

August 24, 1979
**Report on Conflicts Between Baathists and
Communist Iraqis in East Germany**

Citation:

"Report on Conflicts Between Baathists and Communist Iraqis in East Germany", August 24, 1979, Wilson Center Digital Archive, BStU, ZA, HA II, 4797. Obtained and translated by Bernd Schaefer. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114420>

Summary:

Since contacting the GDR in the late sixties and beginning to work with them, changes have occurred within Iraq. Communists, who were originally relatively free to their beliefs at the start of the new regime, are facing persecution in the face of the Baathist leadership. Also, this communist-Baathist conflict has begun to spread to Iraqis in East Germany.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Ministry for State Security
Main Department II
Berlin, 24 August 1979

R e p o r t

on some insights into conflicts between Baathists and communists and their consequences in the GDR, with special regard to activities by the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq to the GDR and extremist forces staying temporarily in the GDR

On 17 July 1968 the Arab Socialist Baath Party (ASBP), a national-revolutionary and petit bourgeois party with a nationalist ideology, assumed power in Iraq. After this takeover of power by the ASBP, a number of significant political and economic successes and social achievements were attained. This included, among else, the establishment of a Progressive Patriotic and National Front (PPNF) with the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and other progressive forces in 1973. It basically resulted in enabling the ICP to work legally.

The deepening of the social content of changes since 1968 led to growing social differentiations and accelerated formation of classes.

Since 1973 there occurred in this socio-economic context, many times already, anti-communist press campaigns as well as persecutions and convictions. This happened though the ICP supported all measures directed towards stabilization and deepening of revolutionary and democratic changes. At the same time, the ICP came and comes out consequently against those elements of Baath policy which impede revolutionary-democratic development.

Following increasing pressure from domestic and foreign reactionaries, especially from Saudi-Arabia, against the alliance between ASBP and ICP, in 1977/78 conflicts about the further course of development and contradictions of Iraqi policy visibly increased. Such conflicts are in particular an outgrowth of ASBP efforts to attain unrestrained use of power, in conjunction with anti-communist tendencies and increasing nationalism. Especially since spring of 1978 repressive measures against the ICP have increased in severity.

Collaboration between ASBP and ICP in the framework of the PPNF has basically ceased.

The long-term objective of the ASBP in solving the power issue consists in creating a de facto one-party-state. This lies behind the escalating campaign of persecution against the ICP. Its goal is to weaken and intimidate the party and limit its influence on the masses.

The first culmination occurred in May of 1978 when more than 20 communists were executed in the Republic of Iraq under the accusation to have violated the statute of the PPNF.

As further ABSP measures against the ICP have to be considered:

- The surveillance of the ICP party office and its visitors, in combination with provocations and arrests;
- . the issuance of a couple of anti-democratic laws;
- . the "purge" of the state apparatus, mass media and universities from communists and progressive citizens;
- . limiting admission to universities and other institutions only to those citizens who are members of the ABSP or one of its organizations;
- . the continuance of physical and psychological terror against communists.

□□

As telling examples underlining the seriousness of further persecution and physical destruction of ICP members living abroad, stand the murders of Iraqi communists in June 1979 in the Democratic People's Republic of Yemen, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in the Republic of Lebanon. Also, the known unrest among Arab students between supporters of the ICP and the ABSP in June 1979 in Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia are part of the ASBP-ICP conflict. They must be viewed as results of domestic action taken by the ASBP [in Iraq against the ICP].

Looking at the development of such tendencies, and given the fact that ICP members are staying in the GDR, we cannot exclude similar activities against Iraqi communists in the GDR based on a potential [secret] decision by the ASBP leadership (see Order by Comrade Minister [Erich Mielke] from 22 August 1979, GVS 17/79).

In this context, Main Department II has so far obtained unofficial information according to which Baath supporters among the Iraqi students living in the GDR plan to kill the Iraqi communist [name excised]. During a party event in Leipzig on 21 April 1979 to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the ICP's foundation he attacked through a parody the current Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of the Republic of Iraq, Saddam Hussein. When the death threat became known, the ICP members in the GDR decided to protect [excised].

We also obtained unofficial information that negative comments and violent threats by ASBP supporters in the GDR have increased against Iraqi communist [excised], Arab interpreter and student in 1978/79 at the SED Central Committee Party University "Karl Marx".

So far no further information indicating an escalation of the situation between ICP and ASBP supporters among Iraqi citizens living in the GDR has become known.

Also, we have no clear evidence yet about the role played by the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in the GDR concerning the conflict between ICP and ASBP supporters among Iraqi citizens living in the GDR.

However, it is noteworthy that the Acting Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to the GDR, Embassy Counselor Al-Assaf, referred on 8 May 1979 to Comrade Schurath, Deputy Head of the Department Near and Middle East in the GDR Foreign Ministry, to the incident by the Iraqi communist (parody of Saddam Hussein). He hinted at potential negative effects on relations between the GDR and the Republic of Iraq. At the same time, he mused that ASBP students in the GDR might "fight back against such actions in the future" though he said he wants to prevent such.

Following up on the instruction within the Order by Comrade Minister from 22 August 1979, GVS 17/79, on potential individuals executing the physical destruction of Iraqi communists: According to first checks of the diplomats in the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq to the GDR, the Deputy [excised] might be a candidate. We have unofficial information that [excised] serves as the [excised] of Iraqi counterintelligence in the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq to the GDR.

It is necessary to keep in mind that we have many indications from Unofficial Collaborators [IM] according to which the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq stores small arms (guns and Kalashnikov rifles) in a basement room. The official reason given is that these weapons serve to defend the embassy against attacks of any kind. Among other things, it was also noted that the Embassy holds a gun "Pietro Beretta Gardone V. T. Caliber 22LR" equipped with a silencer.

Further potential individuals for executing [orders against Iraqi communists] are:

- Al-Dbak, Durgham Abdullah (35 years), OV [Surveillance File] "Babylon"
born: 1944
residence: Berlin
Counselor in the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq to the GDR until 6 August 1979;
suspected as a member of Iraqi intelligence service.

According to our unofficial information Al-Dbak is said to have been actively involved in the persecution and killing of progressive Iraqi forces and ICP members before he assumed his post at the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq to the GDR.

We have clear evidence that, as a diplomat in the GDR, Al-Dbak worked with informants among the Arab, and in particular the Iraqi students to gauge attitudes of individual students towards the ASBP.

As it became further known, Al-Dbak is said to have left the ABSP after the end of his diplomatic tenure and now applies as a doctoral student at Karl Marx University in Leipzig.

It cannot be excluded that Al-Dbak's alleged resignation from the party as well as the doctoral studies were orchestrated on orders by the Iraqi intelligence service. The objective might consist in expanding his contacts among Arab students in order to win confidence and join progressive circles to identify and spy on communists among the Iraqis staying in the GDR.

[Excised]

[]

born: [Excised]
residence: Berlin
Doctoral Student at the College for Economy in Berlin

According to unofficial information, [excised] is a member of the ASBP leadership in the GDR and acts openly as an anti-communist. In his opinion all Iraqis living abroad who are not Baathists ought to be shot.

[Excised]

[]

born: [Excised]
residence: Berlin
citizenship: Lebanon

Member of the ASBP of the Republic Iraq leadership in the GDR. Works among Palestinians living in the GDR on behalf of the Iraqis. [Excised] is also said to be a member of the Baath Party Lebanon regional leadership. Unofficially he is characterized as a chauvinist with fascist tendencies.

According to another unofficial information [excised] is in possession of a gun Nr. WX 4367 - 1970. Until 1979 [excised] was a doctoral student with Humboldt University in Berlin. He is said to have been relegated due to lack of discipline and bad academic records. His wife works in the administration of Iraq's embassy to the GDR.

□□[Excised] (31)
□□

born: [Excised]
residence: Berlin
Doctoral Student at the College for Economy in Berlin

According to unofficial assessment a Baathist who can lean towards extremist action.

It is of relevance in this context of potential intentions for the physical destruction of Iraqi communists that about 2,400 Iraqis stay long-term in the FRG [West Germany] and Berlin (West). Out of those, about 900 on monthly average enter the capital of the GDR for one-day stays.

Another essential aspect of the conflict between ASBP and ICP in the GDR lies in the temporary stay of extremist forces in the GDR where options for confrontations do exist between these forces and Baath supporters of the Republic of Iraq.

A talk occurred between the Acting Ambassador of the Republic Iraq in the GDR, Al-Assaf, and the notoriously known international terrorist "Carlos" in the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq to the GDR in June 1979. In the context of the murder threat against Iraqi communist Daoud Gorgquis Daoud, "Carlos" told Al-Assaf that he, "Carlos", will kill one hundred Baath supporters if one Iraqi communist is murdered in the GDR. To underline the seriousness of his statement "Carlos" showed the gun in his possession.

"Carlos" as well people from his circle condemn the actions of the ASBP leadership against the ICP in the Republic of Iraq as well as abroad.

Following up, and according to, the Order by Comrade Minister from 22 August 1979, GVS 17/79, we will apply necessary political-operative protection, as well as control measures in contact with further operative Stasi units, to those individuals and groups of people mentioned in this report.