

November 19, 1958

**Record of a Conversation of Cde. N.S. Khrushchev
with a Delegation of Baghdad City Government**

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Summary:

Khrushchev meets with a delegation from the Baghdad City Government to congratulate them on their recent revolution and offer advice on the Iraqi government's future strategy.

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[Handwritten: Forward to members and candidate members of the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee, including Cdes. Gromyko and Ponomarev (orders of Comrade N.S. Khrushchev)]

[Handwritten: send to the General Section of the CPSU Central Committee for dissemination]

[Handwritten: Sent out on 24-XI]

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
OF CDE. N.S. KRUSHCHEV
WITH A DELEGATION OF BAGHDAD CITY GOVERNMENT
19 November, 1958^[1]

Present: Mayor of Baghdad Brigadier General Abdul Majid Hassan, representatives of the Baghdad City Government, Abdulla Ahmad, Mahmoud Al-Mudaris, Abdulla Ihsan Kamil and wife, Suleiman Sami Suleiman and wife, Rifat Kamil Al-Chadarji, and Chairman of the Executive Committee of Moscow City Government, N.I. Bobrovnikov.

When greeting the delegation, N.S. Khrushchev says that the Soviet people are genuinely happy to receive the delegation from the capital of Iraq, where recent historic events took place which put Iraq on the path to freedom and independence, the events that were received with full understanding and support by the Soviet Union.

Hassan states that the members of the delegation consider it a great honor and luck to be received by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. They give N.S. Khrushchev best regards from Iraq's national hero, Prime-Minister Qasim and from all Iraqi people. The members of the delegation have received such a warm and friendly welcome that they can now with a safe conscience say that they feel right at home.

The Iraqi people will never forget the help that the great Soviet Union is extending to all smaller countries and nations. It will never forget that the Soviet Union was the first out of all of the big countries who recognized the Iraqi Republic. It will also not forget that the ultimatum that the Soviet Union posed to Britain and the US during the Iraq Revolution, stimulated this revolution and supported its leader. Iraqi Republic will not forget the invaluable support that the Soviet representatives extended to the Iraqi representative at the UN. The USSR always goes step in step with those states that love peace, justice and progress.

We have no reason to doubt, Hassan continues, that the visit to the USSR by the Baghdad delegation shall be of a great benefit for Iraq and shall strengthen the ties of friendship between the soviet and the Iraqi people.

N.S. Khrushchev thanks Hassan for the greetings that he made on behalf of the Prime-Minister Qasim and asks to pass his best regards and his warmest brotherly wishes to him.

The Soviet Union, continues N.S. Khrushchev, has always shown and continues to show readiness to support the Iraqi Republic. Soviet people remember very well how difficult it was for them in the first years following the October Revolution, and they sympathize with those who wants to solidify and ensure the gains of its people. Therefore when, right after the revolution in Iraq, America started deploying its military in Lebanon, and Britain in Jordan, at the time the Jordanian king Hussein declared himself the King of Jordan and Iraq, the Soviet Government considered it necessary to voice its opinion and declare that the USSR would not stand the

aggression against the newly established Iraqi Republic. The soviet government was also aware, based on its intelligence reports, about the military action that was being prepared by Turkey, Iran and Pakistan against Iraq. Therefore the Soviet Union on its part undertook a demonstration of military force to dampen enthusiasm of the ruling circles in these countries. And apparently they understood this demonstration correctly, since after a while they recognized the government of the Iraqi Republic.

But of course the Iraqi Republic hasn't overcome all of its difficulties yet. Currently the imperialists are placing their reliance on the internal difficulties in Iraq. The main threat for the Iraqi Republic is currently not from the outside but from the counterrevolutionary forces inside the country. The Soviet Union is familiar with this based on its own experience. We have staged the February and the October revolutions in 1917 relatively easily. The main difficulties came about later. France, Japan, Britain, America, and Poland, everyone who surrounded us and had an opportunity to attack, all of them turned against the new soviet state. But the main force nevertheless was the internal counter-revolutionary [elements] who were opposing the soviet government. And thus the Soviet people were forced to fight for 3 years before they were able to solidify their gains.

And therefore, says N.S. Khrushchev, it is too early for the Iraqis to rest on laurels. The enemy does not give up, it looks for vulnerabilities. Your delegation apparently has representatives from different parties. I am a communist, and therefore our opinions will possibly differ. But nevertheless please allow me to express my opinion. As I already said, the main difficulties for the Iraqi Republic are only just coming about. Until now all healthy national forces and all progressive forces in Iraq have been united in their fight against the reactionary, corrupt government. And now that the revolution has happened, what's next? Some of those who participated in the fight against the King's government, are saying that the revolution happened, that the power is in the hands of the republican government and that is just enough. There is no need to move forward. Others believe that this is not enough. A worker wants an increase in pay and a shorter working day, while a capitalist wants that the working day is longer and that he has to pay less. A peasant hopes to receive land, but the landowner hopes to hold on to, and even to increase, what he already has. All Arabs were united against imperialist proxies, but now their interests differ, though they all remain Arabs. This is possibly a more complicated problem than the problems that [you] were faced with when [you] were fighting against the king.

Here, in Russia, N.S. Khrushchev continues, we had these issues too in the past. It did happen that in one family one brother would [fight] for the whites and the other for the reds. My childhood friend, with whom I grew up, went to the army during the imperialist war, became an officer and then joined the Whites. I, as you know, was with the Bolsheviks. That was a difficult struggle, a win-or-die struggle.

The separation that I have mentioned before is unavoidable. The struggle has its own logic. This of course doesn't mean that we are trying to persuade you to follow our path. It is your job to choose your own path. All nations have the same wish - to live better. In this both Russians and Arabs are the same. But there are different points of view as to what path should be taken to get there.

For example, even to this day we are being criticized in India. They acknowledge our successes, but they say that the path that we have followed was too cruel. This is what Nehru says, too. But when the socialist revolution won in Russia, the Bolsheviks displayed great chivalry. I have to say that in Iraq you have acted more decisively than us during the first stage. You have executed the king right away, as well as Nuri Said and other agents of imperialism. We didn't do that. Lenin even let the generals, who instigated a counter-revolutionary rebellion against the Soviet government and were captured by us, go on their own recognizance. But they went to the Don and Kuban regions and organized the Cossack rebellion. Therefore cruelty that took place during the civil war in Russia was not initially employed by the Bolsheviks. But the

Bolsheviks and all working people were faced with a dilemma – to surrender or to decisively defend themselves. Lenin was right when he said that we needed to fight. And now there are attempts to accuse communists of cruelty.

You also cannot afford to be faint-hearted if you want to prevent losing what Iraqi people have gained. If you waver in front of your enemy, it will crush you. General Hassan, as a military person, knows that.

Then the members of the delegation discuss the big impression that they received from their visit to the Soviet Union. They say that they never imagined that the soviet people achieved such great successes in the development of their country.

In the conclusion, Hassan once again from the bottom of his heart expresses his gratitude for the honor of being received by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, of which the members of the delegation couldn't even dream before.

N.S. Khrushchev answers that this is just the first of many meetings between the Iraqi and soviet representatives. Iraqis can always ask the soviet people for [help] and count on their help and support.

Hassan expresses his deep gratitude to N.S. Khrushchev for these words.

N.S. Khrushchev requests once again to give his best regards to Prime-Minister Qasim, wishes the government of the Iraqi Republic to strengthen the political system of the Republic, to develop the country's economy and increase the standard of living of the population, because people see revolution as an opportunity to better their lives.

The conversation lasted 40 minutes. Written down by O. Troyanovsky.

[Handwritten: "sent out"]

[1] * [handwritten: Cde. N.S. Khrushchev did not review the record of the conversation]