

**The Political and Administrative Situations in Iraq (1932-1958)****Memet Yetişgin**

Prof. Dr., Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi, Fen-Edebiyat  
Edebiyat Fakültesi, Tarih Bölümü, memetw@gmail.com

**Qasım Mohammed Faraj**

Arş.Gör.,Salahaddin University, Fakültesi, Tarih Bölümü,  
qasimfaraj4@gmail.com

**Abstract:** Iraq had drawn an important role in the British policy for a long period, especially when their activities reached the gulf countries during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. They realized that their primary needs for raw materials can be obtained in these regions, apart from that Iraq was like a medium for linking Britain to the world economy, for this reason initially Britain spent their efforts for establishing some companies like Mackenzie. In fact these companies tasks were not only business, but they were also busy with political, commercial and social issues. The importance of strategic Iraq for the British traced back to its geographical location that occurs on the gulf territories, which was part of land paths to India that was a British colony, in addition to discovering oil in Abadan. These reasons were influential to urge the British politicians to stress on the importance of Iraq. Since they thought the plains of Mesopotamia were a lively field for the British commercial and political activities, in this regard Lord Curzon expressed the importance of Iraq in 1908. Before the outbreak of the First World War the British planned their military attack on the southern Iraq, and then the Indo-British government created a council 1911 to study the needs and the way of occupying it. The council suggested occupying Faw and Basra. When the First World War broke out and the Ottomans fought alongside the Axis powers against the Allies, and Iraq as part of the Ottoman Empire became the war front line that paved the way for the British to invade Iraq and establish her manda system there. During the I. World War, despite her sound defeat at Kut, the British succeeded in invading Iraq and even after the Mudros Armistice she captured Mosul. Being the mandator, the UK founded a royal regim in Iraq. But political, administrative and economic problems under the UK mandate in Iraq could not end. This period experienced many coups and internal conflicts. This work focuses on administrative and political situations in Iraq from 1932 to 1958.

**Keyword:** Iraq, Turkey, British Mandate, King Faisal, King Gazi.

### Irak'ta Siyasi ve İdari Durum (1932-1958)

**Öz:** Irak, uzun bir süre İngiltere'nin siyasetinde önemli bir yer tutmuştur. 17. asrın ilk yarısında İngiltere Basra körfezinde faaliyetlerde bulunmaya başladığında bu bölgedeki ham maddeleri elde edeceğini anlamıştı. Basra Körfezine kıyısı olan Irak, dünya ekonomisi için bir köprü gibiydi. İngiltere, o yüzden Irak'ta ilk başta Mackenzie, Andrew gibi şirketleri kurmaya başladı. Bu şirketler yalnızca ticaretle değil siyasi, sosyal ve ekonomik işlerle de uğraşmaktaydı. Irak'ın stratejik önemi İngiltere'nin gözde müstemlekesi Hindistan'a giden yollar üzerinde olması ile artmaktaydı. Bir de Abadan'da petrol bulduktan sonra İngiltere siyasetinden daha önemli bir yere sahip oldu. İngilizler, I. Dünya Savaşı başlamadan önce siyasi ve ekonomik faaliyetler için Mezopotamya'nın kendisi için çok önemli bir ortam olacağını düşünmekteydi. Bu önemine binaen Lord Curzon 1908 yılında planlar yaptı ki bu Irak'ın güney bölgelerine saldırmak için askeri planları içermekteydi. 1911' de planı uygulamak için bir kurul oluşturular. Kurul "Basra ve Faw" şehirlerinin sömürgeleştirilmesi önerisinde bulundu. 1914 yılında Birinci Dünya Savaşı başladığında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Merkezi ülkelerle birlikte İtilaf Devletlerine karşı savaşı girdi. Irak da diğer Osmanlı toprakları gibi savaş meydanına dönüştü. Bu da İngiltere'nin Irak'ı sömürgeleştirmesine fırsat verdi. Birinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında Kut'ta aldığı ağır askeri başarısızlığa rağmen İngilizler Irak'ı işgal etmeyi başardılar ve hatta Mondros Ateşkesi sonrasında Musul'u işgal ettiler. Savaş sonrasında Irak'ta mandater bir ülke olan İngiltere Irak'ta krallık rejimi kurdu. Ancak İngiliz mandası altındaki Irak'ta bir türlü siyasi, idari ve ekonomik sorunlar son bulmadı. Bu dönem birçok darbeye ve iç çekişmeye konu oldu. Bu çalışma 1932 ile 1958 arası Irak'ın siyasi ve idari yapısındaki gelişmeleri konu edinmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Irak, Türkiye, Britanya Mandası, Kral Faysal, Kral Gazi.

## INTRODUCTION

Worth mentioning that during the First World War the Ottomans was unaware of the British occupation of Faw (Fao)in Basra till the next day when they were informed by the FAW people, and that was due to the lack of communication in the Ottoman army in Iraq. After capturing Faw the British army headed toward Basra and occupied it on November 23, 1914, and set up a military base there. The Ottoman troops stationed there withdrew to Qurna and Zubair. But British continued to progress and capture Qurna and Zubair in December 9, 1914. It was an alarm bell for the Ottomans, and Ottoman forces in collaboration with tribal forces stopped an English military forces, nearly 10-15 thousand strong, in Shuaiba. A great battle was fought and was won by the Turkish troops, which forced the English to taste a major loss in their Iraq front. Despite this failure, they were eventually able to push the Ottoman forces toward Imarra and Nasiriya. By June 15, 1915 Basra was fully under their hand (Bil,1971: 447; Mazhar,1987: 27).

The British troop headed by General Tawns hand moved toward Baghdad, when the Ottoman forces stationed to defend near Kut on 27 September 1915.The battle of Kut was started and continued for 20 hours. Initially British forces had some success for which the Ottoman forces withdrew and build their defense lines in Madaeen. The British troops continued on their attack, at that moment another Ottoman military force came to the region from Anatolia and were able to hit the British troops hard. The British troops lost the battle and returned back to Kut city. In this battle, number of killed solders in British army were estimated to 4500 fighters (Basre, 2005: 99).

The Ottoman forces were from 6th Army corps and were initially headed by General Goltz Pasha. After Goltz Pasha's death on 19th April 1916 in Bagdad, Major General (Mirliva) Halil Pasha (Kut) headed the Turkish 6th Army corps and followed the British troops and eventually surrounded them in Kut for 5 months. The British forces were devastated and were in a dire situation. Though British tried many times to break the siege, they were beaten back and could not succeed in breaking up the barricade. Later on April 29th 1916 they were surrendered to the Ottoman forces. The British soldiers surrendered were estimated to between 15.000 and 18.000 solders (Kurtcephe, 2006: 100; Sarıca, 1983: 255; Eroğlu, 1990: 80).Halil Pasha claimed that 13 army generals, 481 officers and 13.300 soldiers were taken as prisoners after the fall of Kut (Duman, 2015: 463-473). This victory by the Ottoman army were not lead the liberation of the rest of Mosul Vilayet (Al-Hasane,1983: 32), which later paved the way to the British troops to regroup their forces and restart another round lead by army

General Mod. And then on march 11th 1917 they conquered Baghdad, and moved north and invaded both Samara and Tikrit.

They moved closer to Mosul when the Mudros armistice was made on October 30 1918 and that ended the war with the Ottoman government. Even though Mudros armistice was signed, the British troop headed toward Mosul to invade it, which created a big concern for both Iraq and Turkey (Muhamad,2004: 54).

British move into Iraq made Iraqi situation fragile and Iraq was destabilized. It did not take long for the start of the 1920th revolution in Iraqi that continued for 3 months. The revolution was a big blow to the British army. The key reasons that ignited the revolution were mismanagement of the British politicians and army rulers toward Iraqi tribal heads and several other factors. This rebellion was ended by force, and new government was formed again, and the primacy was given to Abdurrahman Naqib (Hasaane, 1983: 132).

With the start of Faisal as a new king in early 1922, the English government tried to tie Iraq to their interests. The British were arranging treaties in accordance with their interest, and they renewed mandate on Iraq for many years. Iraqi officials were signing those truces without any skeptics (Bil, 1971: 450). Though these pacts were making internal dilemmas to the Iraqi political parties and local Iraqi tribes, yet they were not shrinking England's interests. Later on March 27 1924 the first council was established and held its first meeting. The council made some important resolutions comprised of drafting a new constitution and making new laws for the country (Mazhar, 1982:34 ).

At the mean time these circumstances has made the Mosul state issue back then, and Iraq to face another political problem. The new Turkish state considered Mosul as part of Turkey because of its Turkish inhabitants and historical rights. Yet, Iraqi state under the British yoke was thinking it is Iraqi territory. Succeeding the Lozan and Istanbul summits which resulted in nil, and later League of Nations summit and creation of a committee for resolving the issue in British interest. Later on January 16 1925 the Brussels line was marked and Mosul was linked to the Arabic Iraq. Following that number of treaties, Turkey has agreed to get some privileges in return for Iraq to keep Mousul, which formulized in Ankara treaty in 1926 (Yalçın, 2000: 309-326; Warde, 2005: 137).

Iraq was moving on its path until on March 24 1930 when Noori Saeed has formed a new government, and stepped ahead to sign anew truce with England to extend the British mandate on Iraq. That treaty was known as the treaty of the year 1930. Iraqi opposition to this truce was continued until Iraq has become a

member of the League of Nations on 1932, and after that Iraqi local circumstances entered a new stage that was independent period (Azawe, 1953: 179).

### **King Faisal's Death and Its Significance**

After he was chosen as an Iraq king, the British government was forcing him to do as they wished. But he was not leaning to their orders, which helped the Divans to change from English to Arabic. This was recorded as one of his significant achievements. King Faisal was perished on April 7 1933 in Switzerland when he was there for medical treatment. After his death there were rumors in Iraqi newspapers that were accusing British rulers about his death because of the following causes:

1. Few days prior to his death King Faisal was seen with an Indian women, which they had no prior relation, therefore the conclusion was that British rulers has sent her to poison the king (Al-Atea,1988: 52) .
2. The king's driver who was from Switzerland, one day prior to king's death lost his way and was carrying the king for a long time in his car. People were asking how it was possible for a local driver to miss his trail? Therefore they were suspicious about "keeping king in the car for this long period" that affected king's health and caused his death.
3. Returning his corpse back to Iraq after 8 days was also an additional doubt about British's involvement in his death (Nema, 1987: 83).

The next king was Gazi who was born in Macca on march 21st 1912, spent his life with his grandfather, and later on October 5th 1924 he came to Iraq and was legally assigned as his fathers successor. In the same year Gazi was sent to Howar school in England, and in November 1928 he came back to Iraq and went to military college and in 1932 wher he graduated as a second army lieutenant. At that period king Gazi was able to gather a large number of people to support him and able to attract British rulers' attention toward him (Sahdwn,1988: 65).

When he learned about his father's death, contacted the British ambassador, and the ambassador contacted Mr. Yassen Hashmi, finance minister and head of the Brayati national party to step ahead to make Gazi as king of Iraq. Within that the prime minister and number of the ministers came to the mourning ceremony on April 8th. They met Gazi and asked him to become a king. He agreed to their demand and decided to continue on his father's political path (Hasaane, 2000: 155). Some of the Iraqi leaders and in particular Noori Saeed, and Jahfar Askar were believing that Gazi is not capable of keeping the balance, therefore they were not happy about Gazi to become the next King. But despite oppositions, Gazi was chosen as the king of Iraq.

Gazi's ruling period, 1933-1939, had its own aspects which linked to his support of Arab nationalistic ideology. In some ceremonies King Gazi revealed his opposition to British rulers. Though he was too young when he got the power he gathered a huge number of people and build a radio station called zhoor (Welsn, 1971: 87). He was running the station and was using it to spread the Arab nationalistic ideology and to attack the British rulers, additionally during his governing he demanded to return Kuwait back to Iraq. This issue created a problem between Iraq and England. In 1939 Gazi had a car accident and died. When his death news was sprayed on April 4 1939 in many of the Iraqi cities and in particular Baghdad and Mosul uprising against the British took place they accused the British for his death (Shbr, 1990: 118). Therefore in Mosul people attacked British consulate office and the consul was murdered. The facts that were used to accuse British were:

1. The King Gazies nationalistic Ideology was always against British rulers.
2. His efforts to try to get weapons form different sources such as Italy than England (Basre: 1989: 124) .
3. In addition to the sources indicating that there was a slave with the king during the accident and the slave was disappeared. In fact this slave was Kings Faisals adapted "milk" brother. At that time there was a ritual in the Arabic peninsula if they have a boy child they were finding an adapted milk brother in order not to betray him. Therefore vanishing of this slave made people doubtfully think about the possibility that he may be sent by British to kill the king(Al-Atea, Opcit: P77).

After Gazi's death the throne was handed to Faisal, the second of "Gaziesson", because he was too young his uncle Abdullah became the "willpower" that means he was supervising the whole thing until Faisal reached 18 years old. Faisal the second was born on May 2nd 1935, studied with private teachers, and later in 1952 he graduated from Howar College. He was only 4 years old when he became the King, and later in 1953 he became the direct king of Iraq, and stayed in power till July 14 1958, when he was slaughtered with his family members in rehab palace (Hasaane, 1997: 159).

### **Assyrian Issues**

Nestorians, who by some orientalist are called Assyrians, most of them settled in Jola Merg area in the eastern Anatolia under the guard ship authority of Ottoman's rule. When the First World War broke out Russians were able to control some parts of Ottoman state. The Assyrians' province fell into Russians' control, so the Russians incited the Assyrians against the Ottoman state, but the Ottomans soon were able to defeat them and killed a number of them, but the rest

of Assyrians run away towards Iran and settled in an area in Uremia with other Assyrians who lived there (Mazhar,1987: 105).

The Britons tried to use every means to defeat the Ottomans in Iraq. One method for this goal was to unite and agitate local communities, including the Assyrians, against the Ottomans as they did in Arabia. Since the British knew that the Assyrians had a potential religious hatred towards the Sunni Ottomans they saw a pending local uprising of the locals. So the Britons sent the general Wester Fig to ensure the Assyrians and promise them that the Britain will help them by weapons and ammunition in case they revolted against the Ottomans. Yet, before arriving these weapons to the Assyrians, the Ottomans attacked the Assyrians and caused severe losses to them. After that the Britain suggested that those Assyrians should be transferred to Iraq and settle at the right side of Sirwan River near Baquba. The Assyrians were 25 thousands in number, of them 15 thousands were from the Ottoman state and the rest were from Iran. When the Assyrians came to Iraq by the support of Britain, the men worked in road construction, and Britain spent so much money on the Assyrians' families (Barawe,1980: 130).

But after the world war ended Britain and Iran concluded an agreement by which Iran agreed to the return of Assyrians to Iran. However, the Ottoman state and after that The Turkish Republic did not agree to the return of the Assyrians. So this decision created a new situation about how to deal with the Assyrians. The solution was to enroll the Assyrians in a military force called Levi after that Britain decided to settle them in Kurdish Region. But this step faced failure. Britain used this force in military activities inside Iraq to reduce military expenditures and this force took orders from British officers. In respect to Iraq's attitude, from the beginning Iraq didn't agree to this force, at the same time when the Vilayet of Mosul displayed in front of the League of Nations and a committee came to Iraq to solve this problem and after that it was joined to Iraq. The Assyrians did not agree with this decision though the committee recommended some recommendations about Assyrians' rights like opening their schools and giving some importance to their language. But the Assyrians were not satisfied by these, they demanded for their own right which was re-establishing an Assyrian empire that was destroyed by the Babylonians and the Medes in 612 B.C. On the other hand in 1928 the Turkish State issued a general amnesty for the Turkish citizens but this amnesty did not include the Assyrians. The United Kingdom in 1932 decided that Iraq would be a member of the League of Nations (Mazhar, 1987: 119-121).

The Assyrians strongly protested this decision and their leader Agha Patros whose nick name was "Mar Shamun" went abroad in seek of help to their cause

yet he died painfully there. When Iraq's membership in the League of Nations became the reality, the Assyrians without consulting the Iraqi government headed towards Kurdish regions. The Britain opened a camp between Mosul and Akre; on the other hand the Iraqi government was ready to demilitarize the Assyrians. The French showed their readiness to accept them in Syria if the Assyrians wished to go there. Yet, when the Assyrians came into Syria the French didn't keep their promises as they expected. So the Assyrians had to return to Iraq (Brown, 1996: 134). The Iraqi government accepted them back into Iraq but on condition that the Assyrians gave up their weapons to the Iraqi government. But they refused to do that, so Iraqi army under the command of Bakir Sidqi attacked them in 1933 at Simil village. Many Assyrians were killed and this led to a global protestation, therefore the Prime Minister at that time was Rasheed 'Ali Gaylani with accompany of Noori Sa'eed went abroad and Brazil showed its readiness to accept the Assyrians. Yet after a long time passed Brazil didn't keep its promise. Meanwhile the Britons withdrew themselves from the Assyrians' issue, so the Assyrians forcibly decided to reside in regions of Duhok, Akre, Zakho and Shangar where they have been living to the present (Shbr, 1990: 122).

### **Baker's Coup in 1936**

In 1936 there was a coup in Iraq, sometimes known as Baker Sidqi Coup. It can be counted as the first military coup in the Middle East. If we notice the circumstances of Iraq before the coup, we will know the cabinet was formed and soon changed. This was because politicians did not agree of the authority of the prime ministry (Al-Nassre,2000: 79). Baker would plot and unite with the leader of his tribe which offended the government. Baker forced the Prime minister Yaseen Hashmi to make resignation. Yaseen Hashmi had power on internal circumstances. He could bring a stable environment. He had relations with many very important persons—like Noori Saeed, Jafar Askari and so others (Hassane,1985: 118).

Yaseen gave the rank of general officer to his brother Taha Hashmi. Additionally, Yaseen Hashmi's Government worked to remove disagreed voices and opinions and dissolve political parties, and exile some of those who presented activities apart from closing some newspapers as well as silencing tribes' voices (Ahmed, 1982: 88 ). These were his works inside of the country. Concerning outside the country, the government worked mostly for Arabic nationality, and supported the Arabic movements, especially in Syria and Palestine. But, Hikmat Sleman who was the Iraqi political person outside of this authority had a strong relation with Baker Sidqi. At that time Sidqi was the general officer as agent for the Iraqi army. Therefore, they both agreed to remove Yaseen Hashmi through a coup (Bazaz,1997: 131).



One week before the coup, in October 29, 1936 Sleman with the members of National Reformation Union Establishment informed people that the army officers under the presidency of Baker Sidqi had decided to do military coup so as to topple down Hashmi government. Baker sent a letter to the people, in which he asked them for collaboration. The people agreed on this, but with the conditions that after the victory, they would have the right to share the government and the personal military should not share it, although the government had to be administrated on the principle plans. By this, Baker Sidqi accepted all their demands—they would establish the government and only the ministry of defense would be the right to Baker to select someone to this position (Nassre, 2000: 83).

In October 29, 1936 some planes of air force had shared out some messages over the Bagdad city in which they requested people to participate the military coup to collapse Hashmi government and change into another government that would work for national interests. The shared messages affected people, and Baker Sidqi set zero time –the exact time for carrying out the coup. Then Hikmat Sleman moved to the king mansion and he sent a message to the king in which written that Bakir Sidiqi and Abdul-Allateef, signed and asked to bring down Hashmi government to establish a new government. The new government would be under the control of Hikmat Sleman (Mazhar, 1987: 142). After the planes threw down some bombs, the king with Yaseen Hashmi, Noori Saeed and Jafer Askari quickly hold a meeting with attendance of Britain's ambassador, in which Yaseen Hashmi agreed to resign. So Hikmat Sleman was asked to form a government (Hassane, 1985: 137) .

Jafar Askari went to Baquba so that they could not let the troops enter Bagdad and convince them to be back to their centers. But, when Baker Sidqi knew this he decided to kill Jafar Askeri. By killing him, at 4 o'clock the army could enter Bagdad. In the evening, at 6 o'clock the coup government, by the president, Hikmat announced the membership of National Reformation Union. But (Al-Atea, 1988: 97) we have to refer that this government soon failed. Conflicts occurred between them, this is because when Baker Sidqi interfered in political issues and made decisions without being backed by the government. This made the issues not to be continuous until August 11, 1937. In Mosil city Baker was killed and Hikmat Sleman was forced for a resignation in August 17, 1937. The dire situations lasted till the Second World War (Sahdwn, 1988: 112).

After international conflicts that day by day increased, as a result of things in September 3, 1937, Britain and France together started war against Germany, so this gave way to Noori Saeed to cut off the relations with Germany and get their embassy out in the Iraq and took their stuff then gave it to Indian Government.

Noori Saeed Iraqi Prime Minister at that time declared to enter the war, so he sent two teams of military so that they would fight alongside their allies against central countries (BATA, 2000: 165).

Noori Saeed once rushed in cutting off the relations with Germany, and got Iraq at the services of the Britains. This generally had reflections among Iraqi army especially among those who had the thought of patriotism, since Britain and France were hated by Iraqi People, and this is because of colonial policy they carried out against Arabic nation. Additionally Iraqi people tried to get rid of from the agreement points of 1930, and become the owner of their power and independence. From other side, they were ready to work with Arabic people against Britain and France colonialism, although Germany announced to be against the Jewish (Hassan, 1985: 152). In the beginning years of the Second World War the victory of Germany rapidly reflected on the circumstances of Iraq. Inside of Iraq, two directions rose: the first, having emotions to the Britain—they were high ranks; the feudal and the leaders of tribes all gathered around Noori Saeed. The second, they were mostly humble people and some were nationalist. They agreed with the neutral countries, requested not to let Iraq enter the war. The claimed that Iraq would stay as neutral (Ahmed, 1982: 135).

They also asked to exploit the situations to negotiate with Britain and France to withdraw from the Arabic area, in order to achieve Arabic demands and independence of the Palestinian people. Plus, they wanted to exploit these conditions to modernize Iraqi army with modern weapons. They would have to improve country in economic aspect. In fact the second direction was run by some military leaders and poetical people, like Rashid Ali, Naji Sweedi, Naji Shawkat and with some high personal Arabs, like Muhammad Amin, Mwfti Quds and Fawzi Qawqchi (Al-Barawe, 1998: 141). For this reason they could earn supports of many people, and it is clear that they were felt in Iraq in the beginning of 1940. Rashid Ali Gaylani was able to be successful in bringing four colonels who were neutral in big countries fighting. By this policy, the leaders of military got away of Noori Saeed, he who was with Britain. As a result Noori Saeed made resignation and in March 31, 1940 Rashed Ali Gaylani formed the government and Noori Saeed was introduced as a minister for foreign affairs (Haded,2006: 221).

Moreover, when France was defeated by the Germans and when Italy declared war against the Allies during the Second World War, Britain felt serious dangers in the Middle East in general, and Iraq in particular. The British ambassador therefore requested Iraq to cut off the relations with Italy, here Abdulela and Noori Saeed agreed but Rashid Ali disagreed. Thus, the four colonels of army did not agree on how to follow things in these critical times (Swsa, 1986: 101).

This became a big political crisis which led to May uprising of 1941. It is worth mentioning that Britain saw a bad stance of Gaylani, so Britain requested Wasi to dissolve the ministry and reform another one that would have supported their policies. In spite of these developments, the British had doubts that Iraq had relations with the other countries. So Wasi decided not to make collaborations with Gaylani and obliged him throughout the council of members to make resignation (Ahmed, 1982: 139). For this purpose Wasi left Bagdad for Diwania. Certainly this escape created crises in Bagdad, so Rashid Ali Gaylani obligatorily resigned and requested Wasi Taha Hashmi to form the government in January 31, 1941. But, military leaders had doubts for Hashmi because he ran the government for Britan's interests. When the decision was made that Kamil Shabib would have to be transferred into Diwania, the danger was seen, as the four colonels refused it and considered that it was aimed by Tahahasmi and the Britain. As a result in the Rashid Hutment's "military camp", an emergency was announced (Muhamad,1988: 222; Welard, 1949: 182).

Thus Taha Hashmi made resignation in April, 1941, and then Abdulela fled to Basra, trying to gather supports for himself but he failed. In April 4, 1941, he left for Palestine and then to Jordan. However, there was a gap, for solving this problem, the high council of government was gathered. The government decided that Rashid Ali Gaylani would form the government and take the throne from Wasi Shareef Sharaf who was from Hashmi family. Surely, this change created danger on Britain, so the Britain decided to bring back the situations as it was (Sahdwn, 1998: 166).But the British ambassador questioned the government and sent the Britain army to land in Basra justifying that they would pass through Iraq to Palestine. The Iraqi government agreed if the army would not be more than 9000 and not to stay more than three days. So the British army landed in Basra in April 18, 1949 (Swsa, 1986: 1842). The Iraqi Government showed their criticism from movements of the army. And at that time an air force came into Abania, and after that they occupied Mina harbor in Basra. The Iraqi army were ordered to blockade the British army in Habania, and asked the British to stop the air force. In May 2, the planes of the Britain bombed on the Iraqi troops, thus till May 29, Bagdad was brought down. As a result of the British military and air attacks most military commanders of Iraq fled to Iran except Muhammad Yunis Sabaawi who remained on his stance to challenge the British forces. He tried to distribute the weapons to troops and dig trenches around Bagdad. But he had no results. In May 30, 1941 Iraq had been occupied again by the British (Rafeq,1980: 277).

It is worth mentioning that after the failure of Abdullah's uprising, his friends came back to Iraq, and the British occupation re-happened to the Iraq. The supporters of Britain hurt those who were the supporters of the uprising. Besides,

Noori Saeed's government in their absence decided to proclaim sentences of death to the leaders who fled to Iran in January 6, 1942. Furthermore, the Britain convinced Iran to submit the escapers to Iraq. Eventually, submitted leaders were excused (Salh, 1987: 90). This led to remonstrance, especially for the executions of Salhaddin Sabagh, Mahmood Salman, Fahmi Saeed, Kamil Shabeeb and Muhammad Noori Yunis. Because of the occupation of Britain in Iraq, the situations of the country in war turned bad in social, economic, and political aspects. This lasted till the end of the Second World War in 1945. By this the Iraqi conditions came into a new phase (Haded, 2006: 245).

### **Events of Gawrbaghi**

The Second World War's economic, social and political outcomes directly changed the people's sustenance to the worse and brought their life styles upside down because Iraq politically and economically was subjected to Great Britain and the British used Iraq's economy in the war for their own end as mentioned before. Although subsequently Iraqi governments tried to step forward to better the life of the people, however it had a limited power (Rahman, 2006: 126), and its undertakings were not satisfactory. Especially laborers and poors were affected by bad situations the worst. So the workers were the first to looking forward to good condition of economy because their condition didn't change so much even after the war ended.

During and after the war the first agenda of the workers was to establish a syndicate for pursuing their rights. They fought for this end and obtained rights to oppose any kind of injustice. These developments were warmly received by Iraqi laborers in big cities like Baghdad, Basra and other places and encouraged them to make an attempt in the framework of establishing laborer syndicate and promoting living standards of laborers of Iraqi Petroleum Company in Kirkuk. This important page of the history of Iraqi laborer's struggle was written with blood which was the turning point and it had affected the political and social discriminations in Iraqi society. The beginning of these events was a submission of a proclamation, at the beginning of June in 1946, by some workers to the directorate of their company for the purpose of raising their living standards (Arf, 1999: 95). The workers' demands were:

1. Establishing a syndicate for the laborers of Petroleum workers as an authorized institution to upheld their rights.
2. Changing workers conditions in salary, transportation and house and providing money to rent a house to guarantee their lives.
3. Providing social assurance to support and protect the workers and their families in case of sickness, jobless and getting old.

4. No injustice should occur in rewarding workers especially in their share of petroleum and implement laborers' law about their veneration and holidays (Husen, 2001: 159).

But the directorate of Iraqi Petroleum Company didn't listen to these requests that led to laborers to assert their requests by force.

This time in 8<sup>th</sup> of July the laborers submitted other proclamation which were included many threats to directorate of the company that contained the indignation of laborers against the presence of inequity between the laborers of Petroleum in Kirkuk and Syria and Palestine since in the latter two countries the laborers had war allowances. Moreover, these proclamations contained words expressing enmity against Britain and sympathy towards Soviet Union. Also they declared that if no attention paid to their requests issue, the laborers of the company in Kirkuk will begin a general strike (Hasan,1987: 221).

Since that day, the Iraqi Oil Company took the mission seriously, and in its first step, the company started communications and negotiations with Abdulrazzaq Fattah, the directorate of Kirkuk Police. The aim of the negotiation was to prepare for any urgent event. In 13th of the same month, the laborers started to organize a committee for visiting the directorate of Iraqi Oil Company. Iraqi Oil Company soon agreed on most of the conditions and requirements but for the others it preferred to aware the management of the company in London, this needed time, so the period to confirm them launched too much of time and as a result the Iraqi Oil Company laborers suffered in problem, to the degree that the laborers started going on strikes (Ahmed, 1982: 302).In the first day of the strike, the members of the Communist Party of Iraq in Kirkuk practically supported the strike. It was led by Yousif John Yousif. According to the memory of the laborers who had participated in that strike, on the 3rd of July, which was the first day of the strike, a group of young and courageous men attacked one of the wagons of the company preaching for the laborers in these languages: Kurdish, Turkumani, Arabic, Assyrian and Armenian. The higher committee of the strike on the 4th of July started a calm demonstration aiming to involve the Government to the problem in order to solve it. However, the government started harassing the strikers; it arrested some of the laborers. This event was a good justification for the higher committee of the strike, which was under the supervision of the Communist Party, to arrange a much bigger demonstration against the government. The demonstrators held the strike in Gawrbaghi which was a place of Christians in the west part of Kirkuk (Salih, 1945: 61). One of their slogans was "We Want Bread For Our Families!" Though in the beginning it was the economical factor that pulled the laborers to strike, later on the situations went to some political directions. In the evenings of everyday, the laborers gathered in

Gawrbaghi Park. They preached enthusiastically. All of their preaches were to belittle the company and government of Arshad Al-Umari. He started his mission on the first of July 1946. On the 7th of July, Baba Ali Sheikh Mahmud the minister of economy visited Kirkuk City (Sahdwn, 1988: 242).

Mahmud had promised the demonstrators to care about their issue as soon as possible on the condition that all the laborers have to go back to their works, so that no more the company's projects would be delayed of projected end. But the labors insisted that they would not stop striking until the government provided their demands. The first step was to fire the governor of Mosul and appoint a new one. On the 8th of July, Hassan Fahmi the new governor who was Arab and known for his seriousness defined as a new governor. He soon started reforming the city; he negotiated with the laborers and promised them to serve all of their demands. So, on the 10th of July, he published a manifesto that promised to transform the laborers demands into reality. His promises were to increase the salary of the laborers, to appoint some days for holidays and feasts, giving them the amount money of their tasks and publishing oil on them. Moreover, he promised them to give the money of their travels that was only for the sake of returning them to work. Yet the workers insisted on claiming for their demands! On the 11th and 12th of July, the governor again met the committee of the workers. He again demanded them to go back working, but they insisted on their requirements adding new demands which included payment of past three months of their strike. This made the governor to change his attitude towards them and treated them to use forces to punish them (Ahmed, 1982: 317).

On the evening of 12th of July, a big event happened. When the demonstrations started, the governor commanded a force to hit them in order to make them stop. After taking the decision of the governor, the director of the police started to arrange his troops which consisted of 47 policemen. At 5 in the evening, they surrounded all of the laborers, the police director repeatedly asked the demonstrators to leave the place but they started stoning the director. As a result, the policemen fired gun against the laborers in which some of them died and some others injured (Mazhar, 1987: 177). All of these events led the public to shout disagreements against the government in all levels. Also the political parties condemned the event, but lastly, the company recognized the demands of the laborers and that was a factor why the government of Arshad Al-Umari on 14th of January of 1946 collapsed (Azawe, 1953: 223) .

### **The Wasba Revolution of January 1948**

Political, social and economic changes that the Iraqis faced were the result of the Second World War, which led the Iraqis to flood the streets and demonstrate for reform which was the major demand of all the Iraqis from all the previous fourteen provinces. The January revolution which is known as Wasba revolution in the modern history of Iraq, was the result of all the wrong decisions made by the previous monarchic governments. These series of events were serving only the British government politically, socially, as well as militarily (Al-Sahrwe, 1989: 123). This of course led to the discontentment of all ranks of the society. Event caused political parties and other organizations to be restricted.

At the time the rejection of the Iraqi-Anglo accord of 1930 Deleti was the major demand of the citizens and those who had conservative views. Because the political situation which affected Iraq due the Second World War paved the way for Iraq to serve to the interests of Great Britain. For example those steps which led to the signing of the treaty was an alternate for the treaty signed before 1930 (Shawkat, 1990: 342).

Main focus of the cabinet of Salih Jabar, which was formed on March 21, 1947, was to sign a new treaty with Britain to replace the treaty of 1930. The first meeting that was held to sign this treaty took place privately at the British embassy in Bagdad on May 8, 1947. Other meetings followed as a part of a long process which led the Iraqi delegation to visit London many times. On January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1948 the Iraqi delegation which was led by the prime minster Salih Jabar along with foreign minister Noori Said and a number of personalities were appointed to visit Britain in order to discuss the final stage of this treaty (Zaea,1990: 261). On January 15, 1948 after a series of meeting the treaty was signed in Portsmouth port. This treaty was more rigid than the pact of 1930 (Hassane, 1985: 221). The reason for this was that the English were only allowed to intervene militarily if Iraq was in a state of war, but as opposed to 1930 this treaty gave the right to the English to interfere militarily even if Iraq was under the threat of war. In other words any time London wanted to intervene militarily it would find an excuse to do that. Furthermore according to the first section of the treaty all of Iraq would become like a British military base for 20 years. The news of the signing of the treaty created a huge controversy amongst the Iraqis throughout Iraq. People instantly poured on the streets to demonstrate and reject this treaty and the rejection of this treaty by the Iraqis led to a huge revolution (Azawe, 1953: 241).

The first reaction of the January 15<sup>th</sup> treaty pushed the political parties to release a statement which showed that they were against this treaty. In this

statement the political factions urged the Iraqis to deny this treaty, and demonstrated that the Saleh Jabr government had no right to decide on behalf of the Iraqi peoples. On January 19<sup>th</sup> thousands of people poured on the streets and raised slogans that stated down with the Saleh Jabr government and death to the Portsmouth treaty. Although on this day and the following days the government tightened security this didn't prevent the people from backing down from the revolution on the contrary the abuse of the police and security forces even led protesters to become more enraged. January 27<sup>th</sup> was known as Wasba day. A city wide revolution took place which resulted in the confrontation of the government and the citizens. Throughout history of monarchy in Iraq such confrontation had never occurred between the government and the people (Hasn Shbr, 1984: 188).

In Baghdad, Karkh and Rasafa a large number of people were killed and injured. These events led to the collapse of Salih Jabr government which were replaced by Mohammed Sadr's nationalist government (Husare, 1967: 229).

### **The 1952 Uprising**

The political and military failure of the Arabs before Israel in 1948 Arab-Israel War was a direct reason behind losing people's trust to the government in Iraq. Arabic governments took two different attitudes in the beginning of 1950s. The first one was to suppress the political parties and people struggling against them. The second one was to show themselves as more nationalistic. What is worthy to mention is that conditions were shaped by contemporary political events which occurred in Asia, Europe and Africa such as the success of the Chinese people and the establishment of the republic of the democratic Germany (Hinre, 1945: 278).

In these days, in Arab countries some army coup-detats occurred. Contemporary developments had some factors in these beside the regional effects above all nationalizing oil laws on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1951 by the Iranian parliament, which was a big development in the Middle East and it created a big controversy. At the same time the Iraqi people welcomed this major step through the parties and the political and popular organizations that they increasingly were demanding of their government to make a decisive pace in Iraq to nationalize the petroleum business. However, Iraqi royal regime, instead of listening what the people was saying, it started to make new agreements in February, 1952 with the UK. This agreement was further putting Iraq under the service of the British economic interests which led to the people's and political parties' strong oppositions. If we look at the attitudes of the parties, they had same similarities yet they were quite different in thoughts and views towards Iraqi-British rapprochement (Al-Kremle, 1989: 145).



In this situation, Mustafa Umari on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1952, formed a government, but it did not include any national aims except it had to work for dissolving the parliament and organizing a new election to rescue the country from this crisis. Furthermore, the political parties presented the Regent Abdullah some demands. In general their main demand was to struggle for the rights of the people and solve economic and political problems of the country (Azawe, 1953: 259). At the same time, they demanded the cancellation of the 1930 treaty, as well as demanded a new election and reform in the constitution. The Regent did not promise to implement these demands. Yet he dissolved the House of Representatives and called for a new election. Furthermore all the political parties bilaterally decided to participate in the new elections and this resulted in ending the discord between the government and the political parties and brought the citizens and the political factions closer (Longrek, 1988: 281).

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> with the supervision of The Regent and the participation of the former prime minister, the head of the political leaders and those in charge in the government held a broad meeting but had no result. In this situation educational problems for the students of college of pharmacy emerged and this led to the start of the uprisings. On November 26<sup>th</sup> students started the first demonstrations against the decisions of the ministry of health regarding the system of Passover classes in stages of study to another stage of study (Shbr, 1990: 211).

The demonstrations continued until the 19<sup>th</sup> of the month and ended with the disregarding of the decision. It is worth mentioning that the political parties that were in power then in Iraq on the days of the demonstrations fully supported the students. The approval of the government and the ministry to reject such decision didn't end the demonstrations rather it started new demonstrations on the 21<sup>st</sup> of the month. The collage students of pharmacy poured on the streets once again and started the demonstrations. This led to all ages and ranks of society to participate in the demonstrations. At the same time academic demonstrations turned into a political demonstration (Hassane, 1989: 247) .

This continued until the 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month. So it spread throughout Baghdad and this led the demonstrators to attack the office of the American information center on 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month. Later they burned down the Babshekh police station along with a political party building that was run by Noori Sa'eed and also the office of Iraq Times newspaper. The result of these happenings led to a war between the people and the police. A lot of people were killed and injured. Although demonstrations started in Baghdad but it spread throughout Iraq especially the Kurdish provinces like Sualimani, Koya and Ranya where the uprising began (Mazhar, 1987: 185). The result of this uprising was the

resignation of Mustafa Umari, so the Protector The Regent did his best to form a new government headed by Jamil Madfa'ee and this cabinet was only for oppressing the uprising. But the new government failed to achieve this idea and Madfa'ee failed to form a cabinet. So formation of a newer cabinet by Kamil Chadirchi with the participation of all political parties to antagonize the imperialism and obtain the national demands' requests was one of the aims of the people. But after the Regent's hopelessness to form a new cabinet made him to contact with the army to form a cabinet. Thus, the leaders of the army formed a military government under the presidency of Noor Al-din Mahmud. As a result the latter in 23<sup>rd</sup> of October formed a military cabinet whose main goal was to crush the uprising. To do so, at the night of 23<sup>th</sup> the same month Baghdad's streets were flooded with tanks and cannons which looked like a military coup. Also in 24<sup>th</sup> the Martial Law was announced and all demonstrations and gatherings were banned (Majed, 1996: 32). At the same time a wave of arrests began among politicians and patriots, number of arrested politicians reached 220 persons. This led to larger demonstrations in Baghdad in 24<sup>th</sup> of the same month which started with the students of colleges and then people attended to them. Both sides of Baghdad Karkh and Russafa raised slogans against the army encouraging the officers to stand by the people (Sahdwn, 1988: 261).

On the other hand the uprising of 1952 though there were many victims but the uprising couldn't achieve its goals, because it was oppressed by the army and the police. This made Britain feel happy and congratulated The Regent, but this uprising worked as a turning point in Iraqi national movement history because it was the first time that the slogan of republic was raised and it became one of the main requirements of this stage time. And it has a great resounding effect on Arabic world (Ahmed, 1982: 328).

### **Baghdad Treaty of 1955**

At the beginning of the Second World War Arabic countries faced a lot of pressure from western countries in general and from Britain and American in particular (Hamadane, 1998: 317 ) because of introducing a protective Anglo-American proposal against Soviet's attempts to reach the countries of the Middle East. The latter concentrated its attempts that led to increasing of American ambitions. Increasing the patriotic sense and developing nationalist movement for liberation from Imperialism led to the increase of the restrictions on the countries of Arabs (Longrek, 1986: 127 ).

Though Britain tacitly didn't want to see the increase of American influences in the Middle East, because they think that Middle East was belonging to them, they agreed to the American's proposal to supervise the region at least to protect

some of its interests. In 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1951, USA, Britain and France issued a proposal about how to manage or supervise the Middle East. They invited and asked Arab countries, Israel, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand to participate, so as to establish a basic center of this program in Egypt. On the other hand these three countries by announcing another proposal insisted on formation of an alliance that lead to social and economic prosperity of the Middle East.

Arabic people refused this proposal for the following reasons:

1. It meant to make the Arab land as a base for USA, Britain and France forces.
2. The Participation of Israel in this “Proposal” meant that Arabs admitting Israeli state formally.
3. The influence of Soviet Union on some of Arab countries, was against the proposal (Shakr,2001: 210).

The tree tried to make some superficial changes to the project but it was useless because it was felt that the American's attempt was to replace the role of Britain in the Middle East as Britain became weak. The USA was a new force in the region replacing England to stop the increasing influence of the Soviets either through war or peace (Longrek, 1988: 141). American power played as an obstacle against the communist waves in the region. At the same time for Arabs the presence of the Soviets was not important but what was important for them it was the Soviets who did not help Israel.

When Noori Sa'eed formed the peaceful cabinet in the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 1950, he soon began to work for the westerners. After a short period of his presidency of the cabinet and in a press conference he referred to that it was impossible for him to be neutral, but he should have to stand by one of the sides. Therefore he preferred the western front. At the same time the political parties started to confront counter this decision, they suggested that Iraq should be impartial and save its freedom. And also they contacted with the League of Arab Countries and sought their decision. Inside Iraq, the political parties formed a front called the United People's Front and announced many proclamations. They said that Iraq should confirm its impartiality (Ahmed, 1982: 328).

Protecting Middle East from the Soviet's and its alliances' attempts to control Middle East became the main mission of USA specially after electing Eisenhower as a president of the USA in 1952. The Foreign Minister John Foster Dallas paid a great attention to this subject. In 1953 the Foreign Minister with accompany of Harold Stassen the CIA director visited 11 countries, starting from countries bordering Mediterranean Sea to countries who were neighbors to China and

Russia. These visits were protested by peoples of Arab countries especially Iraqi Communist Party who announced a manifesto against these visits, because Dallas introduced a project called The North Belt instead of Middle East Protection project but with the same goal and content (Hamadane, 1998: 331).

After the failure of the Western attempts, Western countries thought that they should work change in another direction by making bilateral treaties with countries of the region to bind them with the Western interests. The treaty of 1930 between Iraq and Britain almost came to an end and Britain tried to stay in Iraq as long as he could, therefore Britain invited The Regent Abdullah and tried to satisfy Noori Sa'eed by any way to go back to Iraq and form a cabinet. Because Noori Sa'eed was dismissed from his cabinet, he was living in abroad. In 1953 a cabinet was formed under the presidency of Fazil Jammali but Noori Sa'eed didn't participate (Hinre, 1945: 342).

Noori Sa'eed returned to Iraq and introduced a plan to form a cabinet to the King Faisal II after Arshad Al-Umari's resignation. The plan of this cabinet was prepared from inside and outside of Iraq. This cabinet insisted on reinforcing the relationships with Western countries specially Britain in order to save and protect Iraq (Sahdwn, 1988: 301). The King agreed and Noori Sa'eed in 3<sup>rd</sup> of August in 1954 formed the cabinet then started to carry out its aims. From the beginning he curbed all political activities of parties who work inside Iraq and banned any kind of meetings. The cabinet prohibited all political parties, social, literature and athletic clubs and organizations. In a parliamentary election, Noori Sa'eed won 121 seats out of 135. This victory made him to step toward making alliances with westerner for which his excuse was Communist threats that were closer to Iraq more than any other countries. Noori Sa'eed thought that the sooner Iraq made regional alliances with west counties the sooner a wall will be made to serve as a deterrent against the Soviets (Salih, 1945: 175). These steps of Noori Sa'eed were confronted with opposition of Arab countries, therefore in 16<sup>th</sup> of August in 1954 Egypt sent its representative to talk with Iraqi officials to warn them the Arab's protestation to such kind of alliances. But Noori Sa'eed's insistence foiled these talks, though these talks were transferred to Egypt. After Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes' visit in 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> of January 1955 to Iraq, treaty was signed in 24<sup>th</sup> of February of the same year between Iraq and Turkey and called Baghdad Treaty (Hamadane, 1988: 337).

Though this treaty was confronted with a wave of objections of Arab countries, it got approval from the Iraqi Parliament. Britain that played a great role in this treaty joined it in 4<sup>th</sup> of April. After that Iran and Pakistan joined them and became member of the Baghdad Treaty. The USA, the owner of North Belt idea, supervised the important points of Baghdad treaty and it had the right to

make and take decisions (Ahmed, 1982: 349). Though this treaty had no important role on the political stage of the region and the world, Iraq remained as a member till the revolution of 14<sup>th</sup> July of 1958.

### CONCLUSION

Iraq has a great role and importance in Britain policy, especially after finding petroleum in its territory. Iraq has essential strategic and geographical position because it is located on the road to India and this economically important road was among factors that encouraged Britain to control Iraq for her interests. Occupying and invading Iraq was not easy for Britain and they frequently faced tribal Iraqi forces and encountered problems in ruling the country. The tribal Iraqi forces played a great role in uprisings in places like “Shu'aybia” and in 1920 revolution. These forces inflicted great casualties upon British forces that such likelihood haven't been seen before in the Middle East.

Formation of a mandate state, establishment of a cabinet and installation of Faisal as a king of Iraq was another British policy in Iraq. Britain sought for some peoples to have them implement her own policy. Yet these characters failed in their former political experiences. In order not to repeat the same mistakes, such was that what Faisal did in Syria, when he encouraged Syrian nationalists to demand liberty from the French, he was removed him from throne in Syria, Iraq was a free country but its internal and external affairs were under the control of Britain till 1958.

Forcing Iraq to make many treaties like 1922, 1924, 1930 and 1955 resulted in many uprisings and coups in a way that these treaties served British interests. When a treaty would come to an end, another one followed and this was made to extend the British rule in Iraq. This increased demonstrations of peoples in Iraqi streets and at the same time political parties and organizations united in their struggle for the collapse of many subsequent governments. The Second World War affected Iraq and at the same time Iraq was not a bystander to ideological wars which emerged after the war in a way both Eastern and Western blocks had influences in Iraq. Activities of Iraqi Communist Party with the support of Russia increased in Iraq and made many uprisings and revolutions. It was not easy to have a political party or organization because whoever ruled Iraq according to their wills which prevented political quality and lasting unification. Meanwhile the political and organized strife in this country means “confronting” British interests and policy, which caused activists to face arrests and even killings.

As a mandate state of the United Kingdom, Iraq failed to become a full state in its political, administrative and economic structures from 1932 to 1958. In its

all aspects of statehood, Great Britain played the vital role for which Great Britain was after her own interests. Iraq provided vital resources to Great Britain during the Second World War and failed to curb the British demands. After the war, Iraq became a playground for the western powers, especially Great Britain and the USA, and Russia. The Russians tried to promote communist ideology and Russian interests in the Middle East while the westerners worked hard to stop it. In any event, Iraq stayed as a playing toy to the great powers and was not respected for her sovereignty. Because of its fragile political aspects, Iraq experienced many coups and internal conflicts that paralyzed the country keeping her as a weak state.

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