

July 21, 1958

**Record of a Conversation between N. S. Khrushchev
and the Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union K. P.
S. Menon**

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Summary:

Khrushchev decries the politics of the United States and England in Iraq following the July 14th Revolution.

Credits:

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Russian

Contents:

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[handwritten at the top of the first page] *Distribute to members and candidate members of the CPSU CC Presidium and Cde. V. V. Kuznetsov (instructions of Cde. N. S. Khrushchev) [illegible signature and date]*

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION [between] N. S. KHRUSHCHEV AND THE AMBASSADOR OF INDIA IN THE USSR K. P. S. MENON

21 July 1958*

[handwritten at the bottom of the first page] **the record of the conversation was not reviewed by N. S. Khrushchev*

Menon presented N. S. Khrushchev with the text of the reply of the Prime Minister of India to N. S. Khrushchev's message of 19 July, which the interpreter read (the text of the message is attached to the record of the conversation).

N. S. Khrushchev expressed gratitude for the message and expressed satisfaction that it agreed with our understanding of the situation which has developed and was directed toward that same goal to which the Soviet government was striving - the exclusion of the possibility of war, which might arise if the governments of the US and Britain were allowed to further pursue an irrational, aggressive policy.

N. S. Khrushchev said that it would be useful to convey the substance of the reply of the Prime Minister Nehru to the public as soon as possible so that it is evident that appropriate steps are taken and that India makes its contribution to this cause.

Menon replied that there is no objection to this.

He directed attention to a report in the press that Swedish Prime Minister Erlander has also spoken in support of the Soviet government's proposal about immediately convening a summit conference. Menon added that the Swedes were taking a rational position in the Security Council.

N. S. Khrushchev expressed satisfaction with the position taken by the Swedish government at the present time.

Menon said that in recent days Prime Minister Nehru had received messages concerning the question of the situation in the Near East from President Eisenhower and Prime Ministers Macmillan and Diefenbaker. In their correspondence with them Nehru stressed Hammarskjold's published conclusions of UN representatives regarding the situation in Lebanon. Striving to achieve the withdrawal of British troops from Jordan and the American troops from Lebanon, Prime Minister Nehru pointed out to the heads of the governments of the Western powers that Hammarskjold and his representatives did not find signs of foreign interferences in the internal affairs of Lebanon and that therefore the intervention of the British and American troops was completely unjustified. He also pointed to the fact that at the present time UN observers have reported that they have received access to the entire territory of Lebanon and could therefore fully perform the functions authorized them by the UN Security Council.

N. S. Khrushchev said that he completely agreed with Nehru's point of view.

Menon asked what was the real danger of US and British interference in the affairs of Iraq, in his opinion.

N. S. Khrushchev replied that it was difficult to predict what Dulles and Macmillan's actions will be since they have recently done so many unbelievably stupid things that there is no guarantee that they won't commit this last stupidity by invading Iraq. But this would be a suicidal move by them. In any event, at the present time one could say that there is a 60% chance that the Americans and British will not interfere in the affairs of Iraq by means of force, although this cannot be excluded.

Menon said that Macmillan gave Prime Minister Nehru categorical assurances of non-intervention in the affairs of Iraq. The Americans, too, evidently have no such intentions at the present time. In any event the American ambassador in [New] Delhi unofficially stated to Prime Minister Nehru that the US government does not intend to intervene. Although it is hard to say what is the value of these assurance, they nevertheless restrict the governments of Britain and the US to some degree.

N. S. Khrushchev said that much depends on how firmly the new government of Iraq

represents the Iraqi Republic in foreign affairs and how stable the domestic situation is in Iraq. All information says that the Iraqi people completely support the new government. The people in it are completely unknown to us. But, judging from everything, these are rational and decisive leaders.

Events in Iraq have taken the imperialists by surprise. They undoubtedly were also a surprise for Nasser, although the Americans ascribe the organization of this entire matter to him. In his recent conversation with Nasser he, N. S. Khrushchev, told him that the Iraqi events obviously occurred without his knowledge since he was swimming in Brioni at the same time. Nasser confirmed this.

Menon said that the representative of India in Iraq confirmed that the current Iraqi government is firmly in the saddle and that the revolution was bloodless with the exception of some minor incidents.

N. S. Khrushchev said that the imperialist have suffered their most serious defeat in Iraq. They should have supported Lebanon to some degree and especially Jordan, but they themselves subsisted at the expense of the Iraqi people. The revolution in Iraq stuck in their throat, and no surgeon can pull out this bone.

Menon said that in his discussions with the governments of the Western powers Nehru stresses the power of Arab nationalism and the striving of the Arabs for unity. The events in Iraq are the result of the Baghdad Pact and the "Eisenhower Doctrine". As the French newspaper Le Monde wrote recently, as a result of the Baghdad Pact the British and the Americans lost the Pact itself as well as Baghdad.

N. S. Khrushchev said that this is an accurate remark.

He pointed out that, in his opinion, recognition of the new Iraqi republic by the government of India would be a stabilizing factor for the situation in the Near East. Such recognition would give its government authority and tie the hands of aggressive forces.

Menon replied that, in his opinion, the government of India will recognize the Iraqi Republic in the near future since the matter is only in some formalities, which might take several days. The delay which has occurred is explained in particular by the fact that India has not had its own ambassador in Iraq and was represented by only a comparatively minor diplomat. Therefore it would first like to get more complete information about what has actually happened. But there can be no doubt that the new Iraqi government will be recognized very soon. Meanwhile the representative of India in Iraq maintains unofficial communications with the new government and has already had a couple of friendly meetings with the Iraqi premier.

At the same time, added Menon, it needs to be kept in mind that in striving to exert influence on the governments of Britain and the US the government of India is refraining from steps which might be perceived by the Western powers as putting direct pressure on them. However, the government of India has let the Americans as well as the British clearly know that the slightest step from their side directed against Iraq would lead to recognition of the new Iraqi government by India.

N. S. Khrushchev pointed out that Indonesia has already recognized the government of the Iraqi Republic, and added that if recognition from India were sped up then this would be a stabilizing factor for the situation in the Near East.

Menon noted that he used almost the same words as N. S. Khrushchev just now in a recent telegram to the government of India arguing in favor of recognition of the Iraqi Republic by India.

N. S. Khrushchev said that, although Dulles has done an evil thing, but it would be hard to find a better political leader for discrediting the imperialists. Therefore one might still have to take pity on Dulles when he is forced out of the American government.

The Soviet government, continued N. S. Khrushchev, will do everything to prevent an attack on Iraq by the imperialists. But if they nevertheless do this, then such a crazy step would only deepen the hatred of the peoples toward American and British imperialism.

Menon said that evidently the Western leaders are completely bewildered. Recently in the Security Council Lodge drew a pretty picture of how the population of Baghdad had avenged themselves against Jamali, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq.

However after a couple of days a live Jamali spoke on Iraqi radio. This is reminiscent of the first period after the division of India [when] Zafrullah Khan, the representative of Pakistan, said in the Security Council that the Indians had burned his house and killed his brother. But after a couple of days the representative of India presented the Council a photograph showing the living brother of Zafrullah Khan against the background of his completely untouched home.

N. S. Khrushchev said that the Soviet government knows through intelligence channels that the Turks, Iranians, and Pakistanis are pressuring the Americans to destroy the new Iraqi government, explaining that if the government of the Iraqi Republic is preserved then it might serve as an undesirable example for Iran and Pakistan. In reply the Americans are asking members of the Baghdad Pact whether they are ready to take part in an intervention themselves. They replied that they are not ready, but will give the Americans moral support.

In conclusion N. S. Khrushchev asked Menon to pass his best wishes and gratitude for the message to Prime Minister Nehru.

The conversation lasted 30 minutes.

O. Troyanovsky recorded [it].