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The Algeria Agreement of March 1975 Implications in the Middle East

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Abstract:

Iran has long sought to encourage Iraq to agree to Tehran's meaning of the border between the two countries, particularly along the Shat-Al-Arab water way. Concerned to establish his own supremacy in the area, the shah has moreover sought to restrict Iraqi influence and covert activities in the region, as well as to eliminate foreign leftist influences at work in Baghdad. The Algiers agreement of early March 1975 between Iran and Iraq appears to have achieved the Shah's first aim; whether the Shah's other goals could be attained appears more distrustful. Iraq, has been freed of its entanglement in the Kurdish rebellion and, for the time being of the prospect of a confrontation with Iraq. Baghdad's foreign relations options have been substantially increased.

This article outlines the history and genesis of the implications of the Algiers agreement for the participants, Middle Eastern countries likewise the great powers. This study presented a significant amount of certainly not published details about these parties. It provides a brief history about the Iraq's disagreement with the Iranian shah. Particular attention is paid to link between Iraq, other Middle Eastern states and the great powers, and their future relations with each other.

Keywords: *Algiers agreement, the agreement implications for Iraq and Iran, the Kurdish issue, Iraq's regional and international relations*

1. Introduction

Iraq has long been the center of Iran's most intense hostility and suspicious due to ethnic, religious, and political differences. The Shah has regarded Baghdad as a stalking-horse for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) ambitions in the Gulf region. For some time the shah has been using the Kurds of Iraq to divert Baghdad's attention and resources away from interference in Gulf politics, to encourage political stability, further indirectly to promote Iran's wellbeing in border rectification. Never did the Iranian Shah consider help to the Kurds an open-ended commitment, conversely. He did not back up their goal of autonomy out of fear it would persuade similar sentiment among the Kurds of Iran¹.

The Kurdish question took on new dimensions last summer when Baghdad decided to use its USSR-equipped army to seek a "Final Resolution" to its Kurdish question. Baghdad launched an offensive against rebel-held territory that eventually engaged 80 per cent of the army of Iraq. To halt the Iraqi operations and to preserve his Kurdish card, in August 1974 the Shah of Iran introduced Iranian artillery and air defense units directly into the struggling inside Kurdistan. The intervention, furthermore the onset of gruesome weather, eventually suppressed the Iraqi advance. The Kurds, conversely, were unable to regain any lost territory during the winter, as they had usually managed to do in past years².

The Kurds were unsuccessful left the Iraqi army in a good position to renew its campaign in the spring of 1975. The Shah was faced with the prospect of having to shoot up the already sizable Iranian military commitment, if the Kurds were to keep up the struggle. The Shah concerned about the increasing feasibility of an all-out military competition with Iraq similarly the wider implications of such a strategy, decided against deeper involvement. This decision create, the Shah could only conclude that his bargaining position would steadily erode once the anticipated Iraqi spring operation began. He as a result create the best manage he could at Algiers. The Iraqi concession on the Shat Al-Arab no small matter in itself was a necessary minimum in the Shah's eyes as a plausible explanation for his sudden turnaround in reaching an agreement with a bitter adversary³.

The Shah realizes that deeper involvement in the Kurdish fight would jeopardize regional objectives closer cooperation with moderate Arab countries. Expanded Iranian military intervention would have caused him problems throughout the Arab world at a time when he was attempting to develop relations with Egyptian president Anwar Sadat (1970-1981) and other moderate leaders. Arab governments were feeling Iraqi pressure to intervene to secure an end to Iranian intervention. Cairo, in particular, was arguing than ending the competition would help draw Iraq into the Arab political mainstream and lessen its dependence on the USSR. The Shah was concerned over Moscow's advancing supremacy in Baghdad; likewise Cairo's argument may have influenced him⁴.

Pursuit of the military campaign against the Kurds further entailed risks for Saddam Hussein (1979-2003) and might have brought his downfall. As in previous years, policy toward the Kurds was causing spills within the ruling group in Baghdad. The Iraqi strongman had created a personal commitment to a military solution and his prestige was on the line. Hitherto there were serious problems developing within the military over the heavy casualties and over Baghdad's inability to respond effectively to Iranian intervention attention and resources, and the need for military supplies circumscribed Baghdad's freedom in dealing with Moscow. Yet the Baathist regime felt it could not afford to end the campaign and admit failure. Since the immediate need was neutralize Iran, it decided to pay the required price and approve Iran's view on the Shat-Al-Arab⁵.

2. The Algiers Agreement

The Shah of Iran and Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein signed an agreement on 6 March 1975 during the Organization Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Algeria intended to figure out long-standing border crisis which had led to number of serious clashes during the past years⁶. Both countries gained significant upsides from the agreement; Iraq's Kurdish leaders were the big losers. The agreement consists of a public agreement which involved reciprocal responsibilities on two points: (1) Demarcation of land and river boundaries; (2) The exercise of strict border control and prevention of infiltration of subversives. The two states showed the agreement as inseparable; violation of a single establishment invalidates the entire package⁷.

Statement and actions by both sides since March 6 point to the existence of a secret understanding, the exact terms of which were still unknown. The Shah obviously pledged to withdraw Iran's military support from the Kurdish movement. This could not be spelled out in the public agreement due to Tehran always denied giving such assistance. The disposition of Kurdish refugees in Iran possibly was further discussed. Both sides apparently accepted to end up hostile propaganda. The activities of foreign powers in the Gulf may moreover have been treated in Algiers; this has been the theme of statements by officials of both administrations also through their countries' media since the signing.

The Baghdad's main concession was its acceptance of Tehran's formula for demarcating the disagreement southern river boundary according to the Thslweg principle (For instance, center of the navigational channel). The Iraqi administrations has previously insisted that the 1937 agreement setting the border along the Iranian shore of the Shat-Al-Arab gave Iraq complete took over of navigation on the river moreover over access to Iran's Abadan was unable to enforce this claim. However, strict observance of the border took over provision would benefit both sides. It would end the sending of Iraqi trained subversives into Iran to stir up anti-government sentiment among minority groups, particularly the Arab population of Khuzestan. Iranian dissidents presumably would no longer be allowed to promote their activities from Iraqi territory. The major consequence of the provision, of course, was that it has brought an end to Iranian military assistance to the Kurds. This was Iraq's objective and Iran's principal concession⁸.

The withdrawal of Iran's aid decreased the Kurds' options essentially to maintaining low-level guerrilla activity, surrendering to Baghdad, or going into exile. The agreement hence holds out the prospect to Baghdad that freed from a debilitating internal conflict it can devote more resources to development. Some evidence recommended that the Shah thought the agreement further included a promise from the Iraqi government at least temporality to freeze the military situation in Iraq and feasibly to open negotiations with the Kurds. Immediately after the agreement was signed, conversely Baghdad ordered a week until the Shah was able to arrange a ceasefire two days before a prior scheduled meeting of foreign ministers in Tehran on 15 March 1975 to work out the implementation of the agreement⁹. The ceasefire, along with Baghdad's offer of amnesty to rebellious Kurds, expired on 1 April 1975 moreover Iraq completed its military occupation of all Iraqi Kurdistan. It met little opposition. Baghdad, under prodding from Tehran, did extend until the end of April and then for an additional 20 days the period during which Kurdish refugees in Iran could return back to Iraq¹⁰.

Border demarcation and control has proceeded smoothly under the guidance of commissions made by the foreign ministers. The Shat-Al-Arab has been surveyed, likewise jointly-manned took over posts have been established in both countries to monitor the implementation of the Algiers agreement. A second meeting of foreign ministers was held in mid-April and a third was scheduled for mid-May. The refugees question has been discussed, along with the feasibility of wider cooperation. Saddam went to Tehran in late April; the Shah was to return the visit later that spring¹¹.

3. The Algiers Agreement Implications for Iran

On the inside, the Algiers agreement was one of two abrupt major policy decisions in early March that illustrated the Shah's increasingly arbitrary style of rule being his decree of a one-party state for Iran¹². He absolutely consulted no major figure before ditching the Kurds, most advisers have become "Yes-men) as well as there was virtually no public debate over strategy issue. Hence there were few safeguards to miscalculation by him, nor any apparent mechanism for correcting error, beyond the Shah's own perceptions. The Shah's Kurdish decision has domestic security implications. Many if the estimated 150,000 Kurdish refugees in Iraq were embittered by what they regarded as a betrayal, moreover some of Iran's own 1.5 million Kurds have expressed dismay at the abruptness of Iran's withdrawal of support from their Iraqi Kinsmen¹³.

It appears to me Iranian security would be able to manage potential issues from both sources. Iran took the precaution of disarming Kurdish fighting men crossing the border prior to its closing and of isolating them from the civilian refugees. Tehran did not want the refugees to remain in camps and will attempt to integrate them into Iranian society, possible in non-Kurdish areas. There was the possibility that some might resist efforts to settle them in areas markedly different from their mountains homeland. Baghdad, at Tehran's request, sent officials to the refugees to reassure the Kurds that they would be pardoned, if they would return to Iraq. The reporters have received widely conflicting estimates on the number who have chosen to do so. Baghdad realized, as did Tehran, that the Kurds pose a potential security crisis for Iran, likewise probably has slight interests in relieving the Shah of this burden¹⁴.

On the outside, the agreement strengthens the principals' rival capable of seriously challenging Iran in the Gulf, as well as a regime whose sponsorship of subversion and Arab radicalism and receptivity to Soviet influence has long been considered by the Shah as a threat to Iranian security. Iran may benefit from the gratitude of some Arab leaders who had argued the accord would lead to a moderation of Baghdad's present political stance, but others Syrians, Omanis and Kuwaitis worry that Iraqi regime may now devote more attention to its other feuds and border disagreement. Turkish leaders welcomed the agreement turned out to be it puts an end to Iran's support to the Kurdish movement; Ankara feared that there may be a spillover of the struggling or that 3 million Turkish Kurds may have turned out to be involved in an autonomy movement¹⁵.

The Shah would attempt to use the agreement to secure with the help of other Arab administrations a moderation of Baghdad's strategies. In ending his assistance to the Kurds and normalizing relations with Iraq, he developed the hand of Arab leaders who have been encouraging Saddam to decrease his connections to the USSR. The agreement further aids undercut the charge of Arab radicals that Iran was an implacable foe of the Arabs. To the extent that the Shah pushes for a reduction of the USSR supremacy in Iraq, he would have come under pressure to illustrate to Baghdad likewise other Arab states that Iran was not a tool of the U.S policy in the Middle East region. He has previously joined other area states in insisting the Persian Gulf security was the responsibility of littoral states. He now might be willing to enlarge on this line, particularly since prince of Saudi Arabia Fahd Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (1982-2005) whom the Shah's feels was more likely to cooperate on regional security than was King Faysal of Saudi has attained a more supremacy role in Saudi Arabia¹⁶.

Saddam has referred to the feasibility of a collective security arrangement in the Gulf in several press interviews assumed since the agreement was signed. He admitted in one that the Algiers agreement foresaw some Iran-Iraq security cooperation. This goes well beyond any Iranian statements to date. A communiqué issued following a visit to Baghdad by the Iranian prime minister in late March 1975 affirmed only that the Gulf should be "Spared all foreign interference", Iran's government-controlled press has repeated this theme several times since the agreement was signed. Withdrawal of Soviet and the U.S naval forces would leave Iran with the only significant naval forces in the Gulf. The Shah might be willing to state public opposition to the U.S naval in the Gulf more forcefully in exchange for greater regional cooperation on security matters or for concrete examples of a lessened Soviet influence in Iraq. It was doubtful, however, that he would at this time work to secure the complete removal of the U.S presence in Bahrain¹⁷.

The Shah naturally retains a deep suspicion that Iraq's foreign policy will continue to aim at creation of an anti-Iranian front in the Persian Gulf. If Baghdad continues to support subversion and radical Arab politics, the Shah probably will consider himself in a good position to insist that Egypt and Algeria governments which encouraged his reconciliation with Baghdad join Iran in addressing Iraqi "Adventurism". He fears that moderate Arabs will seek their own accommodation with Iraq and even cooperate with Baghdad to limit Iranian influence on the Arabian Peninsula. The Shah's decision to end his support of the Kurds raised doubts about the Tehran in the minds of some conservative Arab leaders with whom he was on good terms. Oman, for instance, was cause to wonder about the steadfastness of Iranian support on the Dhofar fighting. Muscat possibly was responding to rumors that an Iranian withdrawal from Dhofar was included in a secret protocol to the Algiers agreement. Oman has privately reemphasized to Tehran its need for Iranian support. The Shah has shown no disposition to withdraw from Oman¹⁸.

Jordanian King Hussein was deeply concerned over the agreement. He had wished that Iraq would be persuaded to moderate its, position toward the Kurds and that a settlement might be reached under which Barzani might certain his position as leader of the Kurdish community. Hussein now fears Iraqi subversive efforts, and he now wonders whether the rapprochement may have assumed the Iraqi license to do whatever they want in the Gulf region.

The Algiers agreement reached during a summit meeting of the OPEC could complement other efforts to maintain unity with OPEC ranks due to it eliminates a potentially divisive issue. The Shah probably believes the agreement enhanced his role in the organization especially with Arab oil producing states, who in the event of worsened Iranian-Iraqi relations might have found it politically expedient to oppose Tehran's policies in the OPEC venue¹⁹.

4. The Algiers Agreement Implications for Iraq

The end of the Kurdish movement makes stronger Saddam Hussein by removing a vulnerability that his critics could exploit. The present Baathist administration, which took office in 1968, was an uneasy collation of military and civilian factions²⁰. Saddam. Who made the decision to use military means to manage with the Kurdish problem, leads the Baathist regime's civilian wing. The Military's representative in the leadership, President Baker, who was seriously ill and inactive, acquiesced. As the fighting, and the conflict turned out to be known as "Saddam Hussein's War". Giving in to the Shah's demands on the Shat-Al-Arab cost Baghdad something in national pride; conversely, by getting a free hand to manage with the Kurds and lessening the danger of war with Tehran has been no known public reaction Iraq against Saddam's concession to Iran, nor have critics within the leadership tried to exploit the matter. The possibility remains, however, that if he stumbles on some other issue, his concession on the waterway could have come back to bedevil him²¹.

Although troublesome Kurdish related questions have to be faced, Saddam can now redirect the regime's energies. Domestically, Saddam will concentrate on repairing damage to the economy stemming from the hostilities, which he estimated, cost the lives of 10,000 Iraqi troops. Demobilization of reserves will free manpower to return to civilian goods. Baghdad, furthermore, can now allocate more of its resources to accelerating industrial development, and to efforts to subvert Gulf States and Syria²².

As for the dealing with the Kurds, Iraq is relatively free to impose its will. The government of Baghdad will grant no concessions to Kurdish aspirations for self-role beyond the token legislative and executive bodies established last summer. Baghdad has made some efforts to Arabization Kurdistan region by settlement and may see this as part of the long-time solution to the problem. Armed forces

resistance by the Kurds on the scale of 1974 is at that moment out of question. Preliminary indications suggest that about one-third of the 30,000 man Kurdish regular force intend to continue the insurgency using guerilla tactics. The Kurds are believed to have cached large quantities of ammunition in the mountains before that the Iraqi offensive in March. They may have also laid in additional stores arms and supplies from Iran before the border was closed on April I. The Kurds may try establishing lines of supply to the Syrian border. Notwithstanding Damascus well-founded resentment of the subversive activities of the rival Ba'athists regime in Baghdad, Syria has more direct means of putting pressure on Baghdad than arming Iraqi Kurds²³.

Some die-hard Kurds hope that Iran may have resumed military assistance if implementation of the Algiers accord does not proceed smoothly. Such an eventually appears unlikely despite reports that Iran may have training some Kurds against the possibility of a breakdown. Even if mutual suspicious run deep in Iranian-Iraqi foreign policy internationally and externally relations, both sides have a major stake in keeping the new relationship intact, at least for the near international political term. The decline in the Kurds fortunes in matched by the disarray in their leadership. Mullah Mustafa Barzani, now in his early 70s, the personification of the self-government movement, has effectively stepped down. The shah's accord irreparably damaged Barzanis prestige and authority. No remaining rebel commander has the stature to replace him. The Kurdish central command may simply disappear and a number of independent rebel groups may try to carry on resistance against Baghdad. It appears obvious that without substantial support the rebel's resistance to Baghdad will be restricted to the harassment of government units and acts directed against economic target. In their current frame of mind, the Kurds may even strike at Iraqi oil installations, heretofore proscribed from the rebels target feared list at the insistence of the Iranians, who apparently feared that Iraqi terrorists might retaliate against the petroleum complex at Abadan²⁴.

5. The Iraqi-United States Relations after the Algiers Agreement

The end of the Kurdish movement removes one of the impediments to developed relations between the U.S and Iraqi regime. The Iraqis in all probability believe that the U.S was collaborating with Iran and Israel in providing military support to the Kurdish movement. It was, conversely, the U.S role as Israel's principal backer that Baghdad saw as the foremost deterrent to better relations with Washington; likewise the Algiers accord has not affected this. For the moment, Iraq most likely saw no advantages in ending up its status as the only Arab state, among those that broke with the U.S in 1967 over the Arab-Israel war, which has not re-established relations with Washington.

The Iraqi policies were developing in a course that could bring about at some point a reopening of diplomatic relations between the Iraq and the U.S. It was difficult to calculate the timing of such an event, conversely it has noted a rather steady increased in the possibility of goings-on allowed to the United States Interests Section (USINT) in Baghdad, and the Iraqi medias, whereas still capable of strident anti-American arguments, appeared to have decrease somewhat the regularity and vehemence of its assault on the U.S. it was clear, furthermore, that Iraq wished to decrease its prior international segregation and expand its commercial relations with the west including extended business relations with the U.S companies²⁵. The absence of formal diplomatic relations has obstructed quick growth in commercial relations between the U.S and Iraq. In February, for instance, Baghdad decided a \$225 million contract for the U.S "Boeing Aircraft", making Iraq one of the fastest growing markets for products in the Middle East, Iraq still severely limits official contact with U.S diplomats attached to the interests section in the Belgium embassy. Shortly, the U.S diplomats doubt that Iraq would be receptive to any overtures to develop change in overall US Middle Eastern foreign relations²⁶.

6. The Soviet Union Assessment upon the Algiers Agreement

The Soviet Union had no part in getting Iran and Iraq together. Moscow, certainly, likely has mixed feelings about the outcomes of the Algiers agreement, although the Soviet over and over again has advocated an agreement of disagreement between Iran and Iraq a granting of Kurdish autonomy. At the moment Moscow presumably was concerned about what the agreement may portend for Baghdad's relations with the USSR. Moscow aware that Iraq may decide to take upside of go down regional tensions to accelerate it was purchase of Western good, technology, and progressive support, while reducing its dependence on and collaboration with the USSR and Eastern Europe, Even before the Algiers accord, the USSR had assumed indication of concern over what they saw as an Iraqi tendency to lean toward the West. Moscow knew that the Iranian shah wanted to wean the Iraqis away from the USSR and to restrict the advance of USSR supremacy in the Middle East.

On the other side, the Algiers accord has some positive features from Moscow's point of view. The end of the Kurdish movement eliminates a threat to a government in which Moscow has a substantial stake and with which the USSR enjoy basically good, if sometimes troubled, relations. Moscow, moreover, no longer faces the unwelcome prospect of being importuned to back Iraq in full-scale fighting against Iran with whom the USSR have advanced profitable commercial relations. The USSR was aware that over the short term Iraq cannot replace Soviet military hardware, with which Baghdad's forces were almost exclusively equipped supplies, spare parts, technical assistance, and training, although the need for supply will now be less urgent. About 500 USSR advisers are surviving in training roles with the army also an additional 400-500 were with the air forces of Iraq. The enhanced capabilities displayed by the Iraqi army were probably largely the result of USS training and advice. Present purchases of additional MIG-23 aircraft and scud missiles, complementing earlier deliveries of advance weaponry (FROGs, TU-22s and SA-6s), were moreover indications that Baghdad intends to continue looking to Moscow for sophisticated weaponry²⁷.

The USSR, conversely have not been willing to give the Iraqis everything they wanted. A two month delay last year before agreeing to Baghdad's request for additional ammunition undoubtedly increased Iraqi concern about its dependence on one nation for its military needs. This has tribute to a Baghdad decision to diversify its sources of equipment. France, which already had sold helicopters, armored personnel carriers, moreover light tanks, reportedly now gas offered to sell Mirage aircraft. Moscow also knew that there

were powerful influences in Iraq at work to impede any significant turn away from Moscow. The Soviets recognize that historical animosities, distrust, and conflicting interests will be barriers to a significant or lasting accommodation between Baghdad and Tehran. At the same time, the USSR will continue to maintain cordial relation with Iran as a vital element of its policy in the Persian Gulf. Although the agreement could even lead to an improvement in relations; the Soviets have purpose to believe that the agreement presages a different power balance in the Persian Gulf that could further limit USSR influence in the area²⁸.

7. Israeli-Arab Implications

Iran perceives the agreement with Iraq as contributing to its effort to draw cordial to the Arab countries. The Shah, who aspires to regional leadership, did not wish to be classified as hostile to the Arabs and a backer of Israel. Additionally, it might be his conception that the power balance has altered in favour of the Arab states. He may also get ahead an eventual modification of U.S. policy toward Israel. The Shah did not want to be caught brief. Iran's diplomatic, economic, and intelligence relations to Israel were based upon pragmatic, not emotional or ideological considerations. One such consideration was that Israel has served the same goal toward the Arab World that the Kurds served toward Iraq; it has kept the Arabs off balance and occupied. With the understanding that Israel remains militarily strong and able to absorb Arab energies, the Shah would regard his connections to Tel Aviv as in his wellbeing, likewise he would maintain quite relationship. To Tel Aviv, the touchstone of relations with Iran was the continual flow of Iranian oil, which meets about half of Israel's domestic requirements. Tehran's reconciliation with Baghdad will hence not by itself significantly alter Iranian-Israeli regional relations, whereas it has shoot up Israeli doubts about the Shah's willingness to supply petroleum should another Arab-Israeli war break out²⁹.

Since the mid-1960s, Iran supported and abetted Israeli helped to the Kurdish movement. Israeli provided financial and material assistance likewise sent military and intelligence advisers to train Kurdish tribesmen at sites in Iraqi Kurdistan and Iran. A few Kurds may have been trained in Israel. This assistance was possible because of Iranian help and without it there was little chance that Tel Aviv will continue to aid the Kurds. The collapse of the Kurdish rebellion and lessening of Iraqi-Iranian tensions will free much of Baghdad's military forces for use against Israel in the event of another war. In October 1973, Tehran's willingness during a period of tension with Baghdad to resume diplomatic relations with Iraq enabled the Iraqis to send two armored divisions to the Syrian front line. It estimated that by that summer the Iraqis could again contribute as many as two armored divisions likewise some air craft to any renewal of Arab-Israeli war³⁰.

Iraq's help might be more effective than in 1973. At that time the Iraqi effort on the Syrian front was hampered by a shortage of tank transporters, an inadequate logistical system, likewise difficulties in coordinating operations with the Syrians. Soon after the October war, Baghdad took steps to increase its supply of armor transportation and improve its command and control procedures. The logistical system appeared much more effective, largely as a result of experience gained in fighting the Kurds. Despite the present cooperation between the two sides, however, Baghdad has still considered Iran the main military threat and will deploy its troops accordingly. The Iraqi units will return to their normal areas of cantonment near the Iranian border. The Iraq army suffered heavy casualties and moderate equipment loss during the year of fighting the Kurds will experience little difficulty in refitting and bringing units up to strength for service against Israel³¹.

The size of the forces that Iraq contributes for service on the Israeli front line would be determined through Baghdad's relations with the Arab belligerents when, and if hostilities break out. Baghdad's strident call for "liberation" of Israeli-occupied territory should not be read as an open-ended commitment of troops to another round of fighting. If the Iraqis did not believe the front-line Arab countries intend an all-out prosecution of the war, Baghdad would not be disposed to make a maximum military contribution; and as in 1973, the reliability of its commitment would be subject to the vagaries of Iraq's foreign relations with other Arab belligerents³².

8. Iraqi Regional Effect

The Algiers agreement fits the pattern emerging over the past year of Iraqi efforts to project an image of moderation in its regional strategy and non-interference in the affairs of its neighbors. It was too early to estimate whether there was any substance behind the image. The initial impression, however, was that Baghdad's courtship of some Arabs and now Israel reflects an adaptation to internal and external pressure the need, for instance to end up the Kurdish movement and did not signal a primary shift in its foreign policy outlook in the near term. Past performance did not encourage unquestioning approval of Saddam Hussein's new pose. Whereas his personal charm and dynamism have positively impressed even many conservative Arab leaders, and apparently the Shah, his record is that of a dedicated Baathist revolutionary and meddler in the affairs of other countries.

It believed that the Baathist administration leadership remains revolutionary in outlook and committed to attempting overturn conservative and moderate regimes in the Peninsula and the Gulf region. Iraq might turn out to be more subtle in its tactics, however, its best estimate was that Baghdad has adopted a two-tiered policy. It actively courts its neighbors on the diplomatic level, while it continues to interfere in their affairs. For a time, however, in keeping with the conciliatory spirit of Algiers, Baghdad may refrain from blatant involvement, such as its support last year of an effort to overthrow the North Yemen government and to replace it with a Baathist regime³³.

9. Destabilization and Diplomacy

Freed of its battle against the Kurds, the Iraqis may well decide to concentrate on their energies on covert operations aimed at extending their influence within the states of the Peninsula and the Gulf. Baghdad has never been better prepared financially for such undertakings. Iraq's oil revenue estimate \$6.5 billion in 1974 was developing quickly; by the end of the decade Iraq surpasses Iran in oil

production. In line with its new moderate posture, Baghdad would likely concentrate at first on constructing its clandestine assets through the quietly expanding Baathist cells in the small Gulf states likewise increasing support spend liberally to influence local officials and political. Iraqi embassies will probably acquire additional intelligence and security-related personnel³⁴.

At the same time, it anticipate that Saddam, concluding that the Algiers agreement has neutralized earlier Iranian opposition, will embark on a new effort to create some kind of regional security pact or joint military unit among the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf. It believed, however, that such a proposal would keep on to encounter Iranian and Saudi Arabian resistance, as well as foot-dragging by the smaller countries. Baghdad's intentions with respect to its neighbors should have been measurable through observable criteria. Critical tests will be how Iraq deals with its problems with Kuwait and Syria and its role in supporting Omani revolutions and other dissidents³⁵.

The forces of Iraq continue to occupy a strip of Kuwait territory seized in March 1973. The Kuwaitis fear that Baghdad now free of the Kurdish situation would shoot up pressure upon them to cede two islands flanking the approaches to the port of Um, Qasr. The Kuwaitis expect both Iraqi diplomatic initiatives and military muscle flexing along the border. Various Arab leaders including Egyptian president Sadat and Algeria president Boumediene have been mentioned as being interested in mediating the dispute, further Baghdad's response will shed light on its general posture. Iraq has shown no inclination to refrain from subversive acts against the rival Baathist regime in Syria. It was just such acts which provoked Syria's latest squeeze of the Euphrates water supply and its earlier restrictions upon Iraq shipments through Latakia.

To illustrate its adherence to the principle of non-interference, Baghdad could curtail its support of the rebels in Oman's Dhofar province. It believed, however, the Iraqis will do their part to keep the Omani insurgency alive coordinating their support to the revolutions with that of South Yemen while maintaining a low profile themselves. The Iraqis believe they can plausibly deny that they were providing the arms, money and training. Baghdad may urge a shift in tactics to political subversion and terrorism in northern Oman, arguing that the movement can revert to guerrilla warfare whenever the Iranians went home. If Algiers was really a bench-mark in Iraq-Iranian relations, Baghdad would end its support of Iranian separatists. For some time Baghdad has sponsored a Khuzestan Liberation Front to promote separatists sentiments among Iranian Arabs and the Baluchi Liberation Front for the Baluchi tribes of Southern Iran. Iraq has also meddled in Baluchi affairs in Pakistan³⁶.

10. The Algiers Agreement Implications for Syria

How Baghdad deals with Syria will also be watched closely. Relations between the two were at one of their periodic lows. In additions to historic animosities between the two countries, Damascus and Baghdad have rival claims to leadership of the Baathist party. The news of the Iran-Iraq war was not well received in Damascus: the Syrians would prefer to have Baghdad preoccupied with the Kurds. The Syrians expect the Iraqis to conduct their propaganda attacks against Syrian participation in the Middle East peace negotiations and to feel freer to overthrow the Syrian regime. The Syrians appear to have grounds for concern. In mid-March, a senior official of the Baathist Party of Iraq privately commented that the Algiers agreement would free Baghdad to pursue a number of policy goals among which, was one the creation of a government in Damascus more ideologically in tune with Baghdad. The official predicted an upswing in Iraqi sabotage and espionage operations against the Syrian government.

In early April, an early issue flared up when the Iraqis charged that Damascus was violating an agreement by diverting waters from the Euphrates Rivers. The Syrians publicly denied the charge conversely privately acknowledged they took the step to warn Baghdad to stop meddling in Syrian domestic affairs. Only a few weeks' earlier Syria authorities had rounded up 250-300 local Baathist Party members on charges of conspiring with Iraq to oust President³⁷.

11. Egypt's Risk Factor

The Egypt's role in securing the Iran-Iraq agreement was undertaken to further its own efforts to maintain improving relations with Tehran and Baghdad. Sadat counts heavily on economic assistance from both countries, particularly Iran. He further regards as an important partner and Iraq as a principal target for his efforts to exert a moderating throughout the Middle East. The Iraq-Iran disagreement was a main hindrance to both efforts. Sadat undoubtedly felt that his close ties to Tehran endangered Iraq's economic assistance and hampered his efforts to moderate Iraq's opposition to Arab-Israel peace negotiations. In any circumstance, as long as Tehran was skirmishing with an Arab state, Egypt was vulnerable to criticism from radicals for its good ties with Iran. Further Sadat was fully aware that settlement of Iraq's issue with Iran also an ended up to the Kurdish movement might free Iraqi troops to take place in another Middle East war; presumably he, what is more, wished that developed connections with Baathist regime would have motivated the Iraqis to join in an oil siege if war break out.

Whatever Sadat wished, Baghdad was not likely to repay Cairo for its efforts by softening Iraq's stand against Arab negotiations with Israel. Iraqi regime saw merit in its rigid posture likewise no real downsides, at least while negotiations remain stalled. The Iraqis most likely calculate that they can climb on the negotiations bandwagon, if they sense that progress was being made toward a settlement. For the moment, the Iraqis, allied with the Fedayeen groups that refused the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) willingness to participate in negotiations, prefer the adversary role. This posture, they reason, places them in the vanguard of the Arab World persist who brook no compromise with the peaceful approach Egypt and Syria renounce the peaceful approach to a settlement, the Iraqis would be rapid to admit other Arabs that they were right all along. Iraq would then exploit and harness the anticipated radicalization of view toward Israel and the Western³⁸.

12. Algerian Wishes Form the Algiers Agreement

Thought far from front lines, Algeria president Houari Boumediene (1976-1978) undoubtedly expects to receive some financial aid and political support for his proposal for a new economic order as fallout from his part in arranging the Algiers agreement. In need of funds to finance its ambitious four-years development plan, Algeria reportedly has request \$50 million from Iraq and may have also approached Tehran. On international issues, Boumediene probably hopes Iran and Iraq will support his views that oil discussion with consumers be held only in the context of all raw materials not only oil, that the price of oil should be indexed to world inflation rates, and transformation of the world economic system at the seventh special session of the UN general assembly in September 1975³⁹.

13. Saudi Arabia Expectations

The Algiers agreement gave the new leadership in Saudi Arabia more freedom to seek and more complex relations with Iran. During the tension over the past year between Tehran and Baghdad, Iraq would have found it easy to criticize any such moves by the Saudis as inimical to Arab solidarity. Despite signs of a warming of Saudi-Iraqi relations Saddam and prince Fahd reportedly soon would exchange visits moreover the settlement of border problems appears to be near the Saudis fears that Iraq, free from its Kurdish entanglement, would now be able to turn its attention to Persian Gulf affairs⁴⁰.

14. Conclusion

The provisions of the agreement were being implemented. Both sides seemed to have complied with their part of the bargain and have a mutual wellbeing, for the moment, in keeping the agreement intact. Problems might yet advance, however, the Shah, in effect, traded performance for promises in Algiers, likewise there were few assurance that Iraq will want to honor all those promise once it has mastered its Kurdish problem.

Iran's leverage over Iraq was largely lost when it pulled troops out of Iraq, shut off aid to the Kurds, and closed its border. If Baghdad chose to renege on its part border of the agreement it would be tough for Tehran to revive an effective Kurdish resistance movement inside Iraq. Friction appears certain to revive if Iraq persists in meddling in Gulf countries, in addition to particularly territory flanking the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr. In the Gulf to develop its political and military position.

After removing the Kurdish rebellion for making better international relations the Iraqi government wanted to improve its relations with the US and the US role as Israel's principal backer that Baghdad sees as the main deterrent to better relations with Washington and the Algeria's agreement has not affected this. For the moment, Iraq probably sees no advantage in ending its status as the only Arab state, among those that broke with the US over Arab Israel war, which has not reestablished tis wit Washington. To my knowledge, the Soviet Union had no part in getting Iran and Iraq together. Moscow was in fact, probably mixed feelings about the result of the Algeria agreement, although the USSR repeatedly has advocated a settlement of differences between the Iran and Iraq and a granting of Kurdish autonomy. Now Moscow presumably was concerned about what the agreement may portend for Baghdad's relations with the Soviet Union.

In the Middle East region the agreement gives the Saudi Arab the new leadership in Riyadh more latitude to seek better and more complex relations with Iran. Further the Egypt's role in securing the Iran-Iraq agreement was undertaken to further its own efforts to maintain improving relations with Tehran and Baghdad. Sadat counts heavily on economic assistance from both countries, particularly Iran. He further regards as a significant partner and Iraq as a principal target for his efforts to exert a moderating throughout the Middle East. The news of the Iran-Iraq harmony was not well received in Damascus: the Syria would prefer to have Baghdad preoccupied with the Kurds. The Syrian expects the Iraqis to set up their propaganda attacks against Syrian participation in the Middle East peace negotiation and to feel freer to overthrow the Syrian regime. Also the Syrian appears to have grounds for concern, the Syrian regime executed many members of the Baathist party on charges of conspiring with Iraq to oust President. Finally, thought far from front lines, the Algeria president undoubtedly expects to receive some financial aid and political support for his proposal for a new economic order as fallout from his part in arranging the Algeria's agreement.

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