Interview with a Member of the Iraqi Communist Party–Central Leadership*

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Introduction

In 1919, the great Marxist teacher Lenin analyzed that "The peoples of the East are becoming alive to the need for practical action, the need for every nation to take part in shaping the destiny of all mankind." The struggle to shape the destiny of all mankind, communism, the building of the new and clearing of the old arose as a concrete task undertaken by the constitution of various Communist parties in the East. In the days when the name of Marx was relegated to the tounges of useless intellects and imported bookshops in Iraq, Yusuf Salman Yusuf (later to be known as Comrade Fahd), was tempered in the struggle against British imperialism, eventually coming to the inevitable conclusion that Marxism is the only weapon sharp enough to pierce the heart of imperialism and reaction. Organizing what were once intellectual circles who merely ruminated on Marxism, Comrade Fahd gathered a group who unified on the necessity for *practice* and *action,* grasping the very epistemological foundation of Marxism. Hence, heeding the call of Lenin, Iraq's foremost children of the people met in Baghdad on the 19th of April, 1945, establishing the Iraqi Communist Party under Marxism-Leninism, the banner of the proletariat.

The Communist Party of Peru wrote that "revolutions give rise to a

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thought that guides them,"[1] thus the Iraqi Communist Party was forged through the intense struggle of great leader Comrade Fahd, waging struggle against opportunism and economism, producing a guiding thought and concrete path for the Iraqi masses to walk to victory on. Guiding thoughts are the reflection of the eternal motion of matter, particularized to each country, the advancement to communism. Such a reflection will be seen refracted in the Tigris and Euphrates, etched into the walls of the ancient city of Ur, the land that saw humanity make leaps in law, medicine, and language will at once be consolidated under the great path set before us by Comrade Fahd. Fahd made the correct analysis that Iraq is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country subservient to British imperialist, decrying the main task of all revolutionaries in Iraq to wage national democrat revolution against the feudalists and compradors. Declaring that Communism is higher than the gallows in which he would be martyred on, he was immortalized by the running dogs of the British imperialists in 1949.

Following the pattern of all movement, "the splitting in two of a single whole," Fahd's legacy and teachings were stripped of its revolutionary character into a hollow figurehead, not dissimilar to the method in which the Soviet revisionists ironically displayed the banner of Lenin, by *Chelab* (Dogs) and cowards, capitulators who blindly followed Soviet directives despite their glaring contradiction with the clamoring Iraqi masses. These revisionists called themselves the Iraqi Communist Party–Central Command (ICP-CC), issuing orders and directives from the comfort of Hungary, Poland, and the USSR. "One splits into two," and there were those heroes of the Iraqi people who bravely lifted ahigh the true banner of Fahd and communism amidst a landscape of reaction and revisionism. Uniting under the Iraqi Communist Party–Central Leadership (ICP-CL), Iraq's genuine patriots and revolutionaries waged this struggle for decades.

The ICP-CL's principled line, basing itself on the people and armed struggle, led them to be the only revolutionary group adhering to the principle "political power grows out the barrel of a gun." The heroic operation of Khaled Ahmed Zaki and the peasant uprisings of the South, the organization of *Al-Ansar* (the partisans) militants in the North, and countless martyrs who were immortalized in the struggle against the bureacrat bourgeoisie, the Baath party. The ICP-CL would ultimately meet its demise and make se-

[1] RedLibrary: *Concerning Gonzalo Thought,* Central Committee of the CPP, 1988. `https://redlibrary.info/works/pcp/fundamental-documents.pdf`

rious errors regarding its methodology of joining forces with the Kurdish national liberation struggle, mainly subordinating itself to groups representing the historically vacillating class, the national bourgeoisie. The lack of independence and subservience to such groups, namely the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), led to betrayal and the breakdown of what was already a steady process of ideological decay, and losing sight of the central task.

The following text is a recent translation from the ICP-CL, a necessary step in understanding the political situation of our country's fighters. Bringing to the light previously unknown information, such as Soviet Social-imperialist ventures in the Middle East, we hope this document will be taken up by genuine revolutionaries in understanding the general situation of combatting revisionism, and it's particular expression in Iraq. We also hope it will shed light on a critically understudied and misunderstood political landscape among those who consider themselves communists today.

- 2 Arab Strugglers

Oil, Oppression and Resistance in Iraq

THIS INTERVIEW PROVIDES INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTROL EXERCISED BY WESTERN OIL CORPORATIONS OVER IRAQ. FURTHERMORE, IT DESCRIBES THE TERROR EXERCISED BY THEIR AGENTS, THE BA'ATH GOVERNMENT, IN AN ATTEMPT TO ENFORCE CONTROL OVER THE PEOPLE! IT DESCRIBES THE LIQUIDATION AND DISINTEGRATION OF THE FORMER ICP AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ICP/CENTRAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS PERSPECTIVES. THE INTERVIEW TOOK PLACE TOWARDS THE END OF OCTOBER 1970 WITH A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP, COMRADE NAJIM.

- The BERTRAND RUSSELL PEACE FOUNDATION

Question: What is the current economic and political situation in Iraq like?

Answer: In short, the most important issue in Iraq, whether economic or political, is the oil question, i.e., the control of Iraq's economic and political affairs by oil corporations. The oil business accounts for 80% of the direct and indirect state budget. Additionally, it is the source of 90% or 95% of foreign exchange and represents about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the national income. This is precisely the Iraqi problem because the government of Iraq, that is, the oil

corporations, they are a state within the state. They are the forces behind the coups and changes of government. Although oil production has increased and thus state income has also increased, the overall situation of the country has nonetheless deteriorated extraordinarily. The government has imposed countless taxes, recently the water and electricity costs were also increased, and a tax of 50 Pounds Sterling is demanded for leaving the country. It has raised almost all other taxes and introduced new ones. But aside from that, there is, of course, the social problem of backwardness, especially in rural areas. There were feudal or semi-feudal conditions there, mainly introduced by the British occupying power when Iraq was still a tribal community and the Ottoman rulers could not introduce feudal conditions. But when the British occupation took place in 1914, the new colonial masters introduced such conditions to establish foreign influence through the feudal sheikhs. After the revolution in 1958, a new land reform law was enacted, dividing the land among the peasants, but the revolution was not continued. The government, pressured by the new peasant movement and the influence of the Communist Party, therefore did not fully implement the reform, with the result that now there is not a single sign of cooperation in the countryside. In some areas, the sheikhs have divided the land, in others, the farmers have, and in the Kurdish areas, the land is still controlled by the agas (the Kurdish feudalists).

The current government has tried through all possible propaganda to say it is socialist and has made concessions to the patriotic standpoint regarding the oil companies and feudal sheikhs, but it has not gone very far and the general situation is still the same as before. Currently, there is trouble with the farmers in southern Iraq and Kurdish farmers are also demanding land. The country is in a pronounced crisis. This is the current economic and political situation.

In the cities of Iraq, there is a student and youth movement, as Iraq is a particularly young nation with more than 50% of the population under 20 years old. Therefore, youth plays a decisive role in politics and Iraqi society in general. The youth sympathize with the new revolutionary movements because they want a better future. They are simply not satisfied with the current situation, and this will have significant implications for the future of Iraq. They have no connection to the current government, and as more people voluntarily attend school, we consequently have more educated individuals, prompting the government to discourage people from pursuing an education. The government is introducing new regulations, making exams

increasingly difficult, and extending study periods. However, these measures come too late. Consequently, all individuals with a school diploma are now being drafted into the army, which has never been done before. Additionally, women are required to work for the government for two years at a low wage as a substitute for military service. A doctor, an engineer, or a graduate earns approximately 3 Dinars (about 3 Pounds Sterling) per month. This is symptomatic of the current situation in Iraq, yet the government speaks of socialism...

Question: Can you provide an example of the real relationship between the government and the oil companies, and to what extent this differs from what the government admits?

Answer: There are some very recent examples. Firstly, there's the oil agreement between the government and the Soviet Union for the exploitation of the oil fields in North Rumaila. In 1969, the government concluded several agreements with the Soviet Union and Poland for the exploitation of these oil fields. Their propaganda was full of claims of being patriotic, opposing the West, and so on. However, in reality, the above agreements were not implemented; many obstacles were put in their way. They usually claimed they would need only a few years to realize them but extended the timeframe to prioritize other matters. At the same time, they entered into a secret agreement with Western oil companies, in which they imposed much lower taxes on the export of oil from Iraqi ports. This issue was one of the reasons for the conflict between the Iraqi government and the oil companies since 1960. Abdul Karim Qasim demanded 270 fils for every ton of oil exported from Basra, which the companies refused. Then they had to make concessions, and the oil companies played a very significant role in the 1963 coup (I'll come back to that later). The first thing the government did was to postpone negotiations, leaving everything unchanged. Then they reached a sort of compromise. In 1965, there was a new agreement, and the companies agreed to grant better conditions to the Iraqi government, but the agreement was not signed, against the will of the population. The issue remained frozen until last year when the government concluded an agreement with the oil companies, exactly at the same time agreements were made with the Soviet Union and Poland. This agreement is really to the detriment of Iraq. We lose approximately 1 1/2 million Dinars (or five Sterling Pounds) per year, and the Iraqi government did not inquire about the debts from the previous agreement, which amount to 70 million Dinars. Meanwhile, most of those working under the new contract with the USSR–Iraqi engineers, workers,

and officials–complain that the government has erected obstacles to implementing the contract with the USSR in such a way that it cannot be carried out.

Another example shows that in October 1970, the government threatened the oil companies with taking control of the pipelines carrying Iraqi oil, arguing that the companies had not increased Iraqi oil production to the same extent as other countries. This naturally meant less oil revenue. They threatened to control the oil pipelines and that the government would use the underutilized capacity of the oil pipeline to export its own oil produced by the national oil company within two years. There was much talk about them controlling the oil pipelines within two years. All that happened was as follows:

The individual oil companies agreed to grant them a 20 million dinar loan to keep them quiet. Of course, the loan had to be repaid, and we conducted propaganda against the oil companies with the result that we got nothing from them. Persia increased its production at the expense of Iraq; the companies that enriched themselves from Persian oil also enriched themselves from Iraqi oil.

These are just a few examples. There are other facts that have not yet been published, but the latest agreement was published in "OIL AND GAS MAGAZINE" in the USA. In fact, one of our friends saw the official delegation of the Ba'ath government in Moscow when they arrived there. Ammash, acting vice president of Iraq, demanded that the delegation sign the agreement the same day they arrived in Moscow; if the engineers were to protest, saying they needed time to understand the situation and that the agreement could not be signed in a day, he said: "If you don't sign, another agreement will be signed somewhere else, and we will be accused of making agreements with the British. Therefore, we must sign beforehand and let the whole world know, and no one will know about the other agreement."

And so it happened. We published an article in our party newspaper, which outlined specific details of the agreement with the oil companies. So we're just shadowboxing. The government doesn't make serious demands, and the oil companies don't take them seriously. They make propaganda and nothing else.

Question: What can you say about the character of the Ba'ath government? You have hinted that it is in a partnership relationship with the oil companies, but what about its structure and development, with the authorities and the armed forces?

Answer: I will try to paint you a picture of how it emerged, which will help you understand the character of the government. The former government was controlled by Aref, who was a very weak man. He tried by all means to hand over the exploitation of Iraqi sulfur deposits and oil to the Americans, but he failed in this attempt because the public demanded that oil and sulfur be exploited at the national level. In the last days of his rule, he sought rapprochement with the USSR. At the same time, a revolt broke out in southern Iraq, led by our comrade Khalid Zaki as part of a general explosive situation in the country, so the oil companies had to see even more that this weak government could not control the country. Therefore, they offered the Ba'ath clique the government of Iraq, which they now hold. They didn't fire a single bullet, and the people who gave them power are the same ones who then controlled the government. When the Ba'ath Party took over the government, they did not conclude any oil and sulfur agreements in the first year because they were isolated and faced a general uprising *[Text missing]* British-American influence in Iraq. At the beginning of their rule, the Ba'ath government had some American agents among them, especially Abdul Razzakh al-Nayef, who was then prime minister, and Abdul Rahman al-Dawood, the defense minister, who had carried out the coup. Some weeks later, these people were dismissed and expelled from Iraq as insurgents, and the government was led only by the Ba'ath Party. The Americans were not pleased about this, as they had achieved some successes shortly before; British influence was now predominant. The government tried to appear anti-American, prompting the Americans to persuade the Shah of Iran to control the Shatt al-Arab, as he continues to do to this day. He controls Iraqi waters with his armed forces, and the government does nothing about it. Afterwards, the Americans planned to overthrow the government of Iraq; but it seemed that the government could rely on British support, and they had 50 or 60 so-called spies, i.e., American spies, hanged, but not a single British spy was hanged. Naturally, these "spies" were either ordinary soldiers or ordinary people. The real spies are sitting in the government. They have not been hanged, not investigated, and are still in power. It seems that recently a struggle within the government, between Hardan Takriti, the then vice president, and the rest of the government took place. It was said that he was directed by America, and when the confrontation reached its peak, he was banished to Algeria. His successor in the army was also dismissed, and the other leaders, who were hoping for British influence, now have one *[Text missing]* the British newspapers, including the Guardian and others,

usually publish very favorable articles about the Iraqi government.

Another important matter is the Persian Gulf. When the Labour government decided to withdraw from the Gulf in 1971, they entered into an agreement with the Ba'ath regime that they would enter into some kind of partnership in the Persian Gulf against the Persians and against revolutionary movements within the country. However, the Conservative government seems to have made a deal with the Americans and the Shah of Iran, and British newspapers are calling for a partnership between the Ba'ath government of Iraq and British interests in the Gulf to destroy the revolutionary movement in these countries. The Iraqi government is now arming the sheikhs of Oman and other areas. They have fought against the revolution in Dhofar and accused the revolutionary organization in the Persian Gulf of interfering and arming the reactionary forces of this region. So it seems that British interests offer Iraq some benefits–financial and political support–in return for undermining the so-called "Union of Arab Emirates in the Gulf." The Iraqi government officially supported this so-called Union. It was recently published in the Guardian and Economist. The main interests are secured—the interests of British and American corporations—and although a lot of "revolutionary" propaganda has been broadcast from Radio Baghdad, not a single step has been taken against these corporations. This must be seen in connection with the events in Jordan in September 1970. The Iraqi government claimed that it would place all Iraqi forces under the leadership of the Palestinian resistance movement, and they made much fuss about a declaration on behalf of the so-called Revolutionary Council in Baghdad. When King Hussein attacked the Palestinian movement, the Iraqi government did nothing. The Central Committee of the Palestinian resistance movement issued several calls to the Iraqi army to stand on their side; however, this did not happen. In fact, they allowed the Jordanian army to march through their territory to attack the Palestinian resistance, resulting in the Iraqi government being completely ridiculed. Everyone, even their closest friends, accused them of being agents of American and English imperialists and of issuing their declaration for propaganda purposes only. This is exactly the policy they are pursuing now.

In October 1970, they passed emergency laws in Iraq, which, however, are not significant because anyone can be hanged without trial, and Qasr al-Nihaya, the most dreadful prison in Iraq, is still full of people. They are tortured every day, and no one knows what happens to them. When they die, they are thrown into the river, and this happens every day. Twenty of

our comrades were killed in this prison, at least 3 members of the Central Committee of the revisionist Communist Party were also killed. Hundreds of their members were also tortured, even though they supported the government. They also imprisoned the leaders of the Socialist Arab Movement and murdered their leaders. They have killed various other people from the left-wing Al-Ba'ath Party and the Syrian Al-Ba'ath Party. They have committed various other crimes. They attempted to arm anti-Kurdish forces but were beaten back multiple times. They continued oppression in complete secrecy and exclusion of the public. The Ba'ath government is what we call "neo-colonialist." They are agents of imperialism and actually serve only that, while in their propaganda they call themselves Marxists, socialists, etc. The government has taken actions in its foreign policy to disguise its tyrannical policies. They have recognized the German Democratic Republic, concluded some agreements with the USSR, and recognized the Vietnamese National Liberation Front, but within Iraq, they are servants of the oil companies. They have learned from the machinations of the Shah of Iran, whose country is in the CENTO pact, which is an agent of imperialism, and who takes tyrannical measures against progressive forces in Iran. All of this could not prevent him from concluding agreements with the USSR and asserting sovereignly that his country is undergoing an independent development through his policies and that he is carrying out a progressive "white revolution." The government of Iraq is, of course, not royalist–there is no king, and they call themselves socialists, and their leaders have been invited to Moscow several times.

At the same time as the "pro-Moscow communists" were being murdered in Baghdad, a World Peace Day was held in Baghdad, and the World Peace Medal was awarded to President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, as a supporter of peace in the world. Of course, they used this opportunity to their advantage. For us, this is a sign that the USSR has abandoned its socialist policies and is now pursuing a different course by supporting governments like that of the Shah of Iran and the Ba'ath regime in Iraq against their populations. They believe they gain advantages from this–diplomatic or economic–but they harm us in the process.

Question: How widespread is the knowledge and awareness of the government's oppression? Mainly in urban areas?

Answer: It is probably not only widespread in urban areas, although it is mainly known in the cities because the government has now created something they call modern security machinery. They have a secret security

minister. The identity of these officials, the minister, and his torturers, is kept secret. Even the existence of political prisoners is denied. They concentrate their forces mainly in Baghdad, and at every street corner of Baghdad, there is an armed policeman equipped with a walkie-talkie. They have installed several of these communication devices in their police cars. They have created various units of armed police troops: one is the official armed police, another is the civilian armed unit, and the third works with members of various government loyalist organizations. All these units are armed and have radios to stay in contact, thus controlling entire cities; especially Baghdad, which is like one big police camp. Furthermore, they have tried to extend their tyranny to rural areas and have introduced entirely new forms of tyranny. On July 17, 1970, the second anniversary of the so-called revolution, they released over 1000 ordinary prisoners. They gave them weapons and money and sent them to the countryside, where they were paid to kill as many communists as possible. One of our comrades was killed in this way.

In large parts of the country, the farmers are against the government and support our party. The government is trying by all means to expand its repressions. In 1969, they had information that some of our armed comrades were gathering in a certain place in the countryside. They then attacked the village with several armored vehicles. They were repelled, and about five policemen were killed, several others wounded, and two vehicles set on fire, forcing them to withdraw without capturing anyone. They did the same in the summer of 1970. They believed several of our comrades were gathering in the countryside around Al-Hay in southern Iraq. They sent 12 armed police cars and several plainclothes policemen but found no one. They fired their cannons into the area and left without capturing anyone. They are trying this tactic again now, and it is quite possible that they will expand it further, but the peasant movement continues to grow, and the government orders to shoot at any armed peasant, resulting in peasants now shooting at any armed government car and, if possible, setting them on fire, making it difficult for the police to roam freely as before. They have to take more and more measures to protect themselves, and it is very difficult for them to expand repression in the countryside, which is very vast, and therefore they cannot concentrate strong forces.

In the cities, however, it's more challenging. In mid-October 1970, they detained about 50 students from Baghdad University and tortured them. Their fate was not known for a long time. Others had been killed before them. About 6 students from NASIRIYAH and the southern Iraq were arrested, and

at least one of these students had his leg broken, and another had his hand broken. They are trying to extend this kind of tyranny to Iraqi students in Europe. Recently, they went to the homes of two Iraqi students who had left their country several years ago to study in Europe, to scare them or deter them and other students from democratic and revolutionary work. This is something that happens every day. They have also arrested the leaders of most other parties in Iraq, regardless of their political principles and opinions. In July 1970, the 8th Congress of the Kurdish Democratic Party took place, and most of the other parties sent greeting delegations. These delegations were all arrested and tortured on their way home.

They have undertaken other propaganda efforts to prove that they are fighting corruption. They have introduced show trials and use some responsible individual who has committed a minor negligence, sentencing them to 20 years in prison or a fine of several hundred thousand dinars, to then portray this as a good action in the interest of the revolution and to show how they are fighting corruption. At the same time, they smuggle a lot of money from Iraq to Swiss banks because they fear that if things continue to develop as they are, they will find themselves outside of Iraq, and then they want to benefit from this money.

Question: What is the perspective and strength of your party?

Answer: First, I will give you some facts about the development of our party. The Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) is a very old party. It was founded in 1934. It is almost the oldest party and certainly the largest party in Iraq, perhaps even in the Middle East. But it has always been a victim of oppression. The leaders of our party were publicly hanged in 1949, and thousands of communists were imprisoned, tortured, and persecuted. After the revolution of 1958, the party worked almost openly because there were some democratic freedoms for organizations. Although illegal, the party could campaign among workers, peasants, and students, and therefore it has many supporters and sympathizers. It controlled almost all mass organizations– trade unions, the peasant movement, the student movement–and controlled half of the armed forces. It was so influential in Iraq that it had its own candidates in the Chamber of Commerce, which is the backing of the national bourgeoisie. There were communist merchants and traders (which is unusual in other countries). The commander of the Air Force and several commanders of important divisions of the armed forces in Iraq were party members, so they could have seized power. But the power was in the hands of Abdul Karim Qasim. In May 1959, he turned against the ICP. The result

was that the party either had to overthrow the government or risk being destroyed itself. It tried to organize a revolution–and then the CPSU heard about it. They sent a specific person, who had been retrained in Moscow, a member of the Central Committee of the ICP, and demanded that the revolution be postponed, then that it should not take place at all because it was an action of leftist adventurers. So those responsible for the revolution were removed from the party leadership and the opportunist elements seized the party leadership and then went to Abdul Karim Qasim and said, "we prevented the conspiracy against you." The result was that a few years later, the fascists seized power in Iraq and murdered many thousands of Iraqi communists. They could not defend themselves because the party leadership had told them that Qasim would become democratic and introduce parliamentary elections, etc. But in reality, Qasim was a dictator and relied on reactionary forces. The result was that the party lost most of its cadres–the General Secretary (Comrade Salam Adel) and the majority of the leaders were tortured to death. These elements, who were in Moscow and had been frozen in their activity by the party leadership, took part in leading our party even though they were in Moscow. They adopted for our party the line set by the CPSU, specifically in the Suslov Report of 1964. They made contact with the Aref clique, which was very reactionary and carried out executions of Iraqi communists, and they said that the government was progressive and we had to dissolve our party like the Egyptian and Algerian communists had done. Naturally, this leadership fell into discredit, and there was great protest against them, and the underground movement was organized. The party leaders refused on eight occasions to hold the party conference and elect the leadership. So, in September 1967, a party grassroots uprising was organized, and the leadership was overthrown. It had the support of the majority of organized workers, farmers, and the Kurdish faction of the party, as well as the student movement. But most of the professional cadres went with the reformist party, as they were dependent on it for their livelihood, generally not brave enough to put aside their own interests. As a result, two parties with the same name emerged; the revisionists called themselves the Iraqi Communist Party/Central Committee, and we called ourselves the IKP/Central Leadership.

Since then, our party has experienced significant growth. We control almost all genuine organizations. Our party organized the peasant revolt in southern Iraq, led by our comrade Khalid Ahmed Zaki. Although supported to a small extent by the peasants, this uprising garnered widespread attention

throughout Iraq. As a result, most communists and progressive individuals supported our party as the only one truly following the revolutionary path, with the hope of establishing people's rule in Iraq.

Our party has also made several mistakes. About a month and a half after the peasant uprising, the oil companies handed over to the Baath regime, which now governs Iraq, demanding that the leaders of the insurgents be hanged. The first thing the new government did was publicly execute the prisoners of the uprising. There were large protests, and they had to postpone the executions several times. However, our party leadership remained in the cities, resulting in the new government organizing a mass assault and capturing most of them. Twenty were tortured to death, and some confessed, especially those who were against the strategy of guerrilla warfare and did not support the peasant uprising. We had to endure very difficult times.

Since then, the party has rebuilt itself, and in August 1969, a large assembly was held where a new leadership was elected. We criticized ourselves, for example, in the document on armed struggle. We discussed most of our mistakes and experiments and established a new strategy for our struggle in Iraq. It is called the Strategy of Armed People's War. Our party has also clearly stated its position on modern revisionism and tasked the Central Leadership at the August 1969 assembly to draft a document outlining our stance and experiences regarding revisionism because we believe it is the main reason for our deviation from the revolutionary path in Iraq. Pursuing this revisionist line led us to make significant mistakes, resulting in many failures for our party. We have created a document outlining our stance and policies toward the general, modern, revisionist tendencies of the world, and this includes various facts that are not known outside Iraq, which occurred in the fifties and sixties. The perspective that our party proposes is that there should be an alliance of revolutionary forces in Iraq.

We believe that a new direction is developing in Iraq. *[Text missing]* abandoned, and new forces have emerged.It is the policy of our party to ally with these new forces at the level of people's democracy and armed popular groups to end this neo-colonialist system and establish a democracy, a government of the people in Iraq. We have had some success in small beginnings; a student movement has emerged–a progressive front of various forces including our party–and we hope this will evolve into further political alliances, which of course depends on the course of the struggle.

We see armed struggle as the only way, as all governments have resorted to violence against the people. They have suppressed all freedoms, refused to

make concessions to the people, tried every form of terror, and thus left the people with no alternative but that of the weapon. This has been recognized by almost all progressive forces in Iraq. The policy of our party has also been accepted by several other parties in Iraq. With regard to the Kurdish movement, we have our own policy. We criticize the government, and we also criticize some tendencies of the Kurdish revolutionaries insofar as they have made an agreement with the current government. The government is trying to buy time. It made an agreement with the Kurdish revolutionaries to buy time, to suppress other political forces, and to have a free hand in the Persian Gulf. Later, they will crush the Kurds along with other political forces. Our party was almost the only one in Iraq to criticize this agreement between the Iraqi government and the Kurdish revolutionaries from March 1970. It soon became apparent. The agreement was not implemented, and there were several armed clashes between *[Text missing]* revolution and the government. It was speculated that a referendum and census took place in northern Iraq to determine where the majority of Kurds live, under the pretext of clarifying the question of autonomy. However, this census was postponed. It was assumed they would appoint a Kurdish vice president, but as of today, nothing of the sort has happened. Now there are tensions between the Kurdish leadership and the government. Our party proposed that the only way to introduce Kurdish national rights in Iraq would be to establish a democratic people's government that would respect their rights.

In the Arab world, the perspective is that we need to develop unity among the Arab forces, and we have already begun this process. We believe that the enemies we fight are not local or Iraqi; they are the international oil companies collaborating with world revisionism, US imperialism, and reactionary forces. To defeat these enemies, a revolutionary front must emerge, a collaboration between the revolutionary Arab forces and the revolutionary organizations of the world. Therefore, we support the struggle of the Vietnamese people as our own and see their battle as ours. The same applies to the peoples of Latin America. We call for a worldwide revolutionary front and unity to confront American and revisionist threats.

Our party has made a fresh start and is evolving, although these advances are not publicized because most newspapers and mass media have imposed a veil of silence over the revolutionary movement in Iraq. They only publish much about the so-called "progressive" actions of the Baath regime, which have nothing to do with real progress. We participated in the Palestinian resistance movement, and in the recent conflict when King Hussein attacked

the Palestinian organizations, our party sent an armed group and joined the fighting. We worked for cooperation with the Palestinian organization, as they face the same fate as us. It is international factors that condition the situation in the Middle East, and this can only be addressed through the collaboration of revolutionary groups in the Arab world.

Question: How do British oil interests fare on a global scale, and how do these interests connect with British militarism in this region?

Answer: The Persian Gulf holds approximately two-thirds of the world's oil reserves (including those of the Soviet Union). This region encompasses Iraq and its immediate surroundings. Therefore, Iraq plays a significant role in British policy regarding the Gulf. The British control more than one-third of Iraq's oil shares and half of Kuwait's oil, as well as stakes in Abu Dhabi and Bahrain. The British aim to forge partnerships between their interests and those of local reactionaries, firstly due to the development of revolutionary forces in the area and secondly because of the withdrawal of British troops from there. Initially, they proposed a union of sheikhdoms in the Gulf, but their efforts have not succeeded thus far. Secondly, they suggested a partnership with the Ba'ath regime in Iraq, promising to share oil riches with them. This is not new; in 1963, they spent approximately 30 million dinars (equivalent to British pounds) to support the Ba'athist coup, and in return, the Ba'ath government supported the union of sheikhdoms in the Gulf. Of course, the British government cannot control the Persian Gulf with the powder of its fleet or air force; they must work with the local reactionaries.

On the other hand, one must also consider the interests of the USA and the Shah of Persia in this area. About three years ago, the Americans proposed a pact for the Persian Gulf between Iraq, Persia, Turkey, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, so that they could control the Gulf against British interests with the help of this pact. The Shah of Persia was put forward to play the role of the American representative of interests. He wanted to occupy Bahrain, but failed, and now he is trying to control Bahrain from within, although he acknowledges the independence of this state. There has been a large emigration movement of Persian citizens to the Gulf Sheikhdoms. It is hoped that in this way agents of the Shah can be infiltrated, who could help in the future to control this area. So, we believe that on the one hand, there will be cooperation between British oil interests and the local reaction, and on the other hand, a growth of the revolutionary movement. From the south, we know that they have already liberated a large area of Oman and Muscat

there, and that the new revolutionary organizations in Bahrain and Oman are growing strong. The British are advancing their plans with deliberate awareness, and therefore, it is necessary for all revolutionary forces to collaborate to counter these imperialist and colonialist plans. We believe that the British plans will be thwarted. They cannot withstand the revolutionary struggle. The real solution to the problem is the liberation of the Gulf and *[Text missing]* its land. Of course, they will not set fire to the oil or throw it into the sea. They will sell it to the West, perhaps at much better prices than the current monopoly prices. Therefore, there is a common interest in the liberation of the Gulf and supporting the revolutionary forces in the Middle East by the peoples of Europe, because monopoly capital is not only the enemy of the peoples of the Middle East but also the enemy of the European working class.