

November 15, 1986

**Saddam and the Revolutionary Command Council
Discuss President Ronald Reagan's Speech in which
he Admitted that the United States had a
Relationship with Iran**

Citation:

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Summary:

This audio file contains a meeting between Saddam Hussein and the Revolutionary Command Council members to discuss the position of the US and Russia towards the Iraq war, specifically citing a Reagan speech which confirms US-Iran relations. It discusses Russia's position. Furthermore, he talks about the deal that America had offered to Iraq in which America would support Iraq with weapons and Iraq would give the US Russian tanks to be examined. Saddam comments on some of President Regan's speech like stopping the war and censuring violence. Saddam recommends sending a letter to the United States Government in which Iraq expresses its suspicions of the American positions. In addition, Saddam said that America is trying to create a misunderstanding between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and America's desire of not leaving the alliance with Iran for the benefit of Russia will force it to achieve the Iranian ambitions in the Arabian Gulf. Then Tariq 'Aziz talks about the friendly relationships with the great countries. He said that it's a hopeless case because the great countries are running after their own benefits even if it's against its own friends. Discussion regarding America wanting to end the war through supporting Iran, also to achieve its alliance with Iran. He adds that if America follows this policy, it will commit political suicide in the region.

Original Language:

Arabic

Contents:

Transcript - Arabic

Total Duration Start: 00:00:00 End:
01:36:25 File Type: Physical
Meeting (Audio)
Periods unaccounted for are blank

This Audio file is a recorded meeting of Iraqi officials, including Saddam Hussein, discussing the speech of the American President Ronald Reagan.

-Time: 00:07:00-00:15:43: Saddam says: I suggest we take a 20 minute break before discussing the position of Reagan and the memo which comrade Tariq has prepared.

Saddam asks an unidentified official: Are you sure the speech is well translated?

The unidentified official responds: Of course sir.

Saddam asks: Is the sentence (The diplomatic initiative aims to gain some degree of access and influence within Iran as well as Iraq) properly translated?

The unidentified official says: Sir, the English text has the same meaning as the Arabic one; the translation is free from error.

The unidentified official says: It is written in the speech that their aim is to gain influence within Iran as well as Iraq; the text is properly translated.

Saddam says: It is written here that they (want to approach and communicate with...); this doesn't mean that they want to gain influence.

The unidentified official explains: It is written that the diplomatic initiative aims to gain some degree of access (which means approach) and influence within Iran as well as Iraq.

Saddam says: This sentence does not seem to be properly translated as it is not relevant to say (Approach) and (Gain influence).

A second unidentified official explains: Sir, the term (access) does not mean to approach, and the sentence (Gaining influence within Iran) means gaining influence inside Iran. If we suppose that the term (access) means to approach, the meaning would be (to approach and gain influence within Iran as well as Iraq).

diplomatic relations are on the right track, which reveals the insincerity of Reagan's position toward Iraq and the Iraq-Iran War.

The unidentified official says: Reagan is insincere.

Saddam says: I agree, Reagan is declaring his position in public.
Saddam says: I want you to make sure the text is properly translated.

An Official says: Reagan says that the diplomatic initiative aims to gain some degree of access (which means approach) and influence within Iran as well as Iraq.

Saddam says: This does not mean to (breakthrough)

The official says: No sir, it doesn't mean to (breakthrough)

Saddam says: Westerners think that they are still capable of doing whatever they want as they used to do fifty years ago, but actually they are like the old man who thinks that he is still capable of doing what he used to do when he was still a young man.

Saddam says: Drink your tea before it cools.

Saddam says: The Iranians were the ones who took the initiative as they told the second party that now is the right time to start moving forward.

Saddam says: The last visits of the ministers of foreign affairs of Turkey and Pakistan were intended for the same purpose.

The unidentified official says: Sir I think that you should start from the visit of Turkey in 1984.

Another unidentified official interferes and says: This started in 1983.

Saddam says: The most significant calls have occurred before the FAO conference for sure, and the Iranians have been advised to take this step.

-Time 00:15:51-00:00:27:10: Unclear chitchatting among some officials.

-Time 00:27:11-00:46:37: Saddam says: now we are ready to begin our conversation. We have discussed during the Revolutionary Command Council meeting held before three days (on Wednesday) the new relation between Iran and America, and we wondered if the United States of America or the Soviet Union would gain any influence within Iraq or Iran as the war continues. It is known that the United States of America and the Soviet Union are trying their best, by different means, to gain influence within both countries before the war ends, and if one of them sees that lengthening the war is not to its own benefit, it will try its best to stop it. We also wondered what the position of Iran toward America will be after the war ends. We haven't reached any new conclusions concerning

the situation and we haven't been surprised by any of the American nor the Soviet positions toward us. During the meeting, we have reestablished the period of war when we were fighting inside Iranian borders; the Soviet Union has stopped providing us with spare parts and confiscated our aircraft that were sent to them for maintenance purposes in addition to different types of weapons costing more than 450 million Iraqi Dinars. The amount was paid in full but the weapons were shipped to Kuwait and then back to the Soviet Union and never reached Iraq. Yet, the Soviet Union started providing us with weapons after they found out that America is supporting the Iranians and that Iran is establishing good relations with Israel.

An unidentified official interferences and says: The Israeli-Iranian relation was established in 1981.

Saddam continues: America was supporting Iran by all means; of course the Americans did not supply Iran with new aircraft, as the Iranians were not in a position that allows them to receive aircraft from America. After July, most of the great countries were not in a position that allows them to take any risks as the situation was unsettled and the westerners were convinced that Iran will invade Iraq. At that time, America refrained from declaring negative positions toward Iran.

Comrade Tariq comments: In 1982, America launched a huge campaign against the Iraqi regime.

Saddam continues: In November 1982, they started reconsidering their strategies as we were gaining victory in eastern Basrah. The Soviets were not that worried about us, yet they were less harmful than the Americans.

Comrade Tariq says: In 1982, the Americans decided to communicate with us, accordingly we decided to delegate Dr. Sa'd to Washington, but Negelton suggested communicating with Iraq on a higher level.

Saddam says: When Americans realized that the Iraqi army has proved to be well-established and that fighting inside Iraq differs from fighting inside Iran, the international view of war, peace, and the two conflicting parties became more settled. We said that the American view of the situation has been revealed in Reagan's speech when he talked about the importance of establishing good relations with Iranians. We also decided not to take any actions regarding this issue until we make sure this relation is real. Yesterday, the U.S. President was forced to mention this issue in his speech due to public opinion and international pressures. Reagan says that America is supplying Iran with defensive weapons only; this can't be true as Iran is holding an offensive position, not a defensive one. Aircraft spare parts can't be considered defensive weapons, as Iranian aircraft are intended to attack and strike Iraqi targets, while radar spare parts can be considered as defensive weapons as they prevent Iraqi missiles from striking military and economical Iranian targets. Yet, when the Iranians are the ones attacking Iraq, then such weapons are considered offensive and intended to harm Iraq. In addition, Reagan said that the armament deal with Iran is restricted to one shipment, but he can still send more than one

shipment in secret and no one will know about it. This deal is intended to lengthen the war and shed more blood unlike what Reagan said in his speech. Moreover, we wonder if Americans are using this strategy to build up new relations with some countries, as when the Americans wanted to establish new relations with Iraq, we were in need of mortar rounds, so they offered us 100,000 (75mm) mortar rounds and 100 (175mm) mortar rounds before the Al-Basatin Battle. This was not offered directly by the U.S. government, but we have received this offer from one of the American companies.

-Time 00:49:34-01:36:10: Saddam says: When Americans wanted to establish new relations with Iraq, we were in deep need of weapons but we never asked for their help. However, the Iranians have established their relation with Americans based on an armament deal. Reagan says that Iranians possess an oil stock large enough to make them play an important role in improving the world's economy in the long-run.

An official interferences and says: This is definitely not true Mr. President.

Saddam continues: This can't be true, as we know that the Iranians' oil stock does not enable them to hold this position in the long run.

An unidentified official says: They are overestimating the position of Iran.

Saddam continues: Reagan says that the American government is trying its best not to take sides with any of the two conflicting parties or other concerned countries in order not to extend the war.

Saddam asks: Who is Terry White?

An unidentified official responds: Terry White is the British priest who visited Lebanon many times to accompany the hostages and was authorized to negotiate with Hezbollah for the exchange of hostages.

Saddam says: Reagan says that the Americans have condemned the violent acts of both parties; maybe he meant the use of chemical weapons or something like that.

Saddam says: The American-Iranian relation does not seem to be honest, as the Americans are aiming to gain influence inside Iran. Anyway, we can respond to Reagan's speech in two ways; we either mention everything we discussed in a statement, or we can send a formal letter to Americans and ask them for explanations. We have to look at the bright side of the American-Iranian new relation taking into consideration our people's morals, so the Iraqi media must not dramatically deal with this issue. I suggest that we come up with an average statement and send a tough letter to Americans requesting to give clear answers to all our inquiries.

An unidentified official says: Rafsanjani said that Americans are treating Arabs the way they treated the Shah of Iran.

Saddam says: Our concerns regarding Reagan's speech must be circulated among all Arabs and the American public opinion, in order for other countries not to follow America's footsteps and donate Iran more weapons under the same or even greater pretences. As America is trying to gain influence within Iran, the Soviet Union also might supply Iran with weapons for the same purpose, under the pretence that Iran controls Muslims in the Soviet Union.

Saddam says: Reagan also talked about the balance of power; the reality is that the Americans creating an imbalance of power in the region, as Iran is known as an aggressive country and four times bigger than Iraq. All this must be mentioned in the letter that we must address to Americans via our ambassador over there in order to make them reconsider their position.

Comrade Tariq says: Iraq has mistrusted the great countries since the beginning of war.

Saddam interferences and says: The Americans have been showing more explicitness than the Soviets for the past six months.

Comrade Tariq continues: In 1979-1980, the Soviets wanted to destroy the Iraqi regime by stimulating the socialists in Iraq to rise against us. Friendship can only take place among countries which are balanced in power, such as France and Iraq, as the great countries do not believe in friendship and aim to gain influence inside other countries, but when they find themselves unable to do so they attempt to create a certain relationship with the intended country. In the mid 70's, the Soviets thought that the socialist party will have to pave the way for them to access Iraq and rise against the regime, but when they realized that this matter is out of reach, they attempted to create some kind of a relationship with us. Many countries became interested in creating good relations with Iran, as Iran holds a powerful position in the region and the great countries are attempting to change the situation for their own benefit. As a political analyst, I was surprised to know that Reagan himself publicly showed that he is the one standing behind this conspiracy against Iraq. I think we should deal with this conspiracy the same way we dealt with the Soviets when they conspired against Iraq, but as the American conspiracy was manifested in public, I see that we also respond in public. Sir, as you said before, we must pinpoint the contradictions in Reagan's speech in an effort to hinder this deal. We must take necessary measures to face the American intention for lengthening the war, as the Americans think that this war will pave the way for them to gain more influence in the region. The American congress, press, and influential people are still not convinced with Reagan's speech.

Another unidentified official says: Mr. President, I think what really matters now is how to obstruct the American-Iranian relation, or at least reduce its impact on us. As you said before, the American-Iranian armament deal will pave the way for other countries to supply Iran with more weapons. The only way to block this relation is to make the Americans feel that their new policy toward the region will cause them too much trouble. I say that we make our public statements short, and discuss in private with the Americans all the details related to this matter. Also, I suggest that we send the following letter to the

Americans: If the Americans think that the war can be ended by reinforcing Iran, then they will be making a horrible mistake, as the Iraqis intent is to defend every span of their country. They will never accept any settlement outside the five principles mentioned in our president's last speech. Domestically, I suggest that we incite our people on fighting and defending their country and explain the situation to all the Arabs. Politically, I think we should communicate privately with the Soviet Union, socialist countries, and America's allies, such as France, Britain and the European countries, and explain to them our own view of the situation regardless of whether or not they share the same view us. In addition, I think we should launch a huge campaign in the Arab countries and make public all the details related to this issue.

Saddam says: It is very important to relate this matter with the Zionist position.

The unidentified official continues: We must also explain to the people of Iran that their government has taken the initiative to establish a new relation with America and Israel. Moreover, we must do our best to win over the authors and educated people all over the world so that the Americans feel the pressure of the public opinion.

The same unidentified official says: Sir, regarding the 7th clause which says: "...this has happened in accordance with the Zionists' desire in keeping the region in a state of anarchy...etc", I think we should hint to make it clear that its the American-Zionists' desire and not only the Zionist desire, so that the reader understands that keeping the region in a state of anarchy is the Zionists' desire as well as the Americans' desire.

Saddam replies: This clause has been modified, and I'll pass to you the modified copy.

Another unidentified official says: Mr. President, personally I won't attach important details, yet...

Saddam interferes and says: As to the subject related to the Zionist...