

The Kurdish Struggle in Iraq according to British Documents (1963-1975)

İngiliz Belgelerine Göre Irak'ta Kürt Mücadelesi (1963-1975)

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Abstract

The monarchy witnessed various Kurdish tribal revolts in Iraq. When General Qasim seized power in 1958, he initially cooperated with the Kurds. In 1961, Mulla Barzani started a widespread revolt against the government, with neither side securing a decisive advantage in the ensuing hostilities. In 1963, the government renewed hostilities against the Kurds, resulting once more in a military stalemate, but hostilities began once more in 1965. In June 1966, the Iraqi Prime Minister, announced a 12-point plan for peace in the north of Iraq. Any hopes of a settlement diminished when he was dismissed from office in August. In March 1970, the Kurds and the government agreed on the terms of a new settlement that foresaw Kurdish autonomy within the framework of the Iraqi Republic. Little progress was made towards the implementation of the agreement, and relations between the Kurds and the government steadily deteriorated. Fresh fighting broke out and Iran, taking advantage of the opportunity to destabilise the Iraqi regime, provided the Kurds with material support. When, in 1975, as part of the Algiers Agreement, the Shah withdrew his support for the Kurds partly in return for Iraq's acceptance of Iranian frontier claims, the rebellion collapsed.

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This paper aimed to reveal the dimensions of the struggle of the Kurds living as Iraqi citizens with the Iraqi governments reflected in the British documents. Determining Britain's evaluations on the Kurdish question in Iraq will contribute to the understanding of the establishment of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Administration, as well as provide a basis for the scientists who are interested in the regional problems to evaluate the establishment process better.

Key words: Britain, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Kurds, Kurdish Question

Özet

Monarşi Irak'taki çeşitli Kürt aşiret isyanlarına tanık oldu. General Kasım 1958'de iktidarı ele geçirdiğinde, başlangıçta Kürtlerle işbirliği yaptı. 1961'de Molla Barzani, hükümete karşı geniş çaplı bir isyan başlattı ve her iki taraf da ortaya çıkan düşmanlıklarda belirleyici bir avantaj sağlayamadı. 1963'te hükümet, Kürtlere karşı düşmanlığını bir kez daha tekrarladı ve bir kez daha askeri bir çıkmaza neden oldu, ancak 1965'te bir kez daha çatışmalar başladı. Haziran 1966'da Irak Başbakanı, Kürt sorunu için 12 maddelik bir barış planını açıkladı. Ağustos ayında görevden alındığında, anlaşmaya varma umutları azaldı. Mart 1970'te Kürtler ve hükümet, Irak Cumhuriyeti çerçevesinde Kürtlerin özerkliğini öngören yeni bir çözümün şartları üzerinde anlaştılar. Anlaşmanın uygulanmasına yönelik çok az ilerleme kaydedildi ve Kürtler ile hükümet arasındaki ilişkiler giderek kötüleşti. Yeni çatışmalar başladı ve İran, Irak rejimini istikrarsızlaştırma fırsatından yararlanarak Kürtlere maddi destek sağladı. 1975'te Cezayir Anlaşması'nın bir parçası olarak Şah, kısmen Irak'ın İran'ın sınır taleplerini kabul etmesi karşılığında Kürtlere verdiği desteği geri çektiğinde isyan çöktü.

Bu makale, Irak vatandaşı olarak yaşayan Kürtlerin Irak hükümetleriyle yaptığı mücadelenin İngiliz belgelerine yansıyan boyutunu ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. İngiltere'nin Irak'taki Kürt sorunuyla ilgili değerlendirmelerini ortaya koymak Irak Kürdistan Bölgesel Yönetimi'nin kurulma sürecinin anlaşılmasına katkı sağlayacağı gibi bölge sorunlarıyla ilgilenen bilim insanlarının da süreci daha iyi değerlendirmelerine zemin hazırlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngiltere, Türkiye, İran, Irak, Kürtler, Kürt Sorunu

Introduction

Although Kurdish nationalist sentiments can be traced back to the 19th century, it was the period following World War I that saw a larger, more coherent movement emerging from a series of separate, smaller rebellions. Kurdish populations are concentrated in Iran, Turkey, Iraq and Syria. Territory populated by the Kurds evolved over the previous two centuries, and while some regions stabilised, others were under constant change. However, today, continuing international debate regarding the future of 'Kurdistan' is fast changing.¹

After World War I, Britain intensified its influence over the territories the Kurds highly populated. The Ottoman Empire had been defeated and Iran was in a state of collapse, hence the officers of the Foreign and India Offices, together with their French counterparts, took on the responsibility for much of the region. Although the idea of establishing a Kurdish homeland on former Ottoman lands was supported by some, in the end Britain and France chose to divide the imaginary Kurdistan among the newly formed states of Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, in spite of protests, petitions, and resistance from the Kurds.²

According to the 1965 census, the 8.3 million Kurds in Iraq constituted between 15 and 20 per cent of the total population, a larger percentage than in any other country.³ They had succeeded in maintaining a large degree of independence from the central Government. In the tribal areas, their basic desire was to maintain this independence and to be free to continue their traditional way of life without interference. For the urban elements, however, which represented about a quarter of the Kurdish population in Iraq, the question of equality of opportunity within the Iraqi State had become ever more important in 1960s. The demands of the Iraqi Kurds therefore included both autonomy in the north of the country and full rights for themselves as Iraqi citizens.⁴

¹ Anita Burdett (ed.), *Records of the Kurds: Territory, Revolt and Nationalism, 1831–1979*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), *Passim*. See The National Archives, UK (here after TNA) FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

² Burdett (ed.), *Records of the Kurds, Passim*. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

³ Today, the Kurds in Iraq are understood to constitute between 15 and 20 per cent of the total population (26 million in the 2003 census). Avshalom H. Rubin, 'Abd al-Karim Qasim and the Kurds of Iraq: Centralization, Resistance and Revolt, 1958-1963', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (May 2007), 353-382.

⁴ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

The Treaty of Sevres (1920) envisaged the setting up of an autonomous Kurdistan, but was never ratified because of Turkish opposition. Instead, the Kurds found themselves divided by the international frontiers of Turkey, Iraq and Syria where under the Ottoman Empire only provincial boundaries had existed. However, the establishment of an independent Kurdistan uniting all the Kurds divided by international frontiers was not an immediate aim. The 1966 Programme of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) stated that the Kurds were fighting 'for liberation and the autonomy of Iraqi Kurdistan within the framework of the Iraq Republic.' See FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish

During the British administration of 1920-1932, measures were taken to improve conditions among the Kurds in Iraq, but efforts to establish a special administration for the Kurds in the north of Iraq were hindered by a series of tribal uprisings. When Iraq gained full independence in 1932, the government formally declared to the League of Nations that it would guarantee the rights of the Kurds and other minorities. This guarantee included equality before the law with other Iraqi nationals and stipulated, inter alia, areas in which Kurdish was to be an official language together with Arabic, and in which officials should, if possible, be Kurds. It also promised the allocation of official funds for the provision of primary education in the Kurdish language. However, the Iraqi Government did little to honour this declaration, instead enforcing its authority in the north of Iraq.⁵ Kurdish discontent led to a number of revolts, the most serious of which was led by the tribal leader Mulla Mustafa Barzani in 1943-1945. He was defeated by the Iraqi army, with the help of tribes receiving government pay, and fled to Iran, where he joined the short-lived Kurdish 'Republic of Mahabad'. When that collapsed, he made his way with a number of his followers to the Soviet Union.⁶

When General Qasim deposed the monarchy in 1958, he gave the Kurds promises of equality with the Arab population of Iraq and allowed Barzani to return from exile. After an initial period of cooperation, however, Kurdish opinion hardened against the government because of its neglect of their interests and its arming of tribes that were hostile to the Barzanis.⁷

In July 1961, the Barzanis armed themselves and defeated these hostile tribes, who were receiving covertly support from the government. Supported by other tribes and by members of the Kurdish Democratic Party, they then carried on to take over government posts in the north. By the end of August 1961 the semi-circle of mountains from north-west of Mosul to south-east of Kirkuk was effectively under Kurdish control. Mulla Mustafa Barzani then presented General Qasim with a number of demands, including autonomy for the Kurds. General Qasim's response was to launch a full-scale military offensive against the Kurds in September 1961. Hostilities continued intermittently until General Qasim's fall in February 1963, with neither side gaining a

Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959.

⁵ Marion Farouk-Sluglett & Peter Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1990), 23-30.

⁶ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 23-30.

⁷ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 79-82. See C. J. Edmonds, 'The Kurds of Iraq', *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Winter 1957), 52-63. C. J. Edmonds, 'The Kurds and the Revolution in Iraq', *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 1, (Winter 1959), 1-11.

decisive advantage. The government forces held the main towns in the North (Mosul, Erbil, Kirkuk and Suleimaniya) but the Kurds controlled most of the rest of their territory.⁸

1. Negotiations with Kurds in Irak

Almost immediately after the Ba'ath Party came to power in February 1963 a cease-fire was arranged. Negotiations began the following month, when the government announced it was prepared to grant the Kurds 'national rights on the basis of decentralisation'. It did not accept Kurdish demands for a share in oil revenues and other state revenues on a per capita basis and the exclusion of Arab troops from the north of Iraq. Although the government made counter-proposals, it soon became clear that the negotiations were inconclusive. In June 1963 the government jailed a Kurdish delegation and launched a new military offensive, which was 'more ruthless and bloody' than that under the lead of General Qasim. However, by the time winter arrived, the army had secured control of only a small fraction of the mountainous area of northern Iraq and it was clear that the government had little hope of imposing a military solution.⁹

In February 1964, a cease-fire was announced between the Kurds and the government which, since the removal of the Ba'ath in November 1963, had a Nasserist nature. An official statement by President Abd al-Salam Arif promised the Kurds national rights 'in a single fraternal national unity', proclaimed a general amnesty, and made the government promise to undertake the rehabilitation of the north and reinstate Kurdish officials and employees there. Innumerable visits followed to the north by government representatives in an attempt to persuade the Kurds to accept 'something less than autonomy'.¹⁰

After over than a year of amnesty, marked by ever digressing negotiations, hostilities were resumed by the government at the beginning of April 1965. By then most of the dissident Kurdish group had made peace with Barzani and returned from Iran. Unreconciled, Ibrahim Ahmad remained there and Talabani spent the summer abroad trying to gather international support for the Kurdish cause. The 1965 campaign did not go any better for the government than previous ones had and by the end of the year it was once again evident that deadlock had been reached on the military front.¹¹

⁸ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. See FO370/2718/LR 6/9G, 'The Kurdish problem in Iraq, 1958-1963'. Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 79-82.

⁹ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 102-104. Avshalom H. Rubin, 'Abd al-Karim Qasim and the Kurds of Iraq: Centralization, Resistance and Revolt, 1958-1963', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (May 2007), 353-382.

¹⁰ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 102-104.

¹¹ Two notable features of this campaign were Kurdish accusations that poison gas was used and the presence of UAR (United Arab Republic) troops in a camp near Baghdad (under the auspices of the Iraq-UAR Joint Military Command), which helped to release Iraqi troops from internal security duties to take part in the war. Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, (Oxford: Westview Press, 1985), 199-200.

2. The promises given to the Kurds: The Bazzaz proposals and the 1970 settlement

Early in 1966 there were signs that Dr. Abdul Rahman al Bazzaz, who in the previous autumn had been appointed Iraq's first civilian Premier since the 1958 revolution, was in favour of negotiating peace with the Kurds rather than mounting a new spring offensive. However, his advice was over-ruled and a new offensive began in May. The Government forces suffered a severe setback from the start near Rowanduz, and early in June, the campaign was called off.¹² On 29 June 1966, Dr. Bazzaz announced a 12-point plan for peace in the north of Iraq.¹³

Although the plan was vague in parts and left a great deal unsaid¹⁴ it seemed to provide a sufficient basis for a settlement and it was felt that as long as Bazzaz remained in office there was a reasonable chance of progress. The plan was officially welcomed by Barzani. By mid-July, however the Kurds were becoming disillusioned by lack of any positive signs of implementation, and when Bazzaz was dismissed in August as hopes of a settlement faded.¹⁵

Although full-scale hostilities did not continue in 1966 or 1967, government forces remained deployed in the north and were involved in some skirmishes with Kurdish forces. The government strove to weaken Barzani's position by giving support to Talabani, who had again fallen into dispute with him; occasional armed clashes took place between the rival Kurdish groups, but Talabani's faction was too weak to present a serious challenge to Barzani's authority.¹⁶

The Ba'athist Government which came to power in July 1968 did not initially show any indication of having better plans on how to deal with the Kurds than those of the 1963 Ba'athist Government, or those which other administrations had applied in the interim. In this way, they continued the policy which they had inherited from the previous government of containing the extent of the area controlled by the Kurds and providing Talabani's faction with financial and military aid.¹⁷

After a time, however, they began to put into effect some of the proposals put forward by Dr. Bazzaz in 1966. As a result, Kurdish was made the language of instruction in schools in the Kurdish areas; a university was established in Suleimaniya; a Kurdish Academy of Letters was set

¹² Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 102-104.

¹³ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959.

¹⁴ According to Ismet Sharif Vanly, there were also three secret clauses in which the government undertook (a) to create a new Liwa of Dohuk, comprising the Kurdish area then within the Liwa of Mosul, (b) to free all political prisoners in Iraq, and (c) to legalise the Kurdish Democratic Party. See Ismet Sharif Vanly, *Le Kurdistan Irakien*, (Neuchâtel : Entité National, 1970).

¹⁵ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 102-104.

¹⁶ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959.

¹⁷ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 126-132. Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 204-205.

up; an amnesty was declared for those who had joined the fighting; and a certain amount of decentralisation of power to the governorates was introduced. In spite of these propitiatory gestures, skirmishing continued throughout 1969.¹⁸

By January 1970, it became clear that serious negotiations were taking place between the Ba'ath and representatives of Barzani under cover of a de facto cease-fire. The success of these negotiations was announced by the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council on 11 March 1970.¹⁹

Although the secret clauses contributed towards removing obscurities in the published terms, some important points, such as the exact nature of Kurdish autonomy and the amount to be allocated by the Iraqi government for the development of the Kurdish region, were still not clear; it was evident that further negotiation would be needed on these and other points before the settlement could be considered comprehensive.

Implementing the agreement during 1970 did not happen quickly. The amnesty was generally observed, five Kurdish Ministers were appointed, development activities began in Kurdistan, and a number of gestures were made by the government in the fields of culture and education. On the other hand, the difficulties over the appointment of a Kurdish Vice-President and the creation of a National Assembly were still not resolved in 1971.²⁰

The Government withdrew their support from Talabani and Ibrahim Ahmad, who made their submission to Barzani and formally merged their 'Kurdish Revolutionary Party' with the KDP. A number of the Peshmerga returned to their civilian and a number were formed into a Kurdish frontier force, under the Ministry of the Interior. However, Barzani retained some 20,000 men under arms and kept both his heavy weapons and his broadcasting station. In March 1971, it was reported that he had handed them over, but in fact, he had kept the major part of his serviceable equipment.²¹

The future of the KDP, which was one of the issues that had not been sufficiently spelt out in the agreement, remained unresolved; declarations of its identity of outlook with the Ba'ath were issued from time to time but no practical links were made. A clear-cut picture of future administrative arrangements within Kurdistan also failed to emerge, and as the British Ambassador in Baghdad remarked, 'there could be little doubt that by 'autonomy' the government meant no

¹⁸ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 126-132.

¹⁹ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 126-132.

²⁰ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 126-132; Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 222-223.

²¹ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 126-132.

more than a modest measure of regional self-administration, whereas the Kurds intended it to mean a good deal more'.²²

The important issue regarding the physical extent of the area of Kurdish autonomy, which was to be determined by a census, also remained unresolved: the census was announced for October 1970 but was adjourned without arranging a time for the next meeting shortly before the appointed date. The main problem in determining the boundary was regarding the status of the governorate of Kirkuk, which contained the main oil-producing region of Iraq (although the large reserves were in the south) and had a cosmopolitan population including Turkomans, Kurds and Arabs. Additionally, as the British Ambassador remarked, 'the position is complicated by the fact that many Kurdish families were driven from their homes during hostilities and Arabs were settled in their place'.²³

In March 1970, although accepting that the exploitation of the oilfields should be under the jurisdiction of the central government, the Kurds insisted that Kirkuk should be their capital, as they had long insisted, and were not prepared to accept its exclusion from the autonomous region.²⁴ The Government, as the British Ambassador noted, 'could hardly be expected to accept a boundary which left the oilfields on the wrong side of the line'. He continued to state that, given that the two sides were unlikely to agree on this point, it was perhaps for the better in the short term that the census was postponed, since the emotions it would have incurred on both sides might have jeopardised the implementation of other parts of the agreement. In the long term, however, the British Ambassador was of the opinion that no settlement was likely to be permanent unless the territorial question was solved.²⁵

The postponement of the census did not immediately provoke a reaction from the Kurds. Their first priority appeared to be to see that the Government went ahead with reconstruction and development in the north, and it was felt that as long as progress continued to be made in this and other fields they would continue to observe the truce, though their patience might not be inexhaustible. The Government, needing the stability that the cessation of hostilities could bring, favoured a policy of reconciliation.²⁶

²² FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959.

²³ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959.

²⁴ Farouk-Sluglett, *Iraq since 1958*, 126-132.

²⁵ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

²⁶ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59.

Notably, the political reputation of Saddam Hussein al Tikriti, the strong man of the Iraqi Ba'ath, was to some extent linked to the March 1970 agreement, which he brought about in the face of considerable opposition from within the party.²⁷

In 1971, the Government at various times announced plans for economic development in the north, particularly in the field of tourism. Their relaxation of restrictions on members of the diplomatic corps travelling in the north suggested that they had considered reconciliation to be proceeding sufficiently smoothly. Nevertheless, the appointment of a Kurdish Vice-President had still not taken place. The British Ambassador remarked that it was believed that Barzani was unwilling to see the post filled until its functions were defined: if it was to be a position with little or no responsibility, he saw no point in offering a hostage to the Ba'ath. Nor had the National Assembly been created, despite forecasts in the President's speech at the 1971 celebrations of the July Revolution. The Ba'ath had still failed to formulate terms under which the non-Ba'athi elements (that is, the Kurds and the Communists) would be prepared to participate in national political life, and which would not jeopardise the Ba'ath Party's supreme role to an unacceptable degree. There were indeed some signs of a deterioration in Kurdish-Government relations during 1971: for example, a dispute over the status of the Feili Kurds, a tribe mainly of Iranian origin and citizenship, many of whom worked as labourers and porters in Baghdad and who were claiming Iraqi citizenship; and reports of skirmishes in the north in which pro-Talabani tribes appeared to have been involved. Perhaps in response to Kurdish complaints, the government set up a new Higher Committee for Kurdish Affairs in May 1971, with the supposed purpose of implementing the 1970 agreement more actively. However, since none of its members was Kurdish, it probably did not inspire much confidence in the Kurds. There were also reports that Barzani had made further demands of the Iraq Government during the summer, including requests that 150 million ID (Iraqi Dinar) per annum be devoted to Kurdish areas and that a National Assembly should be set up with one-third Kurdish membership. Finally, the attempt to assassinate Barzani in September 1971, which was widely held to have been the responsibility of the central government, but in which the Ba'ath leadership officially denied any part, must have increased Barzani's suspicion of the Baghdad government and set back further the process of reconciliation. Barzani displayed his feelings in an interview with the Beirut French newspaper, *L'Orient le Jour*, on 18 November 1971,

The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

²⁷ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

in which he said that he did not trust the Baghdad authorities and feared a surprise attack by the Iraqi army.²⁸

In short, at the time of the report, the situation seemed almost to have reached an impasse once more and it appeared unlikely that a solution to the outstanding problems would be found. If Kurdish irritation at the slow pace of implementation of the agreement continued to grow, the British Ambassador expected further outbreaks of fighting serious enough, cumulatively, to render the settlement a dead letter.²⁹

3. Political and Military Aspects of the Kurdish Struggle

As from 1961, when Barzani established himself as the dominant tribal leader and the KDP joined forces with him, the Iraqi Kurds presented a more united front than they had during previous revolts. The feud which had continued on and off since 1964 between Barzani on the one hand and Jalal Talabani and Ibrahim Ahmad on the other, according to the British Ambassador, was a symptom of the difference of perspective which separated the tribal population of the mountainous north from the urban population of the south of Kurdistan and the intellectuals in Baghdad and other places. As long as the settlement remained incomplete and Barzani maintained reasonable health (he was then nearly 70 years of age), the British Ambassador foresaw that his position as the overall leader of the Iraqi Kurds was unlikely to be challenged³⁰. However, if a lasting peace was made, the British Ambassador expected serious divisions to reappear within the Kurdish ranks. The tribal leaders, who would not necessarily remain united among themselves, would wish to preserve their authority in Kurdistan, whereas the more radical elements would want to see the KDP play a dominant role in the administration of the area and pursue progressive policies, including social and agricultural reform. In the long term, it was possible that the intelligentsia may find that they had more in common with the Arab socialists in Baghdad than with their kinsmen, which the British Ambassador believed in part explained Talabani's past dealings with the Baghdad authorities.³¹

²⁸ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

²⁹ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

³⁰ Vanly describes Barzani as both a protector of the traditional chief's *vis-a-vis* the party radicals and a 'catalyst of all the national forces'. A national hero since the days of the Mahabad Republic and his exile in the Soviet Union, Barzani has unrivalled experience as leader of the Kurdish national movement and is at his best in a crisis. However, his vision is limited and he can be stubborn and inflexible. His personal ideas as to future political arrangements in Kurdistan seem to be vague. See Vanly, *Le Kurdistan Irakien*, 20.

³¹ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59;

Since the KDP was the only Kurdish political organisation in Iraq, any future struggle for control of the Kurdish movement was likely to take place within it. It was essentially a nationalist party without a coherent ideology. In the early days of Qasim's rule it associated itself with the Communists for tactical reasons and was infiltrated by them, but their influence was probably negligible as from 1960, when the party was purged. At the same time the Communist bias in its programme was diluted. The programme of 1964, which was revised in 1966, was 'fairly radical in emphasis'³²; but some of its language appeared to be 'a legacy from the old programme adopted in Qasim's time'.³³

Since 1964, when Barzani moved against Talabani and other Socialist (Left-wing) members of the Politbureau, the party was largely subordinate to his authority and in the last elections to the party's Central Committee, in July 1970, Nationalist (Right-wing) members emerged on top. If a firm peace was established, however, and the party was to become more active politically, the more radical elements were likely to make their influence increasingly felt within it.³⁴

The organisational framework of the Kurdish revolt was complex, because it covered a large and varied geographical area and many disparate elements of population. The principal organs of Kurdish authority in the period 1966-1970 were the Revolutionary Council, the Executive Bureau and the KDP Politbureau. Vanly described the Revolutionary Council as a kind of elected parliament of 62 members, which exercised supreme authority and met every four months, or more frequently if requested by the President, by a majority of its own members, or by the Executive

The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

³² **Article 2** of the programme states that the party is 'a democratic, revolutionary and avant-garde party which represents the interests of the workers, peasants, salaried persons, artisans and revolutionary intellectuals of Iraqi Kurdistan'. **Article 3** states that the party is fighting 'for liberation and the autonomy, of Kurdistan within the framework of the Iraq Republic'. **Article 5** states that the party has recourse to 'the progressive scientific doctrines which correspond to the realities of our Kurdish people'. **Article 6** states that the party is fighting for the establishment of parliamentary democracy in Iraq and for freedom of speech, religion, political organisation, etc. **Article 13** demands the allocation of a percentage of Iraq's oil revenues to Kurdistan, proportionate to its population. **Article 14** advocates agrarian reform in Kurdistan specially adapted to the conditions there and aimed at establishing a minimum acreage for each peasant and abolishing the feudal system; it also suggests ways of modernising agriculture in Kurdistan. **Article 16** contains a section on taxes, which should be 'just and based on direct and progressive taxes on income and hereditary wealth and on the reduction of indirect taxes which hit the working classes'. Other articles concern the development of industry and communications, the development of Kurdish culture and education, the adoption of a 'non-aligned' and 'anti-imperialist' foreign policy, etc., See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

³³ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

³⁴ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

Bureau. Vanly described the Executive Bureau as a Ministerial Cabinet responsible for controlling all the organs of the Kurdish revolt, including the army. Significant influence was exerted on it by the KDP Politbureau, which apparently designated a number of its members a majority.³⁵ This was where the formal link between the KDP and the administration as a whole was to be found. Barzani was Chairman of all three bodies, as well as Commander-in-Chief of the army, and was thus in a position to dominate the whole machine.³⁶

The Iraqi Kurds were able to mobilise around 25,000 men. They possessed arms such as rifles, machine-guns, mortars, anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft guns, and some artillery pieces. They also had radio equipment and some motor transport. A substantial proportion of their small arms had been captured or stolen from the Iraqi army. Most of the remaining, and the majority of their heavier weapons, were supplied by Iran and Israel between 1963 and 1966. It was possible that they had received some arms from Czechoslovakia, but not on the same scale.³⁷

In the late 1960s the Peshmerga were reportedly divided into ten 'brigades', recruited on a local basis and having a great deal of independence. Their activities were not fully co-ordinated, though a degree of central control was exercised by Barzani as Commander-in-Chief. Their effectiveness was to some extent limited by their reluctance to operate outside their regions. The small groups used by the Kurds for commando activities, however, were extremely mobile considering the nature of the terrain. Barzani himself, who was surrounded by a guard of tribesmen of some 200, was constantly on the move during the hostilities in order to escape detection. His family usually accompanied him. His third son, Idris, acted as his aide de camp.³⁸

Kurdish military organisation appeared to have improved considerably between 1963 and 1966 as the result partly of Israeli instruction and partly of an influx of Kurdish deserters from the Iraqi army. During hostilities the Kurds employed guerrilla tactics with considerable success, not

³⁵ Vanly, *Le Kurdistan Irakien*, 8-12. Appendices VII and VIII of this book contain French translations of the texts of the Constitution of the Iraqi Kurdistan Revolution and the Administrative Law of the Revolution, both dated 17 October 1964. Other members of the Executive Bureau were representatives of the military, the tribes, other civilians, and the Christian (Assyrian) Community. The Politbureau itself was elected from among members of the KDP Central Committee, which was elected by a congress of KDP members. See Vanly, *Le Kurdistan Irakien*, 21-25.

³⁶ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

³⁷ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

³⁸ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

attempting to hold towns but drawing the Iraqi army on into the mountains and harassing it there. Ground lost in the summer was usually regained in the winter, when snow and rain presented the Government forces with severe difficulties. For the Kurds hostilities were largely defensive in nature, aimed partly at keeping open their supply routes from Iran. They did not take advantage of every opportunity to discomfit the Iraqi army; nor did they resort as much as they could have to sabotage, to which the oil installations in the Kirkuk region in particular are extremely vulnerable. Restriction of the fighting to the mountains, with no attempt to control the major towns, suited Barzani because he was thereby able to maintain a claim for tribal structure in the administration.³⁹

Turkey was not openly involved in the dispute but had relaxed controls on the Iraqi border during hostilities. It would no doubt have welcomed a permanent settlement in Iraq if it meant greater stability on its south eastern border, but it must have feared that autonomy for the Kurds in Iraq would encourage the aspirations of its own Kurdish population, numbering some 3 million. Turkey's own Kurdish problem attracted attention in April 1971, when one of the reasons given by the Turkish Government for imposing martial law was the threat of a Kurdish uprising in Eastern Turkey. Incidentally, the Turks indicated confidentially that the trouble among the Kurds, particularly the students, was being directed from East Germany. At a press conference on 1 May 1971, however, the Turkish Prime Minister said that the threat from the Kurds was potential rather than actual and that the imposition of martial law allowed the security forces full control of the situation.⁴⁰

The belief was that the Kurds received financial aid from the Iranian Government in Qasim's time and that some Kurds were given training in heavy weapons units of the Iranian army. Iran's distrust of the Ba'ath Government and of its dealings with Nasser led to a substantial increase in that country's aid to the Kurds in 1963, though the Shah resisted the temptation to declare open support for their cause. Since 1963 Iran had been the Kurds' most important ally, supplying them with arms and other equipment, provisions, cash, training, and rear communications. Iranian aid was one of the 'open secrets' of the Middle East and was frequently referred to by the Shah in private as his 'Kurdish card' in terms of his relations with the Iraqi Government. Evidently, although he risked stimulating the ambitions of Iran's own Kurdish population and provoking Iraq to retaliatory measures in Shatt-al-Arab and Khuzistan by supporting Barzani, he felt that he could

³⁹ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁴⁰ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. Ofra Bengio, 'Iraqi Kurds: Hour of Power?', *Middle East Quarterly*, (Summer 2003), 1-7.

not miss such an opportunity to embarrass and weaken the Iraq regime. He also saw his action as pre-empting Soviet involvement with the Kurds. Soviet support for them had been limited almost entirely to verbal support in Qasim's time, but in view of the extreme antipathy of the Soviet Union to the Ba'ath regime of 1963 it was widely feared that it might take on a more substantial form and threaten the security of other countries in the area as well as Iraq.⁴¹

The Iraqi Government had on several occasions complained to Iran about its support for the Kurds, notably in January 1966 when the Iraqi garrison at Panjwin was cut off by the Kurds and subjected to artillery bombardment. In response, Iraq then accused Iran both of supplying the Kurds with arms and of allowing its territory to be used for mounting the bombardment. The Iranian Government rejected the charges.⁴²

In addition to supplying aid of their own, the Iranians have allowed Israel to send aid to the Iraqi Kurds via their territory. Most other aid, including Red Cross aid⁴³, has also been delivered through Iran and most journalists visiting Iraqi Kurdistan over the past eight years have entered across the Iranian border with the connivance of the Iranian authorities.⁴⁴

The March 1970 settlement deprived Iran of a weapon against Iraq and had the potential to increase Iraq's ability to cause trouble in Iranian Kurdistan. The British Ambassador expected that Iran would therefore work against the settlement, which had come as something of a blow to her interests. However, the fact that Iran was unable to prevent it in the first place despite considerable financial pressure on Barzani showed that the country only had a limited influence and could not force the Iraqi Kurds to take up arms again. However, Barzani was still in contact with the Iranians and if he decided that further hostilities were inevitable he would look to Iran, as previously, for money, arms and supplies. In the event of Iran-Iraq relations remaining strained, it was likely that Iran would meet Barzani's requests.⁴⁵

⁴¹ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁴² FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁴³ This has been considerable. According to Vanly eight national Red Cross organisations, of which he mentions by name only those of Sweden and Hungary, have sent relief supplies under the auspices of the International Red Cross. Vanly, *Le Kurdistan Irakien*, 45.

⁴⁴ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁴⁵ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

In 1960s, the Kurds in Iran, a population of about 1.5 million, were comparatively quiet. The Iranian Government, 'by a mixture of the carrot (land reform, TV station, radio programmes, etc.) and the stick (stem suppression of disturbances, exile of troublemakers, etc.)', had fairly firm control over them. However, there was still a legacy of discontent, stemming from the unsuccessful attempt to set up an independent Kurdish Republic in Iran in 1946, which had the potential to be exploited against the Iranian Government, particularly in the event of the Iraqi Kurds achieving full autonomy or coming to a permanent settlement with the Iraqi Government. Therefore, while it was in Iran's interests that the Iraqi Kurds be encouraged to fight the Iraqi Government for what they wanted, their success may not have been in Iran's interests. The Iranian aim was to keep trouble firmly on the Iraqi side of the border.⁴⁶

4. British Attitude towards the Kurdish Struggle in Iraq

During the period under review the British Government's policy regarding the Kurdish issue continued to be one of non-involvement. The public position was stated by the Prime Minister in answer to a question in Parliament in June 1965, when he said: 'the British Government regret the fighting in Kurdistan, as any other instability in the Middle East, but we regard the Kurdish question as an internal Iraqi matter in which it would be inappropriate for us to interfere'. The British Ambassador remarked that, in private, the British Government have on appropriate occasions urged both sides to reach a peaceful settlement.⁴⁷

The Kurdish dispute was of special concern to Britain because the installations of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), in which Shell and BP both have a 23.75% interest, were extremely vulnerable to Kurdish attack. In Qasim's time, the Kurds refrained from sabotage, except of a very minor nature, but abducted two IPC employees in 1962 in a successful attempt to gain publicity. During hostilities in 1963, 1965 and 1966 there were a few minor incidents of sabotage, some of which may have been intended as a threat of more serious action. Fears of major sabotage, however, proved baseless, apparently because the Kurds did not wish to alienate Iraqi or Western opinion in general and the IPC in particular, as they hoped that the oil would one day be the major source of their own income. The most serious incident in the history of the dispute took place in 1969, when damage to installations in Kirkuk caused by mortar fire affected operations for more

⁴⁶ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁴⁷ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

than a week. the British Ambassador noted ‘all in all, it may be said that the Kurds represent the least of the threats to the supply of oil from Iraq’.⁴⁸

Another way in which the Kurdish revolt touched on the British Government’s interests was that the deployment of the Iraqi army in Kurdistan had reduced Iraq’s capability to attack Kuwait or operate elsewhere in the Gulf. This consideration, however, never provided adequate grounds for contemplating active support for the Kurds, which would have jeopardised the British Government’s significant political and commercial interests in Iraq and caused anxiety in neighbouring countries with Kurdish populations. The British Ambassador added that since the March 1970 agreement some redeployment of the Iraqi Army had in fact taken place, giving rise to anxiety in Kuwait in particular.⁴⁹

Although the British Government had given paramount importance to their relations with the Iraqi Government regarding the dispute, the humanitarian consideration that arms might be used against Kurdish civilians was at times an inhibiting factor in their policy on arms supplies to Iraq. As a result, in 1963, they decided to phase the delivery of rockets, mortar bombs and other ammunition ordered by the Iraq armed forces, and a similar decision was taken regarding the supply of ammunition and rockets in 1964. However, the British Government never actually refused to supply arms for this reason; as the British Ambassador emphasised, ‘other factors, particularly the possibility of weaning Iraq away from dependence on Soviet military supplies, [have been] considered more important’.⁵⁰

Hence, during the 1960s Kurdish emissaries were received by members of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in London outside the office on an unofficial basis. In Baghdad, paradoxically, dealings tended to be less discreet because many Kurds in touch with rebel groups were allowed to circulate freely and even participated in the Government. At other posts Kurdish emissaries were received if they requested interviews; letters for the Prime Minister or other Ministers were accepted and forwarded to the FCO, but it was usual practice not to give a written acknowledgement or send a reply.⁵¹

⁴⁸ FCO51/191/RR6/10, ‘The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971’, 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers, 29 April 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁴⁹ FCO51/191/RR6/10, ‘The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971’, 6 December 1971. C. J. Edmonds, ‘Kurdish Nationalism’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See William R. Polk, *Understanding Iraq*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006).

⁵⁰ FCO51/191/RR6/10, ‘The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971’, 6 December 1971. C. J. Edmonds, ‘Kurdish Nationalism’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁵¹ FCO51/191/RR6/10, ‘The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971’, 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, ‘The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds’, 13 February 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

The activities of Kurdish emissaries in London on occasion evoked protest from the Iraqi Ambassador, notably in 1965, when Jalal Talabani appeared on BBC television. The question of granting visas to them was reviewed on a number of occasions. The policy was to issue visas, but sometimes to accompany their issue with a request, albeit unenforceable, that the applicant should not take part in political or propaganda activities which might be a source of embarrassment to the British Government.⁵²

Despite the British Government's policy of non-involvement, the Iraqi Government tended to suspect Britain of supplying the Kurds with aid in cooperation with Iran. In August 1965, the Iraqis claimed to have concrete support of this in the form of arms and ammunition seized from the Kurds, but details which they later furnished to support the allegations were insufficient to permit identification of the items. The British Government gave Iraq an assurance that they had not supplied arms to the Kurds.⁵³

The British Government were reluctant to agree to numerous requests from Iraq between 1963 and 1966 that they should bring their influence to bear on the Shah to stop his aid to the Kurds for the reason that it was felt that there was a likelihood of causing irritation without affecting Iranian policy. On one instance in 1965, however, the British Government did undertake to transmit representations on behalf of the Iraqis, without touching upon the value of the complaint. In January 1966, when a series of border incidents connected with the Kurdish war had created extreme tension between Iran and Iraq, the British Government counselled moderation on both Governments at each other's request, albeit in a low key. At the time of the report, circumstances had not required the question of making representations to be considered since that particular incidence.⁵⁴

The last occasion on which the Kurdish question was raised in Parliament during the period in question was in December 1969, when Mr. Rose asked whether the British Government would seek to raise at the UN Human Rights Commission the dangers to peace in the Middle East arising from 'the bombing and atrocities carried out by the Iraqi Government'. The Minister of State for the FCO replied: 'No. I do not consider that it would be appropriate for the British Government to take the initiative in this matter at the UN. Our attitude towards action at the UN, were this subject to be raised in the Human Rights Commission, would depend on the case that is

⁵² FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁵³ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/20, 'The Kurds and the Baghdad Pact Powers', 29 April 1959.

⁵⁴ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

presented'.⁵⁵ This reply was in accordance with the British Government's policy of non-involvement in the Kurdish dispute. It was also consistent with the British Government's position that, where a consistent pattern of violations of human rights in the sense of a general policy was alleged to exist, the UN could legitimately consider the situation even though the allegation concerned an internal matter of a Member State. Incidentally, anything falling short of a consistent pattern, or a general policy, was probably covered by the domestic jurisdiction of the UN Charter (Article 2), except where an individual instance of violation was part of a general policy. In 1963, when Mongolia requested that a charge of genocide be brought against the Iraqi Government, but later dropped the request, the British Government, as in 1969, did not commit themselves on the question, although it was the current feeling within the Foreign Office that Iraqi methods, including the bombing of Kurdish villages, had 'exceeded purely military requirements and might sustain a charge of a deliberate attempt to destroy the Kurds as a race'.⁵⁶

The British Government's policy of non-involvement meant the rejection of all Kurdish requests for aid while fighting was in progress. A small technical assistance programme for Iraq had been in operation since 1970. The Kurds, like all Iraqi citizens, were eligible for awards under it if they were nominated by the Iraqi Government. The British Government also presented books and equipment to Suleimaniya University, the British Embassy in Baghdad were also in touch with War on Want⁵⁷ to see if that body could provide medical supplies through the Iraqi Red Crescent Society.⁵⁸

5. Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals

When Dr. Abdel Rahman Bazzaz became Prime Minister of Iraq in 1965 the Kurdish war had been in progress for some five years, and it was one of his main objectives to end it as soon as possible. He was unable to take the initiative, however, until after the failure of another attempt by the Iraqi army to crush the rebels in the spring of 1966. It was not until early June of that year that contacts were made with Barzani and that conditions favourable to talks were established. A number of visits by delegations ensued in which views were exchanged, and finally Barzani sent a message to Dr. Bazzaz in which he indicated a wish to come to terms. The Prime Minister

⁵⁵ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971.

⁵⁶ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁵⁷ For more information about this organisation, see <http://www.waronwant.org/our-history> [26.02.2016].

⁵⁸ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. C. J. Edmonds, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism (1971), 87-107. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

responded by broadcasting on 29 June a programme for 'restoration of normal conditions in northern Iraq' which he summarised in twelve main headings (the 'Twelve Points').⁵⁹

This declaration created the impression that it was a blueprint for an eventual settlement rather than a settlement as such, that much of its wording was ambiguous and that a great deal had been left unsaid. It was felt, nevertheless, that as long as Bazzaz remained in office there was a fair chance of progress, and the Kurds seemed to be reasonably satisfied with the proposals, which Barzani welcomed as a contribution towards the achievement of peace. By mid-July, however, a reaction had taken root, and the Kurds were becoming more and more disillusioned by lack of any positive signs of implementation, and when Bazzaz was dismissed on 6 August hopes of a settlement all but disappeared. The Kurds accused the Government of having retracted on the Bazzaz proposals, difficulties appeared in the reinstatement of Kurdish officers, and the Government acted reluctantly over Kurdish local government as it suspected that Barzani was not being honest about surrender of weapons, particularly those seized from the Iraqi army. By October, there was a stalemate with no further progress probable. Neither side trusted the other and both made frequent allegations of deceit by the other. As a result, the situation deteriorated steadily culminating in a gradual relapse into further hostilities. Renewed fighting on a considerable scale was reported in January 1967.⁶⁰

The war continued into 1970, early in which it was reported that new contacts had been made with the Kurds in an attempt to reach a settlement. It was known that the Iraqi Government was becoming increasingly concerned about the morale of the large forces fixed in the north, at the ever increasing expense of the war, and the seeming inability of the Army to make a decision. It was believed, however, that these attempts had been unsuccessful, and the announcement of a settlement on 11 March was surprising. The proposals published by the Government on 12 March paralleled those of 1966 fairly closely. Once again, a blueprint had been produced and it remained to be seen whether the 1970 proposals were more likely to implement than those of 1966.⁶¹

Of the fifteen clauses in the 1970 proposals eleven were repetitions, in slightly different form or with slightly different emphasis, of those of 1966 (see Annex 3). However, the Kurds were satisfied that they were an improvement on 1966, and Barzani was reported as having said that they

⁵⁹ FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970. Marr, *op. cit.*, 222-223.

⁶⁰ FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁶¹ FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

had secured all their demands except their own flag, a fixed share of the oil revenues and representation on the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). He was said also to be hoping for at least four Ministries in a reconstituted Government. It was also possible also that there had been agreement on measures that had not been made public, the withdrawal of the bulk of the Iraqi troops, the retention of the Peshmerga as a National Guard in the Kurdish areas and the abandonment by the Government of support for Talabani and his followers.⁶²

The 1970 proposals indeed appeared to be less vague and rather clearer cut than those of 1966, though there was still much ambiguity. They also contained four clauses which were not in Bazzaz's Twelve Points. Of these that on the exploitation of national wealth clarified that the Kurds were not to enjoy the exclusive benefits of oil exploitation in Kurdish areas; the others, dealing with an economic plan, agrarian reform and appointment of a Kurdish Vice President did not make any advancement on 1970 from the Kurdish perspective. The British Ambassador to Baghdad was of the opinion that the gain from the latter appointment was likely to be more prestigious than real, agrarian reform was never an important issue in northern Iraq, and the economic plan would depend entirely on allocation of funds and executive staff.⁶³

The most important clause was that Number 12⁶⁴ in which the Kurds were to be granted autonomy within the framework of the Iraqi Republic, which appeared to make possible the eventual establishment of autonomous areas under Kurdish local administration in the north of Iraq, thereby satisfying the Kurdish demand for a separate Kurdish province.

At the time of the report, it remained to be seen whether the agreement would be able to be implemented, or whether, as in 1966, inaction, mistrust and different interpretation of imprecise choice of wording would lead to gradual failure of the 1970 agreement. The British Ambassador to Baghdad believed that much would depend upon the real inclination of both sides to reach a lasting settlement, on how far Iran was prepared to allow this to happen, and on how much confidence the two sides had in each other's good faith. He added that the RCC appeared to be more strongly based than Bazzaz had been in 1966, and so the situation following the latter's fall was unlikely to be repeated, at least exactly in the same way. The Ba'ath, however, and its ruling clique the RCC, were both exclusive organisations unwilling either to share or hand over power to

⁶² FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

⁶³ FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970. Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 232-236.

⁶⁴ See Appendix 2 and 3.

any extent, and it was therefore open to debate whether the Kurds would succeed in obtaining the full autonomy and degree of equality which the agreement appeared to promise them.⁶⁵

Little progress was made towards the implementation of the agreement, and relations between the Kurds and the Government steadily deteriorated. Four years after the signing of the agreement, the Government unilaterally promulgated an autonomy law which claimed to implement the agreement of 1970, but in fact failed to do so. A Kurdish Legislative Council opened in Arbil in October 1974, but this and other concessions were rejected by the Kurds as falling short of their demands, particularly on representation in government. (A Kurd was appointed Vice-president, but he had little authority and was not regarded as a true representative by the Kurds).⁶⁶

There was no progress on the census to show Kurdish majority areas. Fresh fighting broke out and Iran, taking advantage of the opportunity to destabilise the Iraqi regime, provided the Kurds with material support. The Iraqi Government began deporting Kurdish villagers, and hundreds of villages were believed to have been razed in a scorched earth policy to prevent the return of former inhabitants. The regime hoped to weaken the power-base of the Kurdish Peshmerga, and to dissipate any feeling of Kurdish national identity, to allow the growth of Iraqi nationalism.⁶⁷

When, in 1975, as part of the Algiers Agreement, the Shah withdrew his support for the Iraqi Kurds partly in return for Iraq's acceptance of Iranian frontier claims, the rebellion collapsed. The Iraqi Government subsequently implemented a construction programme in Kurdish areas, redistributing land and allowing the return of some 40,000 Kurds who had been forcibly resettled in the south.⁶⁸

Conclusion

Some progress had been made in the implementation of the 1970 settlement but several crucial issues, such as the precise extent and nature of Kurdish autonomy, the revenues to be allocated to the Kurdish region, and the future of the Kurdish forces (Peshmerga) and the KDP, had yet to be resolved in detail. It was uncertain how long the settlement would survive and there were signs that Kurdish irritation at the slow pace of its implementation was increasing. In the case

⁶⁵ FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970. See Anita Burdett (ed.), *Records of the Kurds: Territory, Revolt and Nationalism, 1881-1979* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

⁶⁶ FO973/687.

⁶⁷ FO973/687. Ritchie Ovendale, *The Middle East since 1914*, (London: Longman, 1992), 123-4, 199, 302.

⁶⁸ FO973/687.

of this continuing, the British Ambassador foresaw outbreaks of fighting severe enough, cumulatively, to render the settlement unsuccessful fairly soon after.

It was to the advantage of both the Iraqi Government and the Kurds themselves that the settlement should last. The Kurds had suffered most from the war, but Iraq as a whole had suffered from its disruptive effects and no government in Baghdad was able to feel that it was in control of the country when the Kurds were in revolt. For Britain, peace in the north of Iraq would remove a potential threat to the supply of oil from that region.

The opposite side was that with the army no longer occupied in the north of the country, Iraq might start to 'indulge in foreign adventures', in Iran, the Gulf (particularly in the period after British military withdrawal), or on the 'Eastern front' with Israel. Hence, peace in Iraq paradoxically constituted a potential threat to stability in other areas of the Middle East. The British Ambassador noted that it was least welcome to Iran, who was 'deprived of a weapon against the Iraqi regime', and Kuwait, who 'remained suspicious of Iraqi territorial ambitions despite Iraq's formal acceptance in 1963 of Kuwait's independence within the 1932 frontier'.

In the event of a permanent settlement being achieved by the Kurds in Iraq, the British Ambassador foresaw an awakening of the aspirations of the Kurdish populations of Iran and Turkey. In Iran, the Kurds were comparatively quiet in 1971, but in Turkey, the potential threat of a Kurdish uprising had been one of the reasons given for the imposition of martial law in April 1971.

During the period under review, the Kurds maintained a sufficiently united front to prevent the Government imposing a military solution on them. Nevertheless, extant divisions in their ranks were likely to become serious if a permanent peace was established. Other than tribal rivalries, the chief division was that existing between the tribal elements led by Mulla Mustafa Barzani and the 'radically-minded urban intelligentsia' represented by Jalal Talabani and Ibrahim Ahmad.

By reversing the cautious policies of Nuri Said, the new Iraqi government was in effect proclaiming an Arab-Kurdish common front disguised as an 'anti-imperialist' brotherhood. It was also true that Kurds who were influenced by the Soviets, such as Mulla Mustafa Barzani and the Barzan family, were being used as figure-heads in these events. To see events in perspective, however, it is necessary to view them in relation to the trend towards Arab unity embodied in Nasser's United Arab Republic.

Clearly, the Iraqi Revolution had set in motion two opposing trends of political thought: one advocating Arab unity; and the other supporting Iraqi separatism beyond Arabism, underlining that Iraq was far from a wholly Arab country. The first trend was represented by Rashid Ali and Arif,

the second by the Premier Qasim. The leaders of the movement towards unity with Egypt and Syria were suppressed and brought to trial with the death penalty foreseen. The rift was so clear that not even a counter revolution would heal it. Popular opinion put the blame on Soviet influence, with Qasim choosing Moscow over Cairo. However, there was no clear evidence to indicate this, and it overlooked the Soviet interest in remaining on good terms with Cairo. The more plausible explanation was that Qasim's choice was influenced by Kurdish nationalism, especially given that this movement emphasised the historical antipathy of Baghdad for Levantine Arabism. For the time being it seemed more attractive for the revolutionary Arabism of Baghdad to share a common cause with a Kurdish movement which its leaders knew as embarrassing to their close neighbours in Turkey and Iran, than to flirt with what was to them the vague emotionalism of Arab unity. At this point, it should be mentioned that critics of the alleged 'divide and rule' British policy at that time appeared to have no knowledge of the real forces at work. Divisive forces have historical roots, going back further than British influence.

The Kurds of Iraq were always wary of any trend towards Arab unity. Their dislike of the abortive Iraq-Jordan Federation can be given as an example. All their influence was likely to be used against Iraq's joining the UAR. Any Iraqi government which followed such a cause would lose their support. The reality of events following the Iraqi revolution demonstrated that the Iraqi Arab leaders had been willing to pay a high price for that support. Indeed, Kurdish ambitions were to an important degree the key to events in Baghdad at that time.

However, the picture must also be viewed from a wider perspective. If any foreign power, whether the USSR, the USA, the UK, or even Iraq itself, were actively to support the consolidation of the Kurds either to form a new Kurdish State (as contemplated in the abortive Treaty of Sèvres of 1920), or to join with the Kurds of Iraq, the Arabism of Baghdad would be under serious threat. This suggests that, however emotionally the Arab-Kurdish front in Baghdad may have been proclaimed at that time, no Baghdad government was likely going to support Kurdish nationalism without reservations.

For the West the problem was rather different. Britain had always supported a fair deal for the Kurds; in fact, it was only British insistence that gave them better treatment in Iraq (e.g., their own schools, use of their own language, their own local officials) than in Iran or Turkey. However, even in the days of the Mandate the British Government did not, following the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), envisage Kurdish separatism, and were prevented from doing so in Turkey and Iran. Indeed, to support an independent Kurdish State would be impossible for a member of the Baghdad Pact, and would inevitably alienate both Turkey and Iran. The British Government could no more do so than support the formation of a Pathan State out of Pakistan. However, it would still be advisable

for Britain or the US to check the atmosphere Turkey and Iran to see if they would alleviate Kurdish separatism by more generous treatment of the Kurdish minorities within their boundaries.

Appendix-1: The Bazzaz Proposals of 1966

His twelve points were, in summary:

1. Equal national rights for Kurds and Arabs in Iraq.
2. Decentralisation; elected local assemblies to have wide powers.
3. Kurdish to be recognised as an official language, side by side with Arabic, in areas where the Kurds formed a majority.
4. Kurdish representation in the National Assembly on a proportional basis.
5. Public offices and appointments to be open to Kurds.
6. Equality of educational opportunity.
7. Local officials to be Kurds if sufficient available.
8. A measure of political freedom and freedom of expression for the Kurds.
9. General amnesty and reinstatement of Kurdish officials and employees.
10. Kurdish members of the armed forces and police to report to their units. Others under arms to surrender their weapons.
11. Rehabilitation of the North.
12. Resettlement of displaced individuals and groups.

Appendix-2: The terms of the 1970 announcement⁶⁹ closely followed the proposals put forward by Dr Bazzaz in 1966 and contained the following main points⁷⁰:

1. The Kurds were to enjoy political rights and autonomy within the framework of the Iraq Republic. The areas of Kurdish autonomy were to be determined by an official census.
2. The existence of two principal nationalities, Arab and Kurd, was to be recognised in the Constitution.
3. A Kurd was to be appointed as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Republic.
4. The Kurds were to share in the legislative power on a proportional basis.
5. The Kurds were to participate in the Government and in Government departments without discrimination.
6. Officials in Kurdish areas were to be Kurds or persons competent in the Kurdish language.
7. Kurdish and Arabic were both to be official languages in the Kurdish areas; Kurdish was to be the language of instruction in these areas.
8. All former Kurdish military and civil officials, students and workers were to be reinstated.
9. Educational and cultural facilities for Kurds were to be expanded.
10. The Kurds were to have their own organisations for students, youth, women and teachers, affiliated to the corresponding Iraqi national organisations.
11. Inhabitants of Arab and Kurdish villages were to be restored to their former homes.
12. Relief measures for Kurds affected by the hostilities were to be put in hand.
13. A Kurdish development commission with an adequate budget was to be established and a special economic plan for the Kurdish region was to be prepared.
14. Agrarian reform was to be speeded up in Kurdish areas.
15. The exploitation of natural resources in the autonomous area was to be the responsibility of the Republican authorities.
16. The Kurdish broadcasting station and all heavy weapons were to be surrendered during the final stages of the implementation of the agreement.

⁶⁹ For a more detailed text of the announcement, see the Appendix I.

⁷⁰ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959.

Appendix-3: The published agreement was accompanied by a secret protocol, reportedly containing the following provisions⁷¹:

1. A joint committee was to be set up to supervise implementation of the agreement.
2. One of the tasks of this committee would be to resettle the Peshmerga (Kurdish rebel forces), except for about 6,000 men who would remain in the force. During the period of resettlement, which would be in five unspecified stages, the Government would pay for the general upkeep of the force.
3. The Government would disarm and disband all Kurdish forces opposed to Barzani, and the Iraqi armed forces would withdraw to their 'normal positions'.
4. The KDP was to be allowed to operate freely in the Kurdish region and to publish its own newspaper.
5. All persons formerly in Government service who took part in the Kurdish rebellion would be permitted to resume employment without loss of seniority. Those who had served with the Kurdish armed forces would be permitted to count that service as if they had served in the Iraqi armed forces.
6. A nation-wide census would take place within one year to define the region of Kurdish majority.
7. Although the Iraqi national flag could not be altered immediately, a Kurdish symbol would be incorporated when next the flag was changed.

⁷¹ FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. See Vanly, *Le Kurdistan Irakien*.

Appendix-4: The declaration issued by the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council, 11 March 1970⁷²

(The declaration begins with a long partisan review of the history of the Kurdish question and lists those measures taken by the Ba'athist regime in the last 18 months which, it claims, laid the foundation for the present agreement with the Kurds. What follows is a verbatim translation of the rest of the declaration.)

The Revolutionary Command Council initiated contacts with Mustafa al Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party, which led to an exchange of views. Both sides became convinced of the necessity of accepting and implementing the contents of this declaration.

The Revolutionary Command Council reaffirms its determination to deepen and expand all effective measures to achieve cultural and economic development in the Kurdish area, seeking first of all to enable the Kurdish people to exercise their legitimate rights and to ensure that they participate in a practical way in the earnest endeavours to build a homeland and the struggle to fulfil its great national aims. The Revolutionary Command Council has therefore reached the following decisions:

1. The Kurdish language shall be with Arabic the official language in areas populated by the Kurdish majority. The Kurdish language shall be the language of instruction in these areas. Arabic shall be taught in all schools where Kurdish is the language of instruction while Kurdish shall be taught in schools throughout the remainder of Iraq as a second language within the limits stipulated by law.

2. The participation of our Kurdish brothers in Government and non- discrimination between Kurds and others in filling public offices including sensitive and important posts in the State, such as Cabinet Portfolios, Army Command, etc. These have been and will remain among the important objectives which the revolutionary Government seeks to achieve. In recognising this, the revolutionary Government stresses the necessity of achieving an equitable ratio in such appointments with due regard to efficiency, the proportionate distribution of the Kurdish population and the inequities which our Kurdish brothers have suffered in the past.

3. In view of the cultural and educational backwardness of the Kurdish population, a plan will be drawn up to make good this backwardness by:

⁷² FCO51/191/RR6/10, 'The Kurdish Problem in Iraq, 1963-1971', 6 December 1971. See FO371/140682; FO371/52369; FO371/2718; FCO8/3243; FCO8/3244; FCO2335; FCO8/2308; FCO51/147.

(a) Hastening implementation of the resolutions of the Revolutionary Command Council concerning the language and cultural rights of the Kurdish people and delegating to the Directorate-General of Kurdish Culture and Information the task of preparing and directing radio and television programmes on Kurdish national issues.

(b) Reinstating, regardless of age, all students expelled or compelled to leave school because of the conflict in the area; failing reinstatement, to find appropriate solutions in individual cases.

(c) Building more schools in the Kurdish area. Raising the standard of education and admitting students to universities, military colleges, educational missions and scholarships in numbers proportionate to the Kurdish population.

4. In the administrative units in predominantly Kurdish areas officials shall be Kurds or persons competent in the Kurdish language provided that the required number is available. Principal officials (Governor, Qaimaqam, Director of Police, Director of Security, etc), will be appointed and immediate action will be taken to set up Government machinery in the area in consultation with the High Committee established to supervise the implementation of this statement; this to be carried out in a manner which will strengthen national unity and the stability of the area.

5. The Government recognises the right of the Kurdish people to set up their own organisations for students, young people, women and teachers which will be affiliated to the corresponding Iraqi national organisations.

6. (a) The operative period of paragraphs 1 and 2 of RCC decision No 39 of 5 August, 1968 (this granted amnesty to all those involved in the Kurdish fighting up to that date) shall be extended up to the date of issue of this statement and shall extend to all those who participated in the conflict in the Kurdish area.

(b) Workers, officials and employees, both civilian and military, shall return to service irrespective of establishment. Civilians may be employed in the Kurdish area according to requirements.

7. (a) A committee of experts shall be set up to supervise the general development of the Kurdish area and to arrange compensation for the setbacks of recent years. An adequate budget is to be allocated for this purpose. The committee in question shall come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry for Northern Affairs.

(b) The economic plan shall be drawn up to ensure balanced development throughout Iraq with due attention to the Kurdish area.

(c) Pensions shall be paid to the families of the Kurdish armed movement and others martyred during the past regrettable hostilities; pensions will also be paid to those disabled or deformed as a result of the fighting. Special legislation will be enacted to implement this on the lines of the laws currently in force.

(d) Immediate action will be taken to relieve hardship by implementing housing projects, providing appropriate aid in cash and in kind and by arranging through the High Committee for the appropriate compensation to those in need who are not covered by the provisions of the paragraphs above.

8. The inhabitants of Arab and Kurdish villages shall be restored to their former homes. The inhabitants of villages in areas not designated for habitation and which are taken over by the Government for public utility purposes under law shall be resettled in neighbouring areas and properly compensated.

9. The Agrarian Reform Law shall be quickly implemented in the Kurdish area and amended in such a way as to guarantee the end of the feudal system and the acquisition by the peasants of suitable plots of land. Taxes on such land which accumulated over the period of the conflict shall be waived.

10. It has been agreed that the Interim Constitution shall be amended as follows:

(a) The people of Iraq are made up of two principal nationalities, the Arab nationality and the Kurdish nationality. This Constitution confirms the national rights of the Kurdish people and the rights of all minorities within the framework of Iraqi unity.

(b) The following paragraphs shall be added to Article 4 of the Constitution; 'The Kurdish language shall be, with Arabic, the official language in the Kurdish area.'

(c) The above will be incorporated into the permanent Constitution.

11. The (Kurdish) broadcasting station and heavy weapons shall be handed over to the Government. This is to be done when the final stages of the agreement are implemented.

12. A Kurd shall be one of the Vice-Presidents of the Republic.

13. The Governorates Law shall be amended to conform with the substance of this statement.

14. Following the publication of this statement the necessary measures shall be taken in consultation with the High Committee supervising its implementation to unify the governorates and administrative units in areas populated by a Kurdish majority; these areas to be decided by an

official census yet to be carried out. The State shall endeavour to develop this administrative unity and deepen and broaden the Kurdish people's exercise of all their national rights as a guarantee of their enjoying autonomy (al-hukm-adh-dhati) within the wider national unity. Until this administrative unity is achieved Kurdish national affairs shall be co-ordinated by periodic meetings between the High Committee and the governors of the northern area. As autonomy is to be achieved within the framework of the Iraqi Republic the exploitation of natural resources in the area will naturally fall under the jurisdiction of the Republican authorities.

15. The Kurdish people shall share in the legislative power in a ratio corresponding with their proportion of the Iraqi population.

Appendix-5: Analysis of the 1970 Proposals⁷³

1. Language: No changes almost identical with 1966.
2. Participation in the Government: Much the same. The present proposals are slightly more precise.
3. Education and Culture: Much the same: if anything the 1966 version is the more comprehensive and rather less vague.
4. Popular Organisations: No change.
5. Reinstatement of Officials, etc.: Much the same.
6. Development Commission: No great differences. The 1970 commission appears to have been given rather greater powers than that proposed in 1966.
7. Economic Plan: Not in the 1966 proposals.
8. Rehabilitation: No change, other than specific mention of Arab as well as Kurdish displacement.
9. Agrarian Reforms: Not in the 1966 proposals.
10. Recognition of Kurdish nationality: No change.
11. Appointment of a V/President: Not in the 1966 proposals.
12. Kurdish Autonomy: The 1970 phraseology is more definite and precise than that of 1966. Autonomy is recognised in a fuller and wider sense.
13. Exploitation of national wealth: Not in the 1966 proposals. Has evident reference to oil wealth, and on this the Government has won its point.
14. Representation: No change.
15. Surrender of heavy weapons, etc.: Roughly comparable with point 10 in 1966.

⁷³ FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970.

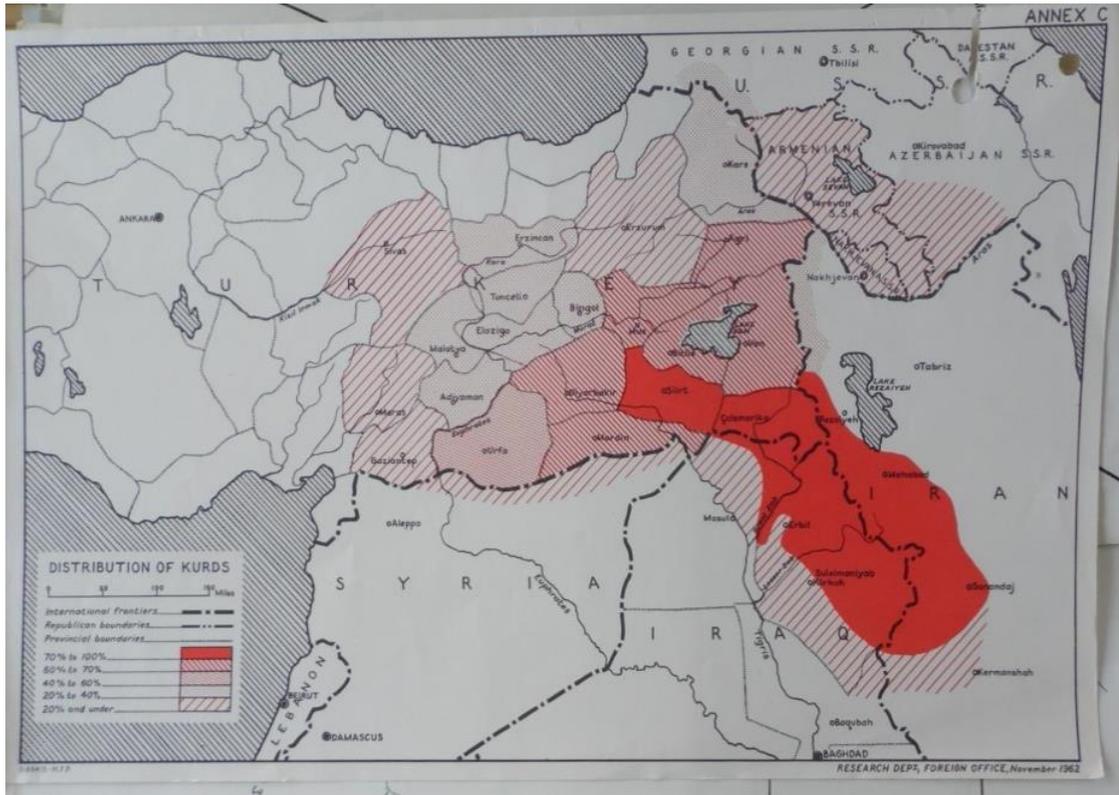
Appendix-6: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals⁷⁴

The Proposals		
1970 The Published Terms	1966 Dr. Bazzaz's Twelve Points	
1	Kurdish language recognised officially on parity with Arabic in areas in which the Kurds are in a majority.	Kurdish to be recognised as an official language side by side with Arabic in areas in which the Kurds are in a majority, and with Arabic as the language of instruction in those areas. (Bazzaz 3).
2	Acceptance of Kurdish participation in the Government and in all Government departments without discrimination. Officials in Kurdish areas to be Kurds or Kurdish speaking.	All public offices and appointments open to Kurds on a proportional basis including ministerial, judicial, military and diplomatic posts. (Bazzaz 5). Local officials to be Kurds if sufficient available. (Bazzaz 7).
3	Educational and cultural services for Kurds to be implemented and expanded.	Kurds to have a fair share of educational grants etc. University of Baghdad to give facilities for study of Kurdish literature, language, etc. (Bazzaz 6). Minister to be appointed for supervision of rehabilitation with control of administrative, linguistic and cultural affairs affecting the Kurds. (Bazzaz 11).
4	Right of the Kurds to have their own 'popular organisations'.	On return of parliamentary life, a measure of freedom of expression and political organisation to be permitted within the law. (Bazzaz 8).
5	Reinstatement of all former Kurdish military and civil officials, students and workers.	On termination of hostilities and acts of violence all Kurdish officials and employees to be reinstated in their former posts, including also dismissed workers. (Bazzaz 9).
6	Establishment of a Kurdish development commission with an adequate budget.	A special body, answerable to a Minister, to carry out rehabilitation and development, including tourism, tobacco growing and afforestation, (Bazzaz 11).
7	Preparation of a special economic plan for the Kurdish region.	-

⁷⁴ FCO51/147/RR6/14, 'The Kurdish Settlement: Comparisons between the 1966 and 1970 Proposals', 2 April 1970. FO371/140682/E1821/9/59, The Kurds by C. J. Edmonds, 13 February 1959.

8	Rehabilitation of Kurds and Arabs driven out or affected by hostilities. Relief measures for housing and employment to be put in hand.	Funds now being spent on the war to be devoted to Kurdish rehabilitation. (Bazzaz 11) . The Government will endeavour to rehabilitate all individuals and groups in their former places of habitation with a return to the status quo ante as far as possible. (Bazzaz 12) .
9	The agrarian reform law to be speeded up in Kurdish areas.	-
10	Amendment of the interim constitution to confirm the existence of two basic nationalities, Arab and Kurd.	Kurdish nationality is recognised by the interim constitution, but to be re-emphasised in the forthcoming permanent constitution. Recognises two main nationalities with equal rights and obligations. (Bazzaz 1) .
11	Appointment of a Kurd as one of the V/Presidents.	-
12	Measures to be taken to secure national rights and autonomy within the framework of the Iraqi Republic.	Recognition of Kurdish rights by decentralisation to administrative units with wide powers in local and municipal affairs through elected assemblies. (Bazzaz 2) .
13	The exploitation of national wealth in the autonomous area to be the responsibility of the Republican authorities.	-
14	Kurds to have representation in the legislature in ratio to the population figures.	Kurds to be represented in the National Assembly on a proportional basis as defined in the new electoral law. (Bazzaz 4) .
15	The Kurdish broadcasting station and all heavy weapons to be surrendered.	All members of the armed forces and police to report to their units. Other armed bodies will be considered as under Government authority and will hand in their weapons in the course of rehabilitation. (Bazzaz 10) .

Appendix-7: Distribution of Kurds.⁷⁵



⁷⁵ FO370/2718.

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