the battle, with the military force, political pressure and oil to be in the forefront.

The Republic of Iraq proceeds in this analysis from tangible facts confirming the reliance of the United States and Western Europe on the Arab oil to run their military and economic machinery; hence the utilization of oil as a weapon in the battle is bound to provide the Arabs with a strong and decisive instrument to impose sanctions on any country that will extend military and political support to the enemy.

“The imperialist powers, headed by the United States will have to choose one of these two alternatives:—

Either adopting a decisive attitude to the Zionist enemy, or standing the loss of energy supplies from the Arab world, hence the possibility of sustaining economic and military difficulties.

Accordingly, the Government of Iraq Republic suggests that:—

1. The Arab countries which have agreed to the proposal specify, in a decisive and prompt

manner, their attitude to the U.S. and other pro-Israel countries within a maximum period of three months, with the countries concerned to be notified of such attitude, should they fail to stop all forms of political, military and economic assistance to the Zionist enemy and act seriously towards forcing it to withdraw from all the Arab territories occupied after June 5, 1967, without any conditions especially including any obligation on the part of the Arab states to recognise "Israel", enter into negotiations, reach a reconciliation with it, or recognise any borders for it.

In this respect, the Arab states should elaborate all the measures to be adopted vis-a-vis each country not responding seriously to the above condition.

It is to be noted that the condition of the "Israeli" withdrawal in the above manner, does not affect Iraq's attitude to the question of comprehensive liberation, and that the above specification is induced by the sincere desire not to embarrass the Arab states which would consider it untimely now to raise the slogan of

overall liberation, under the pretext that it would result in passive consequences in certain circles of the international public opinion. Moreover, the suggestion should imply no doctrinal or practical restriction to the continued struggle for the realisation of full liberation of Palestine.

2. The oil interests of the U.S. and any other country not complying with the condition above be nationalised, and a specific plan be drawn up to specify oil exports to other countries on the basis of securing Arab interests. Projects for the expansion of oil extraction and industry should be curtailed except in as much as is required for the battle and other fundamental prerequisites of the Arab nation, and within the framework of a pre-meditated Arab plan.

3. All Arab deposits be withdrawn from the U.S. and other pro-Israel countries' banks.

4. U.S. military bases be liquidated, together with any other base belonging to any country providing "Israel" with political, mili-

tary and economic aids, and a strict political and economic boycott be imposed in various fields.

5. In case the Governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the other Gulf States decline agreement to nationalise, in view of their political and economic situations, then a strict nationalisation should be adopted in respect of their oil exports, so as to let out the lowest possible level, with due consideration to meeting their commitments relative to their economic development programmes within the context of such austerity as would be made imperative by the battle, noting their foreign exchange holdings. In all cases oil supplies to the U.S. should be cut off until such time as the latter had complied with the above conditions.

6. The armed confrontation against the Zionist enemy be conducted on the basis of joint command, unity of the Arab armies and battlefields, and a joint military strategy.

7. The Arab states supporting the plan and adhering to it should refrain from entering any

unilateral discussion of any scheme related to the Zionist-imperialist aggression, for any such discussion should be held with all the parties committed to the plan.

8. The Republic of Iraq does not make it conditional that the plan receive an exclusive Arab unanimity; an approval of 50 per cent would put it into immediate effect, with the agreement of Syria, Egypt, Libya and the Palestine Resistance Movement being a minimum requirement, in view of the fact that most of these countries directly confronted the enemy and, thus, bore the direct burden of the battle of liberation. Iraq expressed resolute willingness to mobilise its military potentiality, in whatever size, whenever and wherever required by the confrontation states, vide their decisions, regardless of whatever viewpoint Iraq maintained, provided that the mobilisation of the pro-plan countries' armies be completed on all fronts within a maximum period of three months from the ratification date of the plan.

9. Commando activity be given facilities on

the Arab territories, including all necessary support for the performance of its militant obligations.

10. The parties agreed to the plan draw up a detailed timetable including various political, military, economic and strategic obligations for the implementation of the plan in letter and spirit:

11. The Government of Iraq Republic, while making no condition for Arab unanimity to consider the plan successfully sponsored, though confirming the significance of having Egypt, Syria, Libya and the Palestine Resistance abide by it, made it conditional that the sponsoring parties should draw up a programme for its implementation, beginning with the liquidation of oil and other interests of the U.S. and other countries supporting the aggression.

Ocotober War:

The war was launched without Iraq being informed ahead of the zero hour and without

preparation for a durable confrontation.

However, notwithstanding its conviction that it was just a war of "friction," the political leadership of Iraq saw it as a valuable opportunity to launch an Arab battle of national struggle, proceeding thus from the hope that it would develop into a war of liberation through which Arab mass potentialities would be unleashed; thus Iraq resolved to despatch military units to the Syrian front immediately, and send military aircraft to the Egyptian front, in such a magnitude as superseded any conventional military premeditation.

Having originally designed it to be a war of friction, the Arab rightist regimes accepted the Security Council's Resolution No. 238, which called for a ceasefire and commencement of negotiations with the Zionist enemy under the U.S. auspices, only to give further concessions to "Israel" and submit to its desires. Against the background of this state of affairs, Iraq decided to withdraw its forces from the Golan front, as the Syrian head of state had accepted that U.N. Resolution No. 238 on

the very day that the Iraqi-Syrian military command was finalising an offensive plan for the liberation of the Golan.

The post-October period witnessed direct contacts between the rightist regimes and the Zionist enemy, made under U.S. auspices, through which agreements were reached for the “disengagement” in Sinai and Golan, despatch of U.S. emergency forces (for an automatically renewable period of six months) and conclusion of Sinai agreement and protocols.

The situation against which Iraq had warned before the war, began to develop thereafter, as the Arab area began to witness far-reaching and extremely serious developments, especially in the aftermath of putting into practical effect a scheme for the liquidation of the Palestinian Resistance and Lebanese National Movements.

The Situation Following Sadat's Visit to Jerusalem in 1977

When Sadat declared his intention to visit Jerusalem, the Party issued a statement condemning the high treason committed by the head of the biggest Arab state; that was before any reaction on the part of any other Arab country. The Party and Revolution in Iraq, moreover, resolved to embark upon an initiative to salvage the situation and put an end to the deterioration that followed. The Party's national leadership held a series of meetings and called for the convention of Arab national regimes in Baghdad. The President of Iraq addressed a message to the head of Algeria, Libya, Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in which he explained the situation and the prerequisites of encountering it with a high sense of revolutionary responsibility, thus overlooking any outstanding differences with certain regimes, especially the Syrian. The message

included the following points:

1. The treason-laden Sadat's visit constituted an outcome of the "settlement" policy which had begun with the acceptance, by certain regimes, of the U.N. Security Council's Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338, the Geneva Conference. As the two resolutions would ultimately bring about recognition of the Zionist entity, within secure borders and the establishment of diplomatic and economic relations with it, Sadat made a short cut by according the Zionist entity full de facto recognition through his visit to the occupied territory. Hence, the aims have been identical although with different approaches.

2. The adoption of the settlement policy on the basis of the two resolutions (Nos. 242 and 338) by the Egyptian and Syrian Governments which subsequently resolved to carry out certain steps in that direction, hence the liquidation of the Palestine Resistance Movement (in Lebanon), resulted in the deterioration of inter-Arab relations.

3. The confrontation of Sadat's treason

should not merely be conducted through statements of condemnation and denunciation, which would involve a prompt and casual reaction, but through a revolutionary retaliation which could deal with the situation so fundamentally as to involve the reasons which had led to the ensuing circumstances.

4. Vis-a-vis this state of affairs, a nationalist front should have been established by the afore-mentioned parties, with all the political, military, economic and publicity facilities to be mobilised to encounter the serious deterioration in the Arab situation.

5. The front should emerge on the basis of a charter whereby the attitudes, objectives and assignments of various parties thereto would be defined.

6. An activity in that direction would inevitably provoke anti-Arab hostility; therefore, the front should encompass the mobilisation of sufficient material and military resources, with the contribution of various parties to be specified each according to its potentialities.

7. A front of this type would instigate a direct "Israeli" reaction; the Lebanese front might be considered the weakest point through which "Israel" could infiltrate into the Syrian front. Therefore, in order to seal this gap off, the Palestine resistance and Lebanese national movement should be strongly supported. However, such support did not take place and Southern Lebanon was occupied on March 15, 1978.

8. The attitude towards Sadat should not be taken as implying a similar passive standard in treating the people of Egypt who should be assisted to avert the serious conspiracy being brewed by the Sadat in an attempt to isolate Egypt from the Arab nation and Arab homeland.

9. The parties concerned were invited to a meeting in Baghdad to consider these urgent matters; the fifth of December, 1977 was fixed as a date for the proposed meeting.

In the meantime the Libyan head of state invited the same parties to a summit meeting

in Tripoli. The leadership of the Party and Revolution in Iraq, lest its attitude should be misinterpreted, resolved to attend the Tripoli meeting, but reserved the right to call for the Baghdad Conference in due course, or at any other date to be agreed upon by the parties concerned.

The Tripoli Conference was merely an anti-Sadat demonstration, hence:

1. The Conference, reflecting a normative pattern, had no specific agenda, but harboured irresponsible verbal recriminations and a review of misleading attitudes.
2. The Conference provided a camouflage for the Syrian President's submissive and liquidation-oriented policies.
3. Hafez Assad defended the "settlement" policy as implied in accepting U.N. Security Council's Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338 and the Geneva Conference, as a national attitude and tried to confirm the impression that Sadat's visit constituted a threat

to his tendencies, forgetting thus that both lines conducted to the same target, i.e., the recognition of the Zionist entity and loss of Palestine.

The Syrian regime tried to utilise the Conference for the acquisition of support to its policy of "settlement" and submission. Notwithstanding all the serious attempts to save the Conference from utter failure, through such flexibility as would not affect basic principles, Hafez Assad refused to change his attitude, benefiting thus from the lenient attitudes of certain parties.

The Iraqi delegation submitted a draft resolution calling for:

"The condemnation of Sadat's treacherous visit, elimination of its consequences, rejecting the U.N. Security Council's Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338 as well as Geneva Conference, adherence to the rights of restoring the occupied territories and securing self-determination for the Palestinian people, considering the Palestine question a

central issue of Arab struggle, considering the PLO a legitimate representative of the Palestinians, supporting the Commando activity, formation of a nationalist front among the participant countries, formation of an ad hoc committee to draw up the central principles for the proposed front and preparation of the Charter which would be submitted to the subsequent meeting in Baghdad within a maximum period of three months.”

However, the Iraqi proposal was rejected by Hafez Assad, who also turned down a similar Libyan plan to which Iraq agreed, not specifically providing for the rejection of all the submissive schemes, overlooking any reference to the U.N. Security Council Resolutions and Geneva Conference, but calling for the comprehensive liberation of all the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and tolerating no surrender, or encroachment on the sovereignty of any part, of such territories.

Against such obstinacy, the Iraqi delegation had no alternative than to walk out of the

Conference and explain its attitude at a press conference in Tripoli.

The Conference ended with a communique overwhelmed by the condemnation of Sadat as having undermined the feasibility of achieving a “fair and honourable” peaceful settlement that would preserve the national rights of the Arab nation. The communique, however did not specify how much peaceful settlement could be achieved with the racist Zionist enemy occupying the very “heart” of the Arab homeland.

The closing communique of the Conference confined itself to a call for aborting the consequences of Sadat’s visit, by suspending political and diplomatic relations with Egypt. That was the core of Sadat’s anticipation to turn it into a pretext for the isolation of Egypt and its people from the Arabs and Arabism. The communique paid tribute to the people of Egypt and the occupied areas, and provided for aid to be extended to Syria on the grounds that it had become the only confrontation front against the enemy. Accordingly, the “Steadfast-

ness" front was set up at the Tripoli Conference without a working programme to steer its prospective activity.

Charter for the Front:

Following the Tripoli Conference the leadership of Iraq held a series of meetings to consider the situation, and decided to renew the invitation to convene the Baghdad Conference for the countries due to compose the proposed front, on the basis of a well-defined, thoroughly considered Charter. In the aftermath of the Tripoli Conference, a number of Arab heads of state called on Iraq to display a measure of flexibility, and thus shatter Syrian premeditation, in order to relieve Hafez Assad of his embarrassment on the Arab and international levels following his acceptance of the Security Council Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338.

Thus, the Front Charter was drawn up in such a way as to comprise two parts: public and confidential.

The public part was so carefully worded

and thoroughly studied as to involve a great deal of diplomacy and flexibility, so as to avoid Syrian concern and preclude undue pretexts on the part of certain parties; it made no reference to the U.N. Security Council's Resolutions, but implicitly confirmed the inevitability of comprehensive liberation of the occupied Arab territories.

The confidential part constituted a document binding all parties concerned, including the Syrian regime, to set-up a steadfastness and liberation front. It contained a straightforward rejection of the Security Council Resolutions and the Geneva Conference, specified the military and financial obligations of each party and defined the pattern of relations with the West, especially the United States, and with the reactionary Arab countries. It confirmed the necessity that the Palestine Resistance Movement adhere to its principles, without following the example of other Arab countries in terms of showing flexibility, and called for the withdrawal of the Syrian forces from the Lebanon and the extension of military and financial support to the resistance movement and na-

tional forces in Lebanon through the Front's Fund, to avert the pressures of certain reactionary parties through the aid they extended to the Palestine resistance.

The public and confidential parts of the Charter were discussed with all the parties concerned and were approved by Algeria, Libya and the democratic Republic of Yemen. The Lebanese National Movement submitted certain normative remarks and were smoothed out with the political leadership of Lebanon; the PLO voiced objection to a single point concerning the specification of services for financial and military aid, and the leadership of Iraq promised to have this point considered within the context of the Front.

Thy Syrian regime attempted strenuously to complicate the situation by putting forth a number of conditions before beginning to discuss the Charter, especially as related to the settlement of differences between Iraq and Syria, although the President of Iraq Republic had pointed out in a message dated November 22, 1977, that the "differences with the Syrian

Government are in no way marginal or self-inspired, but profound and fundamental. But, we have always differentiated between such differences — notwithstanding their significance to us — and our bigger nationalist responsibilities. Besides, we have culminated this policy line with tangible attitudes in the past. Proceeding, today, from a profound sense of national responsibilities, based on the principles mentioned herein, despite our awareness of the magnitude of our differences with the Syrian brethren, we are fully prepared to embark upon a sincere joint action on the basis of the above-mentioned principles, within the framework of the Front, with all the responsibilities and joint nationalist obligations it involves.”

The Iraqi leadership also notified the late President Hoare Boumedienne that the serious and sincere action through the Front would undoubtedly have positive implications on the Iraqi-Syrian bilateral relations.

However, Hafez Assad insisted on having the bilateral relations discussed, before anything else, on the summit level, and in com-

pliance with President Boumedienne's offices, it was decided that a meeting be held between two members of the Iraqi leadership and two members of the Syrian side holding identical levels, in Algiers and under Algerian auspices to discuss bilateral relations in the course of establishing the front. Meanwhile, Hafez Assad made a number of objections to the Charter, viz: —

1. He would not call on Baghdad, as that would be humiliating to him.
2. He would not reject the Security Council's Resolutions, although this was stipulated in the confidential part, on the grounds that there would be no secret.
3. He would not agree to the points related to the Lebanon which confirmed that parties to the Front participate in drawing up a Lebanese strategy involving the support of the Resistance and National Movement of Lebanon.

Amid the implications of Assad's condi-

tions, the pro-Syrian media in Lebanon announced that an Iraqi-Syrian meeting was imminent in Algeria; they even mentioned the names of negotiators from both sides. Meanwhile, Algeria called for a conference in Algiers on February 2-3, 1978.

No doubt, the successive incidents and premature surprises could only be explained as involving ill intentions and harbouring sinister attempts to preclude the foundation of the proposed Front, which would have put an end to the deterioration in the Arab relations. Hence, there it would be to no avail to participate in the Algiers Conference, for it could only give rise to the same conditions which had marked the preludes to the Tripoli Conference.

Proceeding from its national obligations, Iraq found it imperative to make a positive step towards thawing the ice and removing the passive aspects of inter-Arab relations, especially after Sadat's conclusion of the Camp David accord, lest the epidemic should spread out.

Therefore, the Revolution Command Coun-

cil (RCC) issued a declaration, on October 1, 1978, reaffirming its attitude as an integral part of the Northern Front encountering the Zionist enemy, and confirming its immediate willingness to despatch military units to Syria to secure an invincible Arab confrontation for the abortion of imperialist-Zionist schemes. It also called for the establishment of a National Fund to support Egypt and meet its military requirements (should the Egyptian Government so accept) along with meeting the financial needs of the Western, Northern and Eastern Confrontation Fronts, the PLO and the Arab people of Palestine in the occupied territories. The Fund's allocations would be no less than \$9.0 billion.

The RCC's declaration constituted a practical relation to the Camp David conspiracy, confirmed the profound commitment by Iraq to the national principles it fought for and provided a tangible evidence that Iraq could supersede serious dilemmas and overlook deep-rooted differences with the Arab states for the sake of national principles.

The Arab Summit Conference was held in Baghdad on November 1, 1978 at the invitation of Iraq, and thanks to the prudence of the Iraqi leadership Arab differences were resolved. The Conference adopted significant political and economic resolutions, mainly including the rejection of Camp David agreements, the imposition of economic and political sanctions on the Sadat regime — hence cutting off diplomatic relations with Cairo and withdrawing Arab Ambassadors therefrom — and transferring the Arab League and its agencies from Egypt to Tunisia. The Conference, however, confirmed the necessity of backing up the Arab people of Egypt.

Iraq's policy in respect of mobilising Arab potentialities remained unchanged at the Arab Summit Conferences of Tunis, Amman, Fez and Baghdad; Iraq has always called for a joint Arab action to confront the imperialist and Zionist challenges.

Conclusion:

Vis-a-vis the Zionist terrorist occupation

and racist expansion in the Arab homeland, which have always posed a threat to world peace, the Arab revolutionary struggle against the Zionist entity and world imperialism, its ally, represents the only practical means of confrontation and provides the only pathway of settlement for the Middle East problem. It requires the unity of Arab struggle, proper utilisation of human and material resources, a patient and persevering effort and a high standard of vigilance and preparedness.

The defeat of Zionism does not imply a Jewish genocide, as propagated by the imperialist circles of the West; it implies securing justice for all the oppressed Arabs and oriental Jews who are suffering under the yoke of racial discrimination.

By the realisation of Arab unity, the Jews would enjoy the opportunities of a happy and dignified life all over the Arab homeland, notably as history has always lent evidence to a healthy coexistence between the Arabs and Jews.

The solution prescribed by the Arab revolution is tangibly realistic, even though it might look idealist from the outset. However, the Zionists would desperately try to undermine any proposal which fell short of permitting their political, ideological and economic expansion at the Arabs' expense. Hence, the conflict will persist from one generation to the other, with the area to remain a spot of permanent conflagration, unless the reasons are categorically eradicated.

Although the prerequisites of the revolutionary settlement put forth by the Arab revolution are still to be provided through a prolonged and persistent endeavour, Iraq has admitted the possibility of an "Israeli" unconditional withdrawal from the areas occupied in 1967 and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people represented in the PLO to self-determination and statehood.

"Israel", on the other hand, has declined any concession and insisted on its aggressive attitudes to the Arabs. It has persistently tried to expand at the expense of the Arab terri-

tories, for which end it has launched a series of wars on the neighbourly Arab areas.

The Arabs, on their part, are bound to emerge as an invincible military, economic and technological power, capable of imposing the solution that is consistent with their interests, basically through the categorical elimination of the racist trends in the area and through such realistic conditions as to contribute effectively to the preservation of world peace and security.

Will international public opinion back up right and justice against injustice, oppression and racial discrimination in this important part of the world?

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