

Iraq Prepares for Baghdad — Cairo “Reconciliation”

July 7 (IPS) — Under the pressure of a powerful, CIA-orchestrated military and psychological campaign and lacking Soviet support, the pro-Soviet government of Iraq has begun to issue feelers in the direction of the Rockefeller-dominated axis comprised of Cairo, Damascus, Amman, and Riyadh. Just previous to an unpublicized visit to Algeria and Libya by Iraqi Vice-President and strongman Saddam Hussein — a visit which was gleefully characterized by the *Washington Post* as “a possible move toward ending Iraq’s isolation in Arab politics” — a pro-Iraqi newspaper published in Kuwait, *As-Siyassah*, printed an article meant to explain Iraq’s secret moves toward reconciliation with the Rockefeller-Sadat axis.

At the same time, reports circulating in the pro-Cairo Beirut press confirmed that Rockefeller ally Sadat is laying the groundwork for an eventual Cairo-Baghdad “reconciliation,” with the help of the CIA, as reported last week in IPS. According to *As-Sayyad*, a pro-Cairo Beirut weekly, Sadat will probably visit Iraq before the end of July because “brotherly” Iraq “cannot be absent while important decisions are going to be made.”

Iraq Opens A “Dialogue”

The first public announcement of the impending Iraqi policy shift came indirectly in the June 27 issue of *As-Siyassah*. Evidence that the Iraqis accept this article as accurate is that two days after the appearance of the story, the author was granted an interview with Iraqi Industry Minister Taka Jazrawi. Titled “Iraq to Open Dialogue With Traditionally Hostile Regimes,” the article emphasized “the change in Iraqi stiffness” observed by the author. Recognizing that a sudden dramatic shift in Iraqi policy would be too embarrassing for the Iraqi Baath government, Baghdad is now planning to hold a “Arab Popular Front” conference sometime soon, to include all “national and progressive Arab forces, parties, and organizations” which would evaluate the changed circumstances in the Middle East since the CIA-inspired war last October.

Apparently, the Iraqi tactic involves lining up support for its “militant” positions within the Arab world, while gradually normalizing relations with Cairo. Aside from a flurry of bland articles in *Pravda*, the Iraqis have received absolutely no public support from the Soviet Union. Frightened by this lack of interest from a supposed ally, the Iraqis have been forced to graft their

radicalism onto on purely Arab political base. They have capitulated completely to the “bargaining chip” notion of politics.

Thus, immediately after the publication of the *Siyassah* article, Saddam Hussein made his trip to Libya and Algeria.

Search and Seal in Lebanon

One of Iraq’s prime “bargaining chips” is its influence over the leftwing Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The PFLP is nominally pro-Iraqi, and as such has clashed repeatedly with the rightwing nationalists led by Yasser Arafat and his countergang Fatah. In the past two weeks, however, following the raids into Lebanon by Israel which ended on June 21, the normally confused state of Lebanese politics has collapsed into programmed chaos; the position of the PFLP is greatly weakened.

First, using as an excuse a bloody clash between two smaller CIA-infiltrated commando organizations, Fatah stepped in to “mediate” the dispute, and assumed responsibility for “security” in the Palestinian camps, openly acting out its police role. Then, following a meeting of Arab League Foreign Ministers, an agreement between Lebanon and the Palestine Liberation Organization was reached formally initiating joint Lebanese-Palestinian policing operations.

As a climax, the entire Lebanese security and police forces were mobilized throughout the country, in search of a prominent Beirut newspaperman “kidnapped,” SLA-style, supposedly by dissident Palestinian guerrillas.

Such transparent counterinsurgency maneuvers are aimed solely at one thing. With Iraq’s tentative motion in the direction of Cairo, the CIA wants to ensure that the PFLP is well under control. Very probably the CIA-controlled Lebanese police are preparing a final blow at the PFLP and allied guerrillas. This operation is directly overseen by the current U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, G. McMurtrie Godley, a veteran CIA agent with experience in the Congo rebellion and the CIA’s “secret war” in Laos in 1969.

Tragically, even Iraq is using its influence over the PFLP to induce them to police themselves. The *Siyassah* article reports that Baghdad informed pro-Iraqi Palestinian groups that they should maintain their ties with the treacherous Fatah coalition rather than risk an open break.