

IRAQ UNDER THE RULE OF ʿABDASSALĀM ʿĀRIF (1963 – 1966)*

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Despite Prime Minister ʿAbdalkarīm Qāsim’s refusal to join the United Arab Republic during his reign (1958 – 1963), the pan-Arab dynamic continued to be a persistent feature of Iraqi politics. This could be illustrated by the policies of his successor ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif, who participated in a series of summit talks with the Egyptian president, and in 1964 the two countries prepared plans for the integration of their military and economic policies with the intention of achieving full union in 1966. In order to bring Iraq’s economic structure into alignment with Egypt, ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif nationalized all banks and insurance companies as well as several large manufacturing firms. However, even as he cooperated with Egypt, he had to placate other factions of officers opposed to unification. He was forced to proceed with such caution that by the time of his death in 1966, little real progress had been made toward the full integration of Iraq and Egypt. Arab unity, so ardently desired by powerful leaders in Syria, Egypt and Iraq, remained an elusive dream battered by the crosscurrents of political instability, ethnic discord and personal ambition.

Key words: The End of the *Baʿth* regime, Iraq and Arab Summit Meetings, The Provisional Constitution, Moderate Arab Nationalism, Nationalism and Unity

By the time that ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif and his allies had seized power in November 1963, the constellation of political forces in Iraq had greatly changed. Perhaps most significantly, all hope of the establishment of any form of democratic political life based on representative institutions had been crushed, and a system had emerged that had no other source of legitimacy except that conferred by military force and the possession of a monopoly of the means of coercion. According to Hanna Batatu, the regime of ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif passed through three phases, in each of which it underwent a change of skin. In the *first phase*, which extended roughly from November 1963 to

February 1964, it rested on a coalition of what might be loosely termed military *°Arifists*, military *Ba°thists* and military *Nā°sirists*.¹

As a first step, on 20 November °Abdassalām °Ārif asked Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Tāhir Yaḥyā, one of the officers with little or no commitment to the *Ba°th Party*, to form a new government. The new premier, in agreement with the president, chose the members of his Cabinet from nationalists who believed in *Nā°sirist* doctrines. Eight ministers, including the Prime Minister, were army officers;² a number of ministries were held by technocrats. Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr was appointed as Vice-President. This provided some safeguard against *Ba°thist* plotting and checked any tendency for the *Ba°th Party* to unite against it. From the beginning, of course, the radical wing of the *Ba°th Party* bitterly opposed the government, and especially °Abdassalām °Ārif. The Cabinet, declaring itself in favour of Arab union, had the blessing of Jamāl °Abdannā°sir. The three officers who had been in the *Ba°th* Cabinet and joined the new one had no *Ba°thist* sympathies. Power was now firmly in the hands of the military, and political parties had completely disappeared.³

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¹ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba°thists and Free Officers*, p. 1027.

² The members of the Cabinet were: Lt.-General Tāhir Yaḥyā, Prime Minister; Brigadier Ḥardān °Abdalḡhaffār at-Tikrītī, Defence; Colonel °Abdalkarīm Farḡān, Guidance; Brigadier Rāshid Muṣliḡ, Interior; Lt.-Colonel Ṣubḡī °Abdalḡamīd, Foreign Affairs; Maj.-General Maḡmūd Shīt Khaṡṡāb, Municipal & Rural Affairs; Lt.-Colonel °Abdassattār °Abdallaṡīf, Communications; °Abdalkarīm °Alī, Planning; °Abdal°aziz al-Wattārī, Oil; °Abdalkarīm Hānī, Labour & Social Affairs; Aḡmad °Abdassattār al-Juwarī, Education; Muḡammad Jawād al-°Ubūsī, Finance; Kāmil al-Khaṡīb, Justice; °Izzat Muṡṡafā, Health; °Abdal°aziz al-Ḥāfiṡ, Economy; Air Colonel °Ārif °Abdarrazzāq, Agriculture; °Abdalfattāḡ al-°Ālūsī, Housing & Public Works; °Abdaṡṡā°ib °Alwān, Agrarian Reform; Kāmil as-Sāmarrā°ī, Minister of State for Union Affairs; °Abdalkarīm Kannūna, Industry; and Muṡliḡ an-Naqshabandī, Minister of State. On 31 January, in a reshuffle, Kāmil as-Sāmarrā°ī was transferred to Health, replacing °Izzat Muṡṡafā, and °Abdarrazzāq Muḡyiddīn became Minister of Union Affairs. On 1 March Brigadier Ḥardān °Abdalḡhaffār at-Tikrītī was relieved of the Ministry of Defence and the premier took over the post in an acting capacity. On 27 March Colonel Abdalḡhanī al-Rāwī replaced Brigadier °Ārif °Abdarrazzāq as Minister of Agriculture, °Ārif °Abdarrazzāq becoming Commander of the Air Force. On 18 June Premier Tāhir Yaḥyā formed a new Cabinet, making the following changes: °Abdalmaḡīd Sa°īd replaced Aḡmad °Abdassattār al-Juwarī as Minister of Education, Muḡammad Jawād al-°Ubūsī took charge of Planning as well as Finance, °Abdalḡhasan Zalḡala replaced °Abdalkarīm Kannūna at Industry, Muḡsin Ḥusayn al-Ḥabīb replaced °Abdassattār °Abdallaṡīf at Communications, Ismā°īl Muṡṡafā replaced Gen. Maḡmūd Shīt Khaṡṡāb at Municipal & Rural Affairs, and Mas°ūd Muḡammad became Minister of State.

³ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 317.

The men of the military wing of the *Ba'ath Party* had a number of things in common: all were members of the party's Military Bureau, and all were by birth or by origin from the town of at-Tikrīt.⁴ As for the *Nāṣirist* officers, they were not *Nāṣirists* in the sense that they were Jamāl °Abdannāṣir's men in Iraq. They supported him out of genuine enthusiasm for the policies of which he was the living embodiment.⁵ Their *Nāṣirism* differed from that of °Abdassalām °Ārif in that they stood for an immediate union with the UAR and a close patterning of the Iraqi regime upon the Egyptian one, whereas °Abdassalām °Ārif abandoned his earlier stand and now inclined to a phased and more realistic approach. The *Nāṣirism* of °Abdassalām °Ārif was also distinguished by a marked attachment to at least the visible aspects of Islam. One other thing set the *Nāṣirists* apart from °Abdassalām °Ārif: their closeness to the Movement of Arab Nationalists (Ḥarakat al-qawmīyīn al-°Arab)⁶ or "al-Ḥarakīyīn".

On 24 December the programme – one of the most elaborate since the July Revolution – was announced. It was declared that the Revolution of 18 November 1963 was to correct previous deviations by restoring the sovereignty of law to protect the freedoms and property of the citizens. In internal policy, the government stated that it would welcome the formation of a nationalist front in which "all desirable elements, without distinction, can co-operate in working to achieve social justice and the sovereignty of law".⁷ This was taken to mean that the government was not prepared to allow political parties and would permit only one all-inclusive party under the supervision or control of the government to function. A provisional constitution, promised to be promulgated later, was to define the framework of the government during a transitional period. The programme stressed in particular Iraq's relations with other Arab countries under a special heading called 'Arab policy'. In foreign policy, the programme stressed friendly relations with all Muslim and Afro-Asian countries

⁴ At the head of the military *Ba'athists* stood Ḥardān °Abdalghaffār at-Tikrītī, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and the Minister of Defence; Tāhīr Yaḥyā, the Prime Minister; Brigadier Rashīd Muṣliḥ, the Minister of Interior and Military Governor General; and Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, the Vice-President of the Republic.

⁵ The outstanding *Nāṣirists* in the military were Staff Brigadier Muḥammad Maḥjīd, the Director of Military Planning; Staff Brigadier °Abdalkarīm Farḥān, the Minister of National Guidance; Air Staff Colonel °Ārif °Abdarrazzāq, the Commander of the Air Force; Staff Colonel Ḥādī Khammās, the Chief of Military Intelligence; Staff Colonel Rashīd Muḥsin, the Director of Public Security; and Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ṣubḥī °Abdalḥamīd, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'athists and Free Officers*, p. 1028.

⁶ AḤMAD, Ibrāhīm Khalīl, ḤUMAYDĪ, Ja'far °Abbās. *Tārīkh al-°Irāq al-mu'āṣir*. [Contemporary History of Iraq], p. 232.

⁷ KHADDURĪ, M. *Republican Iraq. A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958*, p. 219.

in accordance with the Bandung Charter. As for the rest of the world, it stated that Iraq was to follow the policies of positive neutrality and non-alignment with friendly countries on the basis of reciprocity and mutual interests. Iraq would adhere to the Charter of the United Nations, was opposed to imperialism and denounced racial discrimination.⁸

A month after forming his government, Prime Minister Ṭāhir Yaḥyā announced its general policies. They stressed the unity of Arab nations and referred to the Cairo discussions of March and April 1963 and to the “Cairo Charter” as the starting point of the advance toward Arab unity.⁹ It was clear that the government had no intention of permitting political parties, but would move to establish a single national organization reminiscent of Egypt’s Socialist Union. In the economic sphere, however, only passing mention was made of socialism, and reliance on Islamic tradition and law was declared to be a sufficient basis for Iraq’s social and economic system. Government encouragement for the private sector was promised. The early promulgation of a provisional constitution was announced. A high degree of uncertainty had clouded economic prospects under the preceding regime. The violent menaces directed at the business community by ʿAlī Ṣāliḥ as-Saʿdī and his associates had raised fears of wholesale nationalizations. In such conditions the private sector had little disposition to invest or to proceed with projects that carried an appreciable risk. Consequently, ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif and the new government made special efforts to give a verbal reassurance to private business in the hope of stimulating investment and faster economic growth.¹⁰

In the economic and social fields, the programme stated that economic planning was to be the basis of Iraq’s policy. It would encourage the development of public and private industrial sectors so as “to profit from the country’s natural resources in the best possible way”. Private investment was stressed by the fact that the government promised to “provide suitable conditions for the encouragement of capital investment in the different branches of the private sector, commerce, industry and agriculture”.¹¹ Neither the nationalization of industry nor socialist measures had yet been envisaged, although this policy had to be changed only seven months after the proclamation of the programme. The establishment of a national oil industry for the future exploitation of petroleum in the area expropriated from the oil companies was promised. “The Government will start this year”, stated the

⁸ Ibid., p. 219.

⁹ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 320.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 320.

¹¹ KHADDURI, M. *Republican Iraq. A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958*, p. 219.

programme, “the implementation of the Iraqi National Oil Company Project and the Oil Exploitation Law”. Lip service to socialism was made only by a casual reference to Arab socialism as the basis of social policy. “It will be implemented through increasing income, organizing the national wealth, preventing exploitation, and raising the individual’s standard of living.” No application of the principles of socialism, as preached by the *Ba‘th*, was entertained. “We have in our Arab legacy and Islamic Shar‘a”, the programme explained, “all that is needed to give our system meaning and content without recourse to imported principles”. The implementation of these principles would be accomplished by legislation which would guarantee the workers a decent standard of living, improving the conditions of peasants and raising the standard of the masses. The Agrarian Reform Act was to be carried out on a more equitable basis.¹²

The new coalition of officers was a coalition of competing groups and therefore inherently unstable, the *Ba‘thists* being of them the least advantaged. In the view of the *Ba‘th* record in 1963 it was not surprising that most of the public was ready and anxious to see all *Ba‘thist* ministers excluded from the new government. By disowning the bulk of the civilian component of their party, they also had in effect struck at the foundation of their power. With little effort, °Abdassalām °Ārif, acting in concert with the *Nāṣirists*, eased them out of one position after another. On 16 December Ḥardān °Abdalghaffār at-Tikrītī was divested of the command of the air force.¹³ In January 1964 the post of Vice-President was abolished and Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr appointed to the Foreign Ministry with the rank of ambassador. In March Ḥardān °Abdalghaffār at-Tikrītī was removed as Minister of Defence. Only Ṭāhir Yaḥyā remained, and he had apparently cut most of his ties with the *Ba‘th*. His place was taken by Premier Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, who, joined by Minister of Interior Rashīd Muṣliḥ, tied himself to the president.¹⁴

With the removal of most of the *Ba‘thist* ministers the new government represented a moderate Arab nationalism. Outside observers expected it to take on a pronounced *Nāṣirist* appearance. In many respects °Abdassalām °Ārif had outgrown some of his earlier immaturity and impetuosity, but he still showed the limitations of the army officer as well as of his character and education when he had to deal with complex economic and political issues before the modern world. The Arab nationalist government had the advantages as well as the disadvantages of following an almost universally detested regime under

¹² AḤMAD, Ibrāhīm Khalīl, ḤUMAYDĪ, Ja‘far °Abbās. *Tārīkh al-°Irāq al-mu‘āṣir* [Contemporary History of Iraq], p. 230.

¹³ *Al-Jumhūrīya*, 5 January 1964.

¹⁴ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 94.

which the ordinary citizen had lost the protection of the law. It hastened to confirm the return to the normal working of law and institutions and the personnel responsible for their operation. Nevertheless, it was pointed out that political parties still had no legal status, including the *Ba'ath*. ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif announced that the government would seek “Arab unity”; at the end of December Prime Minister Ṭāhir Yaḥyā stated that a provisional constitution would shortly be announced which would ensure freedom of opinion and belief.¹⁵

ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif, who continued as President and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, now moved to ease out the remaining “right wing” *Ba'athists*, notably the Vice-President Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr and the Minister of Defence Ḥardān ʿAbdalghaffār at-Tikrītī, whose support had been crucial in the crushing of ʿAlī Ṣāliḥ as-Saʿdī and Mundhir al-Windāwī, thus bringing down the *Ba'ath* government.¹⁶ By the spring of 1964, the president had engineered the resignations of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr and Ḥardān ʿAbdalghaffār at-Tikrītī with the aid of his other associates, including the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Guidance, Colonel Ṣubḥī ʿAbdalḥamīd and Brigadier ʿAbdalkarīm Farḥān, the Commander of the Air Force, ʿĀrif ʿAbdarrazzāq, and the directors of military planning, military intelligence and public security, all of whom were of course army officers.

ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif himself occupied the posts of Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and the President of the Republic, and in the latter capacity enjoyed “exceptional powers for one year, automatically renewable if necessary”.¹⁷ After November 1963 a more integrated force – the Republican Guard – was created based largely on men from the former Twentieth Infantry Brigade.¹⁸ The Republican Guard developed into a special praetorian group within the army. Embracing three infantry battalions and a regiment of tanks, the Guard became the army’s most powerful striking unit, the elite corps of the regime, as well as the president’s personal instrument and the chief support for his political position. The core of the president’s personal support came mainly from his own family and relatives, notably from his elder brother Brigadier ʿAbdarrahmān ʿĀrif,

¹⁵ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 318.

¹⁶ MARR, P. *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 191.

¹⁷ The Revolutionary Council’s Proclamation No. 1 of 18 November 1963. Cit. in BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba’thists and Free Officers*, p. 1027.

¹⁸ Men from the al-Jumayla tribe served in the Twentieth Infantry Brigade, which ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif led into Baghdad on 14 July 1958. In TRIPP, C. *A History of Iraq*, p. 176.

Acting Chief of Staff, Commander of the Forces in the Field and of the Fifth Division,¹⁹ and Colonel Saʿīd Ṣulaybī, who as the Commander of the Baghdad Garrison, controlled key army units including the Republican Guard, which was largely formed from members of al-Jumayla, the tribe from which the ʿĀrifs originally came.²⁰

Although the new regime was relatively coherent to the extent that most of its members were nationalists or *Nāṣirists* of some kind, personal and ideological differences persisted, especially over the question of Iraq’s relations with Egypt. As far as ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif and his closest supporters were concerned, the conditions that had fired their original zeal for unity no longer existed.²¹ In the first place the UAR experiment had failed, and in addition Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir had now entered a more radically “socialist” phase, introducing measures that aroused fears among the Iraqi middle classes that the application of *Nāṣirism* might involve a similar fate for them. While ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif himself had quietly abandoned his earlier enthusiasm for immediate union with Egypt, some senior members of the regime, notably ʿAbdalkarīm Farḥān and ʿĀrif ʿAbdarrazzāq, remained committed to the idea, and also considered Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir’s whole political and economic system as the model that Iraq should follow as closely as possible.²²

Under ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif’s rule, the trends in the internal politics of the country may be characterized as follows: (1) the reassertion of military rule and the emergence of ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif as the strong man in the regime, who, having no desire to rely on political parties, ordered their dissolution and relied on a set of pan-Arab officers for support; and (2) the assertion of Arab union as the basis of Iraq’s relations with other Arab countries, especially Egypt, whose political followers in the country gained an increasing number of adherents after ʿAbdalkarīm Qāsim’s fall. ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif continued to call for union as the official policy of his regime, but in practice political union seemed as remote from fulfilment as ever. Iraq’s foreign policy, however, had a definite pro-Egyptian orientation, and ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif publicly supported Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir in Arab summit conferences and on international councils. (3) While Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir stressed socialism and secularism, paying only lip-service to Islam, ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif showed no initial interest in socialism and

¹⁹ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Baʿthists and Free Officers*, p. 1027.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1028.

²¹ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 94.

²² FAWZĪ, Aḥmad. *ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad ʿĀrif. Sīratuhu .. muḥākamatuhu .. maṣraʿuhu*. [ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad ʿĀrif. His biography ... his trial ... his death], pp. 42 – 43.

insisted that his social and political views derived from Islam rather than from foreign sources. Even when he was prevailed upon to adopt Arab socialism in July 1964, under Egypt's influence, he continued to display his attachment to religion and to argue that Arab socialism was based on Islam.²³

Once in the saddle, 'Abdassalām 'Ārif began to appreciate the forces that had always affected Iraq's relations with other Arab countries. During the previous two years the Kurdish War had aroused criticism in civil and military quarters, and the public began to press for an understanding with the Kurds. Mulla Muṣṭafā al-Bārzanī declared himself in favour of the November Revolution and showed a readiness to come to an agreement with 'Abdassalām 'Ārif. The Kurds declared that they would be satisfied with local autonomy within the framework of the Iraqi state, but if Iraq decided to join the UAR they would demand autonomy on a federal basis.²⁴ Public opinion in Iraq was not prepared to support Arab union if it meant the loss of Kurdistan. 'Abdassalām 'Ārif accordingly could no longer afford to weigh the scheme of Arab union solely on the scales of Arab ideology. As President of the Republic, he came to appreciate the complexity of the problem of reconciling Iraq's demand for internal unity with the demand for Arab union. His frequent visits to Egypt convinced him that Egypt's internal problems were entirely different from Iraq's, although he did admire Egypt's industrial development. He realized that Iraq's complex ethnic and religious structure presented a quite different set of problems with which Egypt was entirely unfamiliar.²⁵ The utmost that 'Abdassalām 'Ārif could concede to Jamāl 'Abdunnāṣir was to accept collective leadership, embodied in the concept of joint leadership, about which more will be said later. It may be of interest to trace the steps which led 'Abdassalām 'Ārif to arrive at this conclusion.

In the second half of 1963, criticism had been levelled against those Arab leaders who had been involved in inter-Arab conflicts while the completion of Israel's project to divert the headwaters of the River Jordan from its natural Arab basin for her domestic use was approaching. The Arabs had already declared that this plan was an act of aggression and threatened to prevent it by force.²⁶ Jamāl 'Abdunnāṣir, possibly because he was not ready to fight, seized the opportunity to bring together Arab heads of states, partly to get them to share responsibility for a decision not to fight, as well as to resolve pending issues, including the Yemeni War. His position had considerably improved

²³ KHADDURI, M. *Republican Iraq. A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958*, pp. 220 – 221.

²⁴ McDOWALL, D. *A Modern History of the Kurds*, p. 315.

²⁵ KHADDURI, M. *Republican Iraq. A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958*, p. 222.

²⁶ JIRJIS, Fawwāz. *An-niẓām al-iqlīmī al-^carabī wa al-quwā al-kubrā*. [The Superpowers and the Arab Regional System], pp. 226 – 227.

since the changes in Iraq since the *Ba'ath Party* could no longer threaten him with a Syrian-Iraqi axis. The Arab summit meetings of 1964 – the Cairo Conference of January and the Alexandria Conference in September – gave Jamāl °Abdannāšir and °Abdassalām °Ārif an opportunity to explore the possibilities of union between Iraq and Egypt.²⁷ It became clear after the Cairo Summit Conference that Iraq had been drawing much closer to Egypt than at any time before. During the sessions of this conference °Abdassalām °Ārif was often invited to meet Jamāl °Abdannāšir privately for consultation, and he seems to have subsequently intimated to his friends that he had intervened with other Arab heads of state to secure support for Jamāl °Abdannāšir. Preliminary discussions of a union between Egypt and Iraq began immediately after the Cairo Conference. These were only exploratory talks, and it was soon realized that Iraq's internal problems necessitated a step-by-step approach.²⁸ The two leaders gradually came to the conclusion that before final unity plans could be drawn up, certain prerequisites would have to be met. °Abdassalām °Ārif returned to Iraq to proceed with preparatory arrangements, which would keep him and his ministers busy for the next few years before talks on union were again to be resumed.

The promulgation of a provisional constitution on 3 May 1964 was one of the steps whereby °Abdassalām °Ārif sought to consolidate his regime within the country and bring it into harmony with the UAR. During his conversations with Jamāl °Abdannāšir in January it was agreed that the constitutional systems of Egypt and Iraq should be reorganized before any step was undertaken to link the two countries within the broader scheme of a union. It was taken for granted that Iraq would follow the constitutional pattern of Egypt with due concessions to local conditions.²⁹ The basic principles on which future Arab union would be founded, as Jamāl °Abdannāšir often reiterated in unity talks, were Arab socialism, a joint military command (both on the regional and national levels), and the establishment of a national Socialist Union in each Arab country which would replace political parties. Jamāl °Abdannāšir promulgated a constitution for the UAR on 23 March which was to provide the framework for Egypt as one of the political units in a future Arab union. Egypt was declared “part of the Arab nation”, and the UAR a democratic, socialist state based on a coalition of popular forces.³⁰ Sovereignty lay with the people, to be exercised by their representatives meeting in a National Assembly. In fact, Egypt provided the

²⁷ MARR, P. *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 192.

²⁸ KERR, M. H. *The Arab Cold War. Gamal Abd al-Nasir and His Rivals, 1958 – 1970*, p. 123.

²⁹ AḤMAD, Ibrāhīm Khalīl, HUMAYDĪ, Ja°far °Abbās. *Tārīkh al-°Irāq al-mu°āšir* [Contemporary History of Iraq], p. 231.

³⁰ VATIKIOTIS, P. J. *The Modern History of Egypt*, pp. 403 – 404.

foundation of the UAR and would form a separate unit within the framework of an Arab federal union.³¹

It was generally supposed in the first half of 1964 that the government would follow a comparatively conservative economic policy more favourable than that of the *Ba'ath Party* to private enterprise and to the middle classes, and this was borne out by its announced programme. But the business community, whether engaged in private or in public enterprise, were influenced not merely by the proclaimed policies of particular governments but even more by the prospects of political stability, and for this reason it probably did not make very much difference what the government said: business would wait to see what it did. Indeed, ever since the 1958 Revolution business confidence had been low and capital had been leaving the country. This was one of the factors influencing the government later to embark on extensive nationalizations.³²

The provisional constitution for Iraq was prepared by a committee under the supervision of the Minister of Justice, and was thoroughly discussed by the Cabinet and approved by President 'Abdassalām 'Ārif on 29 April.³³ It was drawn up on the pattern of the Egyptian constitution, but little or no attention was paid to the views of leaders and groups outside official circles. However, Iraq's own internal problems, especially with the Kurds and other local interests, were taken into consideration. After its approval by the Cabinet and the NCRC, President 'Abdassalām 'Ārif made a statement on 3 May in which he introduced it to the public, and Premier Ṭāhir Yaḥyā read the text in a broadcast on the same day.³⁴ In drawing up the constitution there had been no consultation with leading Iraqi political figures outside the ruling elite and the announcement was coolly received by them, although it was recognized that the publication of any constitution, provisional or otherwise, was already an advance for Iraq.³⁵

The provisional constitution, duly promulgated in May 1964, was not entirely discouraging from this point of view in spite of the fact that it proclaimed the aim of "comprehensive Arab unity", commencing with unity with the UAR, and stressed comprehensive planning. For at the same time it emphasized the

³¹ U.A.R., Information Department. *The Constitution, 1964*; W. A. 1964, pp. 111 – 118.

³² PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 352.

³³ AḤMAD, Ibrāhīm Khalīl, HUMAYDĪ Ja'far 'Abbās. *Tārīkh al-'Irāq al-mu'āšir* [Contemporary History of Iraq.], p. 231.

³⁴ KHADDURI, M. *Republican Iraq. A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958*, p. 225.

³⁵ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 321.

“inviolability” of private property.³⁶ Those who, correctly as events proved, were sceptical of ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif’s commitment to union with Egypt could find comfort in the document. Public ownership of the means of production was not part of the Iraqi provisional constitution as it was in the constitution of Egypt. On the other hand, the political structure was modelled on that of Egypt: political parties were not to be permitted and a kind of “national front” was envisaged, which in practice left great power in the hands of the president.³⁷

However, as ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif and the nationalists had opposed ʿAbdalkarīm Qāsim precisely on the grounds of his lack of enthusiasm for Arab unity, they could scarcely be seen to be acting in vigorous opposition to those who were still committed to it. Hence in 1964 and 1965 a number of high-sounding “unity projects” were launched with great ceremony: a preliminary accord on unity between Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir and ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif in June 1964, the establishment of a “unified command” in December 1964 and the adoption of the eagle of the UAR as the national emblem of Iraq in 1965. Of course, none of these projects had to or indeed could possibly be taken seriously by the principals on either side, but they were useful ammunition for ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif as proof of his continuing enthusiasm for Arabism.³⁸

The *Baʿthist* government in Syria now followed a more moderate line toward Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir in the hope of reducing Egyptian hostility. Michel ʿAflaq and Ṣalāḥaddīn al-Bīṭār had always desired to follow this course, but in attempting it they invariably exposed themselves to violent attacks from the group of ʿAlī Ṣāliḥ as-Saʿdī within the movement and from other militant elements outside it.³⁹ Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir would have no compromise and gave no heed to any of his advisers, who thought it wiser to reduce internal tension in the Arab world in order to face external difficulties with greater confidence. The fact was that Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir’s feud with the *Baʿth Party* was irreparable in the sense that under no conditions was he willing to share power.⁴⁰

In Syria the *Baʿth Party* was torn with internal strife between those who followed the philosophy of its early leaders and those who aimed at a more radical approach to politics. The presence and the activities of the movement’s leading founders and thinkers had been a restraining influence not present in Iraq. The collapse of the *Baʿthist* government in Iraq had served as a warning

³⁶ AHMAD, Ibrāhīm Khalīl, ḤUMAYDĪ, Jaʿfar ʿAbbās. *Tārīkh al-ʿIrāq al-muʿāṣir*, p. 232.

³⁷ MARR, P. *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 193.

³⁸ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 95.

³⁹ DEVLIN, J. F. *The Baʿth Party. A History from Its Origins to 1966*, pp. 274 – 275.

⁴⁰ JIRJIS, Fawwāz. *An-niẓām al-iqlīmī al-ʿarabī wa al-quwā al-kubrā* [The Superpowers and the Arab Regional System], pp. 221 – 223.

against pushing differences too far.⁴¹ But the differences were acute and those who pressed for more vigorous action towards socialism among the military as well as among the civilian party members were gaining. °Alī Ṣāliḥ as-Sa°dī quickly returned from Spain to Syria. Imbued with vague, confused and ill-digested political ideas, and lacking in political judgement, he was still a master of the art of political intrigues and in the organization of conspiracies.⁴² Nevertheless, political life, in spite of its instability, was less immature in Syria than in Iraq. Moreover, Damascus was not the only political centre in Syria which counted, similarly to Baghdad was in Iraq.

The officers, even those who were from the *Ba°th Party*, such as Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, had acted primarily because of the challenge that the National Guard had posed to the army. Once this challenge was disposed of, further co-operation between *Ba°thist* and non-*Ba°thist* officers was unstable. The non-*Ba°thist* Arab nationalist officers, and the non-political elements in the army, now led by President °Abdassalām °Ārif, whose political stature had risen, were irreconcilably opposed to the *Ba°th Party* and all its work. In some directions they leaned towards Jamāl °Abdannāṣir, though the extent of their leanings was exaggerated by outside observers.⁴³ The ambitions of the *Ba°th Party*, embedded deeply in its doctrines, likewise rendered impossible a lasting coalition between it and the Arab nationalist officers and civilians around °Abdassalām °Ārif. The officers more or less seriously attached to the *Ba°th* movement, particularly Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, and Ḥardān °Abdalghaffār at-Tikrītī, would have exposed themselves to virulent attack from the radicals of the Syrian party and from °Alī Ṣāliḥ as-Sa°dī and his group now sheltering in Damascus. They would also have faced less violent but even more effective criticism from Michel °Aflaq and Ṣalāḥaddīn al-Biṭṭār and other moderate *Ba°thists* who, while observing prudence and remaining open to compromise on particular measures, were averse to the sacrifice of *Ba°th* principles in a coalition in which they were not the dominant party.⁴⁴

°Abdassalām °Ārif's principal concern in the first year of his presidency was to maintain himself in power. He managed to achieve this by building up a loyal elite corps in the army and by putting his friends and relatives in key positions. Naturally, these preoccupations meant that he could give little attention to the wider economic and social problems of Iraq, which had been growing in intensity over the previous years and which a "revolutionary" government might

⁴¹ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 313.

⁴² DEVLIN, J. F. *The Ba°th Party. A History from Its Origins to 1966*, p. 287.

⁴³ KERR, M. H. *The Arab Cold War. Gamāl Abd al-Nasir and His Rivals, 1958 – 1970*, pp. 88 – 92.

⁴⁴ RABINOVICH, I. *Syria under the Ba°th, 1963 – 1966. The Army-Party Symbiosis*, pp. 6 – 11.

reasonably be expected to be trying to alleviate. Furthermore, the continuing political instability had created a general crisis of business confidence and had encouraged those in a position to do so to liquidate their capital assets and transfer them abroad.⁴⁵ Thus there was an urgent need for the government to take some action that would both stop the outflow of capital and satisfy the aspirations of some of its members and supporters for the state to play a more vigorous part in the economy.

With the utter defeat of the Baʿthists, the *second phase* in the evolution of the regime was reached. The *Nāṣirists* now came to the fore, or perhaps more accurately, were permitted by ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif to have a free hand. The idea consciously imitating Egypt’s line of development prevailed, and the lever of the country’s policy was turned with impatience toward the closest possible accord with Cairo in every field.⁴⁶ However, the popular expectation at the time that Egypt and Iraq would unite, now that the new Iraqi regime followed an Arab nationalist line closer to Egyptian than to *Baʿthist* ideas, was based on a misunderstanding. Jamāl ʿAbdunnāṣir and ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif were not as close as they appeared outwardly, but each had his own political reasons for concealing these differences from the public. Nevertheless, Jamāl ʿAbdunnāṣir was quick to take advantage of the bitter relations that now existed between Syria and Iraq to co-operate with the latter and intensify attacks on the former. This was followed by frequent visits of officials and economists between Cairo and Baghdad for economic consultations.⁴⁷

The first important move in this direction was made on 26 May 1964: the governments of Iraq and the UAR agreed to form a Joint Presidential Council with a view to planning and coordinating their actions in the military, economic, political, social and cultural spheres, and studying and carrying out the indispensable steps leading to a constitutional union between their two countries.⁴⁸ The agreement also envisaged the unification of Egypt’s only political party, the Arab Socialist Union, with a similarly modelled state-run organization that was yet to be set up in Iraq. The organization, styled “the Arab Socialist Union-Iraqi Region”, was announced on the following 14 July, and in addition to the Ḥarakīyīn embraced various nationalist groupings of little

⁴⁵ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 95.

⁴⁶ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Baʿthists and Free Officers*, p. 1031.

⁴⁷ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 321.

⁴⁸ KHADDURI, M. *Republican Iraq. A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958*, p. 229.

significance and some ex-independents and ex-*Ba'athists* who had turned into *Nāṣirists*.⁴⁹

Then there came an announcement that a conference to organize and prepare the Charter of the Iraqi Arab Socialist Union would be held, which, it was stated, would give civilian elements a chance to raise their voices on political affairs. The announcement had little appeal for the leaders of the former Iraqi political parties. It contradicted their own demand for freedom to restore political parties, and, except for the *Communist Party* and a few politicians, they did not respond to the appeal to attend the conference on 4 July 1964 to construct a political organization.⁵⁰ The scheme languished from a lack of appeal or even of interest partly because the Iraqi government itself was ineffective in supporting it. Similarly, the project for a “United Political Command” led to little more than a series of meetings between Egyptian and Iraqi specialists on economic and military affairs.⁵¹ It is difficult to detect any important political results from all these efforts, but the agreement and the resulting publicity intensified the impression in the Arab world of the isolation of the Syrian *Ba'ath* regime and the rapprochement between Iraq and Egypt. In addition, it may have contributed along with other influences to the sudden and unexpected change in Iraq's domestic economic policy in the middle of 1964.

Some two months after issuing a provincial constitution that stressed the “inviolability of private property” ʿAbdassālām ʿĀrif announced on the sixth anniversary of the 14 July Revolution, the *nationalization* of all banks, insurance companies and thirty-two large industrial and commercial firms, which would now be run by an autonomous state Economic Organization for Banks to administer the nationalized concerns.⁵² It was a coup aimed at bringing Iraq's economy into consonance with that of Egypt and made provision for the allotment to labourers and employees of 25 % of the profits of the companies for which they worked and for their representation on these companies' boards of directors.⁵³ This measure had the effect of heightening rather than easing the economic crisis, without in any way dimming the enthusiasm of the *Nāṣirists* for these policies. Needless to say, the lack of qualified personnel, the way in which the policies were applied and the absence of real commitment to them on the part of many members of the government

⁴⁹ TRIPP, C. *A History of Iraq*, p. 177.

⁵⁰ AḤMĀD, Ibrāhīm Khalīl, ḤUMAYDĪ, Jaʿfar ʿAbbās. *Tārīkh al-ʿIrāq al-muʿāṣir* [Contemporary History of Iraq], p. 232.

⁵¹ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 321.

⁵² GUERREAU, A. *L'Irak: développement et contradictions*, p. 43.

⁵³ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'athists and Free Officers*, p. 1031.

contributed more to the general malaise than any major defects in the principle; given the general weakness of private capital and the fact that oil was the country's main source of wealth, it is difficult to see how any upturn in the economy could have been achieved other than by increased and skilfully applied state intervention. The regime's economic policies soon became the subject of major disagreement between the various factions, particularly over the negotiations with the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), which took place between May 1964 and June 1965.⁵⁴

By September 1964 were some 5,000 Egyptian troops on Iraqi soil. Presumably there for joint manoeuvres, the troops were meant in reality to bolster the regime in the wake of an attempted coup by a possible *Ba'athist* attempt to recapture power.⁵⁵ Next, on 16 October 1964, by way of an anticlimax, came the signature of another unity agreement which substituted the Joint Presidential Council with a fundamentally similar coordinating organ, the Iraq-UAR Unified Political Command, and which apart from this contained nothing more concrete than a promise to realize the hoped-for union "within a maximum period of two years".⁵⁶ The Unified Command, which took shape on 21 December 1964, met only once or twice and after that was allowed to die a quiet death. Deterred by his Syrian experiences, Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir never gave the project for union serious thought. He could have had no illusions as to its feasibility as Iraq geographically was too far away from Egypt. Furthermore, the regime of ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif was too thinly based: it had merely the support of the smaller part of the Arab *sunnīs*, who formed no more than one-fifth of the population.⁵⁷

The caution of the Egyptian leader on the question of unity naturally weakened the *Nāṣirists* in Baghdad. They reached the acme of their influence on 14 November 1964, when in a reshuffle of the Cabinet they increased their share of seats from three to six and secured the key portfolio of the Interior.⁵⁸ By the spring of 1965 they were, however, already losing ground, not only on account of Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir's attitude but also by reason of the short-run unfavourable effects of the nationalization decrees. This and the smuggling of money out of the country by the men of capital produced a discernible decline in the economy. Conservatives in the government had quickly seized upon these

⁵⁴ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, pp. 95 – 96.

⁵⁵ MARR, P. *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 193.

⁵⁶ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'athists and Free Officers*, p. 1032.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1032

⁵⁸ KHADDURI, M. *Republican Iraq. A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958*, p. 240.

symptoms to press for a reversal of the “socialist tide” and succeeded in slowing it down. In April 1965 the *Nāṣirist* ministers met with a rebuff when they demanded a certain degree of public control over foreign trade. They disapproved of the agreement between the Oil Minister ʿAbdalʿazīz al-Wattārī and the oil companies which, among other things, more than doubled the concession area to which ʿAbdalkarīm Qāsim had restricted the companies under Law No. 80 of 1961.⁵⁹

The minister, an intelligent non-political technocrat who had held office since the overthrow of ʿAbdalkarīm Qāsim, was primarily concerned with clearing up the differences between the government and the IPC in order to raise oil output and thus oil revenues.⁶⁰ The IPC and its associates had been thoroughly alarmed by the wider international implications of Law No. 80, and the effect that any capitulation to the Iraqis might have on their activities elsewhere. On the other hand, the principle asserted in the law of the nation’s inherent right to control its own assets and resources, which had been vigorously and successfully upheld by Jamāl ʿAbdannāṣir in the nationalization of the Suez Canal, had become firmly embedded in the public consciousness in Iraq and particularly among the *Nāṣirist* faction in the government.

The main points of the agreement reached in July 1965 were that in return for the payment of £20 million, equity participation by the government and some of the IPC associates in a national oil company, and a substantial increase in production levels, the government would restore IPC’s right of access to all those unexplored parts of the concession area from which the provisions of Law No. 80 had excluded it.⁶¹ Although this would have brought a rapid short term increase in revenues, it would also have resulted in the reinstatement of the IPC in its controlling position over Iraqi oil, since Law No. 80 had in effect ensured that future oil development would be determined by the Iraqi government rather than by the IPC. When news of the agreement leaked out on 4 July 1965, six *Nāṣirist* ministers resigned in protest.⁶² In point of fact, the agreement was never ratified.

ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif tried to avoid a complete break with the *Nāṣirists*. He

⁵⁹ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba’thists and Free Officers*, p. 1033.

⁶⁰ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 96.

⁶¹ STEVENS, P. *Iraqi Oil Policy: 1961 – 1976*. In NIBLOCK, T. (ed.). *Iraq: The Contemporary State*, p. 178; PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 388; MARR, P. *The Modern History of Iraq*, p. 174.

⁶² FAWZĪ, Ahmad. *ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad ʿĀrif. Sīratuhu ... muḥākamatuhu ... maṣraʿuhu* [ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad ʿĀrif. His biography ... his trial ... his death], pp. 40 – 41.

accordingly cultivated the goodwill of Air Staff Brigadier ʿĀrif ʿAbdarrazzāq, the Commander of the Air Force, who was on an intimate footing with the *Movement of Arab Nationalists*, being a cousin of Bāsil al-Kubaysī, a leader of this movement.⁶³ Eight weeks later on 6 September 1965, ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif went one step further: he appointed ʿĀrif ʿAbdarrazzāq, a staunch *Nāṣirist*, as Premier and Minister of Defence. However, he balanced him by placing at the head of the Department of Interior Brigadier ʿAbdallaṭīf ad-Darrājī, a personal friend, and by giving the deputy premiership and the portfolios of oil and foreign affairs to Dr ʿAbdarrahmān al-Bazzāz, a 52-year old Baghdādī conservative nationalist, an ex-dean of the Law School, a former ambassador to London and Secretary-General of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.⁶⁴

The moves of ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif, instead of mollifying the nationalists and other *Nāṣirists*, only spurred them to push their conflict with him to the point of no return. A few days later, the president and his Minister of Foreign Affairs ʿAbdarrahmān al-Bazzāz left the country to attend the Arab summit meeting in Casablanca. On 15 September 1965, taking advantage of the president’s absence, ʿĀrif ʿAbdarrazzāq attempted to seize power himself, but the coup was discovered and successfully foiled. Colonel Saʿīd Ṣulaybī, the Baghdad garrison commander and tribal kinsman of the president, learning of the intentions of the insurgents, had the last blow.⁶⁵ ʿĀrif ʿAbdarrazzāq and his associates, the principal *Nāṣirist* officers, had to flee the country.⁶⁶ This incident marked the end of any significant *Nāṣirist* influence within the regime, and on 21 September 1965 a “moderate” nationalist, ʿAbdarrahmān al-Bazzāz, was appointed Prime Minister: the first civilian to hold this office since July 1958.⁶⁷

With this opened the **third and final phase** in the evolution of the regime. ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif and officers of his tribe, that is, from al-Jumayla, became the sole ultimate arbiters in the state. The man next to the president, now tied and loosened in the armed forces, was the formidable Colonel Saʿīd Ṣulaybī. More than that, the crucial threads in the department of military intelligence passed into the hands of Staff Lieutenant Colonel ʿAbdarrazzāq an-Nāyif, also a

⁶³ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba’thists and Free Officers*, p. 1033.

⁶⁴ AḤMAD, Ibrāhīm Khalīl, ḤUMAYDĪ, Jaʿfar ʿAbbās. *Tārīkh al-ʿIrāq al-muʿāṣir* [Contemporary History of Iraq.], p. 235.

⁶⁵ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 96.

⁶⁶ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba’thists and Free Officers*, p. 1034.

⁶⁷ FAWZĪ, Aḥmad. *ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad ʿĀrif. Sīratuhu .. muḥākamatuhu ... maṣraʿuhu*, p. 57.

Jumaylī.⁶⁸ However, in this phase, and for the first time since the 1958 Revolution, a civilian, °Abdarrahmān al-Bazzāz, was raised to the premiership, and a predominantly civilian Cabinet was given a genuine say in the running of the country. The *National Council of Revolutionary Command* (al-Majlis al-waṭanī li-qiyādat ath-thawra), which had been exclusively military in composition (the Council's Law No. 61 of 22 April 1964 precluded the membership of any person who did not hold at least the rank of Lieutenant Colonel), dissolved itself.⁶⁹ A hitherto exclusively military body created in February 1963 and consisting of the president and the chiefs of staff and other senior military officers both inside and outside the Cabinet dissolved itself and the legislative powers which it had exercised were vested in the Cabinet, giving the impression that real power was at last passing into civilian hands.

Like °Abdassalām °Ārif himself, °Abdarrahmān al-Bazzāz, who had been an academic and a diplomat, was a conservative *sunnī* nationalist for whom the attachment to Islamic principles in private and public was of considerable importance. However, the making of defence policy and the attending to internal security became the prerogative of a new predominantly military organ, the *National Defence Council* (Majlis ad-difā° al-waṭanī). This new military organization maintained the overall control of the military over the Cabinet and together with the Republican Guard constituted the essential mainstay of the regime. Hence, given the nature of the °Abdassalām °Ārif government, the much vaunted Cabinet of °Abdarrahmān al-Bazzāz was almost inevitably largely dependent on the president for its continuation in office.⁷⁰

The new prime minister, who was a prominent if somewhat conservative politician, sought to introduce more market-oriented economic policies and generally promote a more liberal political line. In an attempt to reassure private capital and regain the confidence of the industrial and commercial community, he declared that he was going to pursue what he described as a “prudent” or “rational” form of socialism suited to current conditions in Iraq, that there would be no further nationalizations, and that stability and the rule of law would prevail. In addition, he also undertook to put an end to the arrest and imprisonment of the regime's political opponents, permit free expression of political opinion and ultimately re-establish a parliamentary system.⁷¹

⁶⁸ He was a cousin of Colonel Sa°īd Ṣulaybī. In TRIPP, C. *A History of Iraq*, p. 191.

⁶⁹ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'thists and Free Officers*, p. 1034.

⁷⁰ PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, pp. 333 – 334.

⁷¹ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 97.

ʿAbdarrahmān al-Bazzāz tried to ensure that some basic civil liberties were respected, and claimed to be anxious to pave the way for the eventual introduction of some kind of democratic structure. Political parties were still illegal, and the regime’s only attempt to float its own party, an Iraqi version of the Egyptian Arab Socialist Union in July 1964, had collapsed in the face of general public indifference. In the course of an interview in the summer of 1966 ʿAbdarrahmān al-Bazzāz stated that he intended to embark upon “the resumption of elections as the next step to be taken towards representative government”.⁷² However, it also emerged that he was firmly opposed to any unconditional legislation of political parties, since this would inevitably have involved recognizing the communists, an interesting reflection of the influence the ICP still wielded in spite of the persecution to which it had been subjected since February 1963. Since the *Baʿth* was widely detested because of its activities in 1963, and both the *National Democratic Party* and the *Independence Party* had virtually ceased to exist, it is difficult to imagine what sort of elections the premier could have had in mind.

Refusing the extremes of *Baʿthism* and *Nāṣirism*, the new regime was unable to formulate a coherent political programme, and its uncertain political course disillusioned those who had greeted it enthusiastically at the outset. Like the preceding governments, it failed to reopen the political life of the country on a representative basis, although there was some hope in one brief period within the years 1965 – 1966, when ʿAbdarrahmān al-Bazzāz clearly wanted to move in that direction. It was, however, much more civilized than its predecessors had been.⁷³ Like the premier, the new Cabinet was conservative nationalist. It bound itself to the achievement of Iraqi unity, the maintenance of “the supremacy of the law”, the speeding up of steps for the ushering in of parliamentary life, the pursuit of a “wise Arab socialist” policy aiming at “a higher production and an equitable distribution” and “regardful of both the public and private sectors”, and, finally, to continued cooperation with the UAR with “due account being taken of our special circumstances”.⁷⁴ Before the Cabinet had time to do much about its programme, ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif suddenly died. On 13 April 1966 his helicopter crashed in a sandstorm near al-Qurna in the south of Iraq.⁷⁵ His death marked the end of another chapter in the country’s political history.

⁷² PENROSE, E., PENROSE, E. F. *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, p. 341.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

⁷⁴ BATATU, H. *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Baʿthists and Free Officers*, p. 1034.

⁷⁵ ḤASSŪN, Fajṣal. *Maṣraʿ al-mušīr ar-rukn ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif*. [The Death of Staff Marshall ʿAbdassalām ʿĀrif], pp. 104 – 108; FAWZĪ, Aḥmad. *ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad ʿĀrif. Sīratuhu .. muḥākamatuhu .. maṣraʿuhu*, p. 58.

°Abdarrahmān al-Bazzāz stayed in office almost a year between September 1965 and August 1966, but his effectiveness was greatly weakened by the sudden death of his patron and protector °Abdassalām °Ārif in a helicopter accident in April 1966 and by the ensuing political uncertainty. Although °Abdarrahmān al-Bazzāz managed to secure the smooth succession of the late president's brother °Abdarrahmān to the presidency, the power struggle between the prime minister and the officers which had been latent from the time of his original appointment, became more and more acute in the course of the summer of 1966. As well as antagonizing the officers by his independent stance, and later by his controversial efforts to achieve a settlement of the Kurdish question, his conservative approach to the economy also aroused misgivings outside a fairly limited circle of commercial and industrial entrepreneurs. The notion that the state should be in charge of the overall direction of the economy and thus act both as the main promoter of economic development and as the principal provider of all social and educational services had taken such firm root that the premier's efforts to reverse this process were viewed with concern by many politically conscious Iraqis. Such measures as the relaxation of import controls and an increase in the compensation payable to landlords expropriated under the provisions of the Land Reform of 1958 seemed specifically designed to benefit the privileged classes of the *ancien régime*.⁷⁶

The regimes during the presidencies of °Abdassalām °Ārif and later on his brother °Abdarrahmān °Ārif may be loosely described as Arab nationalist, but they differed from the *Ba'athist* regimes in having no such organized party as the *Ba'ath*. The abortive attempt to set up an Iraqi Socialist Union was aimed at establishing a monopolistic association. The regime was composed of military officers in political posts with civilians in number of departments requiring specialized knowledge and experience. In this respect, it resembled the Egyptian regime, but *Nāṣirism* had less appeal in Iraq than in Egypt. In Egypt Jamāl °Abdannāṣir was a symbol of Egyptian as well as Arab dignity and independence, whereas in Iraq there were many who, while appreciating Jamāl °Abdannāṣir's importance to the Arab world and admiring his ability to stand up to imperialist encroachments, nevertheless resented the prospect of Egyptian dominance in Iraq of the kind they had seen in Syria. Moreover, many *Shī'ites* feared that *Nāṣirism* would strengthen the *sunni* dominance in Iraq, while the Kurds feared that their position would be even more restricted in a larger Arab union.

⁷⁶ SLUGLETT, M. F., SLUGLETT, P. *Iraq since 1958. From Revolution to Dictatorship*, p. 98.

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