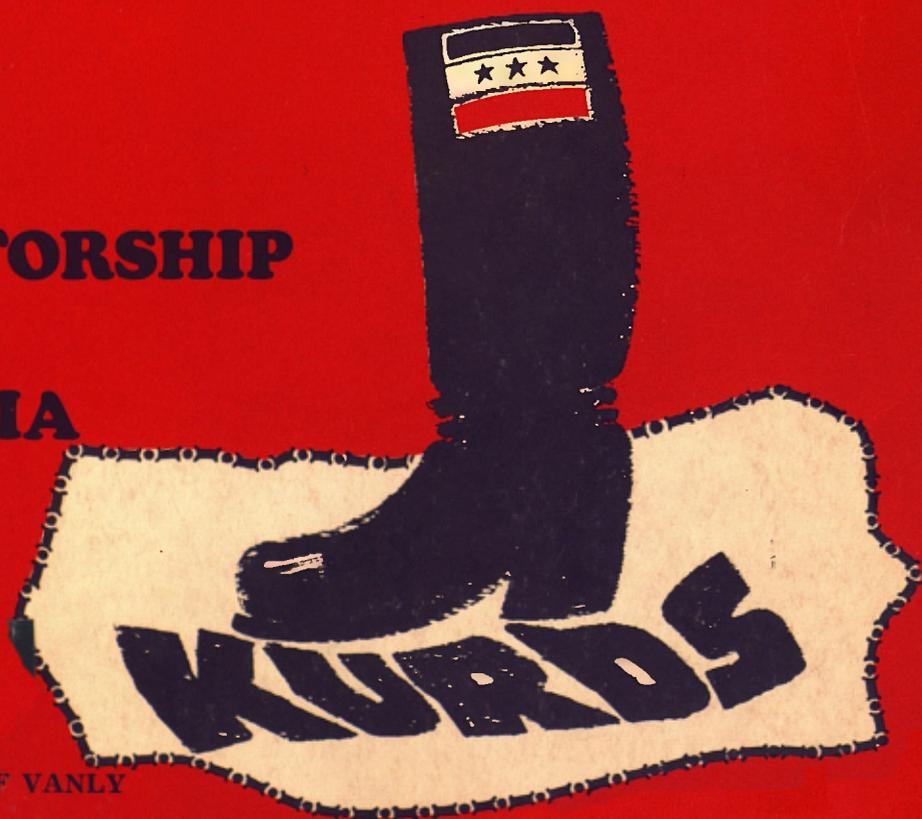


**THE
PERSECUTION
OF THE
KURDISH
PEOPLE
BY THE
BAATH
DICTATORSHIP
IN SYRIA**



by ISMET CHERIFF VANLY

Baath thinking reviewed

**THE SYRIAN “MEIN KAMPF”
AGAINST THE KURDS**

Translated and introduced with commentary and annotations by

Ismet Chériff Vanly

دراسة

عن محافظة الجزيرة .

من النواحي

القومية

الاجتماعية

السياسية

بالتوازي مع

محمد طلال هلال

رئيس اللجنة السياسية بالحكمة

While the facts will speak for themselves, responsibility for the opinions expressed by the author is solely his own.

I.C.V.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this brief work is to bring to the attention of the Arab world, international organizations interested or not, and world public opinion, a book about the Kurds written in Arabic by Mohamed Talab Hilal, a Syrian Arab who is now a minister in the Syrian government.

Since the revolt began in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1961 a number of books have been written by Arab nationalists on the subject of the Kurds. They include "The Kurdish Question and Arab Nationalism in the Struggle of Iraq" (undated) by Mahmoud Al Durrah, an Iraqi officer; "Limelight on the North of Iraq" in Arabic and English editions, Baghdad 1965, by Nauman al-Canaani, also an Iraqi officer; "Iraq and its North" in Arabic and English editions (author anonymous), published by Dar Al Jumhuriya Baghdad 1965, by courtesy of the Iraqi government; "Kassem and the Kurds, Daggers and Mountains", Baghdad 1961, by Ahmed Fawzi, also an Iraqi, this latter work being less anti-Kurd than the others and seeking to embark on a dialogue.

The pattern is familiar: in order to combat the Kurdish national liberation movement they try to discredit it, to "prove" that the Kurds are neither a people nor a nation, but an "agglomeration of tribes" with no national consciousness and no culture, who speak a dialect which is not a language but a "heterogeneous miscellany of foreign words", who practice brigandage under the guise of a national movement. This takes us back to the 'twenties and 'thirties, and the appearance of Turkish writings of the same type, at the time when northern or Turkish Kurdistan took up arms in an attempt to liberate itself. The process is classic, belonging to colonialism, nazism and fascism and the peoples who have been and still are the victims of such plagues are not the ones to refute us.

Scientifically and historically, such abusive assertions are not taken seriously. Thus no space has been devoted here to answering them, to proving recognised facts that the Kurds do indeed constitute a nation, a persecuted nation. But such publications, because of their moral or amoral political and military implications — remain a cause for concern.

pecially, since it concerns their reputation in the world at large and reflects ill on their movement and personality. Such writings directed against a neighbouring and moreover a Muslim people struggling, by the same right as the Arabs, for national liberation, are a dark and shameful blot on the history of that nation which was so often rich, illustrious and untarnished.

A grave question, for the Arabs particularly, arises from the apparent phenomenon that the more vehemently their leaders declare themselves democratic, revolutionary or socialist, the more venomous become their attacks against their oppressed neighbours and the more bloody their opposition to the Kurdish movement. Are then democracy and socialism so sick? Must the so-called revolutionary Arab nationalism therefore be condemned?

The object of such condemnation should be the Arabs in government, these dictatorships self-styled democratic and Socialist. Condemnation must be directed at their policies, the fascism which dare not declare itself and which goes so far as to disguise itself with progressive slogans which it sullies and betrays.

Hence this work is first and foremost addressed to all democrats, whether governments, political circles or private individuals, who cherish the value of man, his rights and the struggle of oppressed peoples for their liberty.

The book we have selected, by Mohamed Talab Hilal, is even more disquieting than the others. Written in 1963, under the title "National, Social and Political Study of the Province of Djazireh" it is 160 pages in length. With the rank of lieutenant — *another military man* — the author was at the time, he informs us, Chief of the "Political Police" (Al Shou'ba al-Siyasiyyeh) of Hasaka, or Djazireh. The work is not on sale in bookshops, and remains unfamiliar to the public: a secret state document, it serves uniquely for the "enlightenment" of certain government members, the leadership of the Baath party and the chiefs of the political police. It was only at the beginning of 1968 that a copy fell into the hands of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Syria (KDP-S), and the latter devoted to it an article in issue No. 12 of its review "The Democrat". The Democratic Party of Kurdistan (Iraqi) did the same, in "Khebat" No. 501 of April 1968.

The Damascus government's reaction to the exposure was characteristic: "Our policy towards the Kurds", it countered, "is not the same as that set out in this book". This was a bold lie: the Baathist government of Damascus was implementing the very plans proposed by the author for the liquidation of the Syrian Kurds as a national entity; the author himself a hitherto unknown lieutenant, suddenly catapulted to ministerial rank. In reward for his zeal and for the "soundness" of his views, Mohamed Talab Hilal was promised at first the governorship of the province of Hama, pending his appointment as Minister of Supply in Zouayyen's Cabinet.

This reaction, on the defensive, of a regime untiringly claiming to

be revolutionary and the spearhead of the fight, gives some idea of all that is hateful in this work and its author. One feels ashamed. For this is hitlerism which dare not admit it¹.

The same hitlerism is manifest in the so-called "socialist" plans launched by the Baath regime to annihilate the Kurdish population in Syria, especially in Djazireh, the first victims being the hard-working and deserving peasants who have made of this region the granary of Syria. We described this policy and its effects in detail in a document entitled "The Kurdish Problem in Syria, plans for the Genocide of a National Minority"² published before having perused Mohamed Talab Hilal's work, which directly inspired the described policy³. That policy is no less than the faithful execution of the plans proposed by the author in question.

In the following pages we shall sometimes find ourselves comparing the views expressed in this book with similar thoughts by Hitler, derived from his famous "Mein Kampf". The reader will himself perceive the comparison to be inevitable, although the authors are men of a very different calibre, and despite the differences of concept or context which are in the natural order of things. One of these differences is that Hitler bases his policy on the concept of "race" and of "purity of blood". Not so the chauvinistic wing of the Arab nationalist movement — but the result is the same. Be it in the name of "the superiority of the Aryan Germanic race" or of the "eternal mission of the Arab nation", the end is in alienation, and in insanity and barbarism. Neighbouring peoples are defamed, the idea of their having a culture — that is to say a history and a language — is contested, and scapegoats are sought for persecution, discrimination and finally for dispersion and massacre: the Jews for Hitler, the Kurds for Aref and the other Hilals. It goes without saying that reference is only to Hitler and his cohorts, and not to the German people, henceforth committed to the democratic ideal, at present split like the Kurds and friends of the Kurdish people.

What comes out very strongly is a definite sense of persecution which seems to have developed amongst the Arabs and which keeps appearing throughout this book: the whole world, the communist east and the capitalist west are making a common cause, are in

1. We are prepared to make available to anyone who takes an interest in the question and who wishes to follow it up and make a thorough study, the original Arabic text, photocopied in its entirety, of the work of Mohamed Talab Hilal, as the sole copy of the original publication which fell into the hands of the KDP-S remains in our possession.

2. A work appearing in French and English editions, edited by the Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the Kurdish People, January 1968.

3. In this work we have referred to another overwhelming document on the Baath policy towards the Kurds in Syria, namely an article in the internal Baath organ "Al Mounadel", No. 11, of mid-December 1966, entitled "Report on the plan for the establishment of State farms in the Hasaka (Djazireh) province". We have an original copy of this document, photocopies of which we shall supply to anyone interested.

league against Arabism; the Kurdish national liberation movement cannot therefore be but the malevolent work of this foreign and hostile world, an infernal instrument created for the destruction of Arabism. It is imperative therefore to destroy it before being destroyed by it. This unhealthy but dangerous feeling can be explained by the malicious imperialist policies of certain large powers in the Middle East, policies which the Arabs see only in terms of their own nation, never applying to their neighbours, least of all the Kurds. So deeply engrained has this feeling become in recent years that there too, one finds oneself in the realm of collective alienation, reflecting a primary and desperate egocentrism, a manichaeistic world where alone the Arab collective "moi" represents the forces of good. All around there is none to be seen but the enemy, even where in fact there is a friend, a people even more oppressed than the Arabs.

This sense of persecution and the extreme deriving nationalism, deriving their nourishment from the glorious era of the Arab-Muslim conquest, while ignoring the spirit of brotherhood and the noble values of Islam, explain — while by no means excusing — the negative or frankly hostile attitude of the leaders of the Arab Machreq⁴ towards the Kurdish people.

Another important reason for this attitude is these leaders' fear of seeing the Kurdish people one day establish a national state, at the same time reappropriating those parts of Kurdistan that world imperialism unjustly placed under Arab domination, following the First World War. At the present juncture, for historical reasons which it cites, the Kurdish movement does not ask for separation. But our Arab friends must know and admit that the Kurds have the same rights to their own country as the Arabs have to theirs, and that the day will come when they will use their right to self-determination, without trespassing on anyone's terrain.

Our Arab friends, we have called them. Unquestionably, for despite the present situation, Arab-Kurdish friendship still exists and we sincerely believe in it. Our only wish for these friends is that they quickly rid themselves of what has become a persecution complex blinding them even to what is in their own interest. We also ask them to stretch out a hand of friendship and brotherhood to the Kurdish people, in mutual respect of the rights and personality of each.

We are convinced, moreover, that a great majority of the Arab people, beginning with the Syrians, disapproves of and condemns the views, the plans and the policy presently followed by the Baath regime against the Kurds. To them, especially, we address ourselves, in the hope that they will strive to inspire their governments with the noble values of Islam, not neglecting the spirit of

4. The term Arab Machreq (east) means the Arab countries of Asia, possibly including Egypt, but excluding the countries of the Arab Maghreb (west) — Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

our century, that of liberty and brotherhood and not barbarism. One of the progressive political structures in Syria, the movement of Arab Nationalists, today aligned with the opposition against the ruling regional Baath leadership (as distinct from the national leadership of that party, also in the opposition) has now held out a friendly hand to the Kurds. This followed the talks conducted in the summer of 1968, between the leadership of the movement and that of the KDP-S. We are proud of this achievement.⁵

We also turn to all good Arabs who moved by the highest motives of national loyalty, have mistakenly supported their government's contemptible anti-Kurdish campaign.

And finally this is addressed to responsible Baathists who are ashamed of their own plans, and who discover in putting them into operation, that their hands become soiled. Let them then purify themselves, abandon their plans, and deal justly with the Kurdish people, by accepting the democratisation of Syria, and freeing the political prisoners, whether Arab or Kurd, and whose numbers are legion, who populate their prisons.⁶

The regime at present in power in Damascus is trembling on its foundations, so fragile is the army on which it depends for its protection, against growing popular dissatisfaction, the activity of Arab opposition parties,⁷ the resistance of the Kurdish people within the KDP-S, and the universal condemnation by the public and the press, of its policy towards this people.

We are happy to note the role played by world press in making the Syrian regime increasingly aware of its great error in pursuing its anti-Kurdish policy. Their reaction to our previous work on "The Kurdish Problem in Syria" was positive and encouraging,⁸ and we permit ourselves the hope that the present work will be similarly treated.

The circulation achieved by our previous work would not have been possible without the help of numerous friends, and in particular the pro-Kurdish organizations abroad and the network of Kurdish organizations inside the country and abroad. Mention should be made of the International Kurdistan Society (Amsterdam), the Deutsch-Kurdischen *Gesellschaft* (Hamburg and Braunschweig), the Committee of Solidarity with the Kurdish Revolution (Paris) and, for the Kurdish movement, the KDP organizations, the Association of Kurdish Students in Europe (with its fourteen branches in Western and Eastern Europe), the Committee for the

5. See Annex I, at the end of this brochure, the declaration of the Arab Nationalists Movement on the subject of the Kurdish problem in Syria.

6. Among the political personalities at present imprisoned in Syria we would mention in particular Mr. Georges Habash, leading member of the Arab Nationalists Movement: we associate ourselves with all who demand his release and that of his friends.

7. See Annex II, list of political formations and groupings presently active in Syria, with respective orientation.

8. See Annex III, list of articles recently published in world press on the Kurdish problem in Syria.

Advancement of Kurdistan in the United Kingdom, the Committee for the Advancement of Kurdistan in the United States, the Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the Kurdish People and the Association of Kurdish Refugees in Sweden. We thank them cordially and invite them to persevere in their efforts.

We should not wish to end this introduction without a mention of how painful it has been for us to put to paper, in speaking of a certain Arab nationalism, the words "barbarism", "hitlerism", "fascism" and "alienation" — interspersed, albeit, with other words of a glorious history, of noble traditions and of friendship. I am, however, constrained to do so by analysis of the facts. But I have done so as a friend, as one in consternation at the spectacle offered us today by the Middle East. It is my desire to be understood.

Ismet Chériff Vanly

Amsterdam, October 1968.

THE BOOK

"Right lies in this strength alone."

Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 653⁹

Our method will consist of letting Mohamed Talab Hilal speak for himself, citing him textually in what appear to us his most edifying passages. We shall add relatively little commentary, the text, as the reader will perceive, not needing elaboration, especially since we have outlined our thoughts in the introduction. We shall abridge what the author has said, scrupulously following his line of thought, only where it appears necessary, taking care to remain faithful to the coherent whole. We shall skim briefly over chapters or passages of little interest to the aim of the present work, without however neglecting to give sufficient indication of their content. The quotations which we may borrow from Hitler's "Mein Kampf" do not, needless to say, appear in the book we are reviewing. We shall introduce them where apposite, solely for purposes of comparison, in the spirit and under the qualifications set out in the introduction. We have eliminated part of Hilal's superfluous repetition, so tedious to the European reader, to make the work more readable.

THE PREFACE

The author explains the methodological and other difficulties he has encountered, as for example the insufficiency of sources, but "the particular circumstances prevailing today in the province of Djazireh, the gravity of the events taking place in the north of our dear Iraqi territory, and their serious repercussions in this neighbouring province", prompted him "to make haste" in editing his work.¹⁰

His sole aim here to give "the general outlines and proposals" which he believes "very necessary" to those responsible, to enable them finally to work out "the plan", since:

"I believe that this is the moment to launch a definite plan for this province and to purify it of foreign elements, so that these elements cannot, with the aid of imperialism, disseminate the evil throughout this dear country so rich in resources and so important for our national revenue, above all since petrol has begun to be found in the fields of Remilan and Qaratchok, which adds to the complexity of the problem".

9. Our quotations from "Mein Kampf" are taken from the English edition translated by Ralph Manheim, published in 1943 in the USA by the *Boston Houghton Mifflin Company*.

10. All passages in inverted commas will be either direct or indirect quotes.

The author dedicates his study to "youthful believers" ('aqa'idi)¹¹ who have faith in the mission of their nation.

"Some day the German youth will be the builder of a new folkish state" (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 406).

THE INTRODUCTION (p. 1-2)

"Historical experience... shows with terrifying clarity that in every mingling of Aryan blood with that of lower peoples the result was the end of the cultured people".

Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 286

The author says that for a very long time Djazireh was covered by the Turks, then by the Germans, then by the French and the English, whose sole desire was "to deal Arab nationalism a mortal blow". The result of their plotting was that this region became "the domain of racial anarchy, inter-community conflicts, a tribal backwater and breeding-ground of the remnants of ancient nationalities long since disappeared, swept away by history". But "its river, the Khabour, flowed on with a persistent, angry rebellious groaning, which calls to mind the groaning of Jaffa and which says to us, with the Arab poet: O Arabs, awake! you are knee-deep in the flood! you are provoked, you bewail yourselves, but you are not seen to be wrathful!". For

"The bells of Djazireh sound the alarm, call upon the living Arab conscience to save this region, to purify it of all this scum, these dregs of history, until, as befits its geographic situation, it may set forth its revenues and its riches, alongside those of the other provinces of this Arab territory"¹² (p. 2).

"The fear which has inspired our chauvinism is a sign of its impotence... For the greatest revolutionary changes on this earth would not have been thinkable if their motive force, instead of fanatical, yes, hysterical passion, had been merely the bourgeois virtues of law and order". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 427).

The Kurds, with their Christian neighbours and friends, the Assyrians and the Chaldeans, are then "the scum of history" as, for Hitler, were all the Slav peoples and their leaders.

11. "'Aqa'idi" (believing) has no religious significance and in Baathist terminology is used to describe those who believe in the party doctrine.

12. In the language of the supporters of Arab unity the word "qutur" or "iqlim" (territory) designates not a department but a larger entity, a territory. Syria and Egypt are two "iqlim" or "qutur" of the Arab fatherland.

THE FIRST CHAPTER

Historical Sketch of the Kurdish Question (p. 3-25)

Let us once more refresh our memory. What did Hitler have to say of his neighbouring peoples? A few examples:

"...France is, and remains by far the most terrible enemy... this people which is basically becoming more and more negrified" (p. 624).

"The organization of a Russian state formation was not the result of the political abilities of the Slavs in Russia, but only a wonderful example of the stateforming efficacy of the German element in an inferior race" (p. 654).

"No, the Jew possesses no culture-creating force of any sort, ...hence his intellect will never have a constructive effect, but will be destructive" (p. 303).

In the paragraph entitled "The Kurdish Question from its Beginning until the Early XXth Century", Mohamed Talab Hilal has to say the following:

"Until now scholars had not been in agreement over the origin of this people... This people thus lives without an identity card... The eastern Kurds differ from those of the west morphologically, in colour of skin and in shape of skull, and both differ from the Kurds of the south. Scientific data give no grounds to suppose that we have to do with a people having its own ethnic and racial characteristics... These somatic differences extend to language also..."

Thus no such people as a Kurdish people can be said to exist, neither may one properly speak of a Kurdish nation..."

And to have recourse to the history of languages one finds no so-called Kurdish language, but merely dialects, each tribe having its own. A succession of conquerors denude the ancient Kurdish language of its quality as a language, and if there be found today those who would contest our argument, it is because imperialism is trying hard to fabricate a Kurdish people having its own characteristics, by seeking to unify dialects which are comparable to those of the gypsies..."

The conclusion is that there exists no Kurdish nation having national characteristics, nor, in consequence, a Kurdish national homeland. What does exist is a group of highlanders whose habitat has endowed them with peculiar characteristics, in the sense that mountain-dwellers differ from plain-dwellers..."

Such then is the Kurdish people, a people which has neither history, nor civilization, nor language, nor ethnic origin, nothing but the qualities of force, of destructive power and violence, qualities inherent, moreover, in all mountain populations" (pp. 3-5).

But admitting the author's claim that the Kurds do not belong to "a single homogeneous race", can he tell us that the Arabs themselves are of "pure Arab race"? Pre-Arab Syria, Roman Syria, was more densely populated than the Syria of today. The Hellenic Syria of the Seleucids numbered, according to generally accepted opinion, about 10 million inhabitants. What then has become of the non-Arab population of pre-Arab Syria? The author will admit that the Arabs at the time of the Islamic conquest, did not massacre them and that they must have eventually become arabised. Here we touch upon one of those arguments advanced against the Kurdish movement by its detractors: in order that there may be an authentic Kurdish national movement, the Kurds must first prove that they belong to one and the same "race", a demand which is made neither of the Arabs nor of the Turks. But since the Kurds have been talking of their national movement, since they embarked on the process of their liberation, the reactionary Arab nationalists dressed up in a certain so-called revolutionary socialism of their own brand cry shame and call the Kurds racists, for since in their eyes the Kurdish national movement is never national, it can only be racist.

"If... all Aryan influence on Japan should stop... its present culture would freeze and sink back into the slumber from which it was awakened seven decades ago by the wave of Aryan culture". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 291).

But since the Kurds are neither a nation nor a people, how is it possible to explain the existence of a Kurdish question? Our author and future Baathist minister, finds no better explanation than "the old and new winds of world policy", a policy which "in its hatred of the Arabs", has prompted the Kurds, who are "nothing but a tool to set themselves up against Arabism. Hence the origin of the Kurdish question. And the author goes on to define the question and put forward his solution — namely:

"The Kurdish question, now that the Kurds are becoming organized, is nothing but a malignant tumour which has developed itself and which has been developed in a part of the body of the Arab nation. The sole remedy which we shall be able to apply thereto is that of displacement" (p. 6)¹³.

2. In the chapter devoted to the "idea of the Kurdish homeland throughout the centuries" (pp. 6-10), the author, misreading his-

13. "Al-batr" in the text i.e. displacement.

tory, tells us that the Kurds were unaware of this idea and that they were divided into "very small seigniories" but in the 19th century, profiting by the weakness of the Ottoman empire "they tried to obtain their independence and form their own principalities, seeking separation from the Turks, and that on the instigation of the western imperialism of that era". The Ottomans however, put down these attempts:

"It was then that the Russians entered the arena: seeing the strength of the Kurdish military elements, they encouraged them, notably to emigrate to so-called Kurdistan. The Russians would thus be rid of them while at the same time making yet another dagger-thrust in the body of our fatherland, which they might need in the future to reach the warm seas, policy of all the Czars of ancient Russia" (p. 8.).

The author does not tell us where the Kurds had "all their little seigniories" prior to the 19th century, since they only emigrated to Kurdistan at that time, with the help of Russian imperialism. It is true that the "so-called" Kurdistan is but an imaginary country, because "no scholar has been able till now to trace the frontiers of the Kurdish homeland, according to national and ethnic data" (p. 10).

"If we wanted territories in Europe, it could only be done at the expense of Russia, and this would mean that the new Reich would again march along the road of the Teutonic knights of old, to obtain by the German sword land for the German plow and daily bread for the nation". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 140).

3. In the paragraph devoted to the "Kurdish Question Immediately Before and During the First World War" (pp. 10-12), the author says that "this question, since the beginning of the 20th century, has assumed a new character; unlike its former character, when the universal wind of the idea of nationality then began to sweep through the Arab world and the East". Did the Kurds thereby become a nation? This is not certain, for "as soon as colonised Arab nationality tried to stand up on its own, imperialism to combat this endeavoured to establish other nationalities, particularly in the domains of the *Sick Man*¹⁴. It was then that "the Soviets intervened, side by side with imperialism, working to set this Kurdish nationality on its feet".

"I was repelled by the conglomeration of races which filled the Capital (Vienna), repelled by this whole mixture of Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, Ruthenians, Serbs, and Croats, and everywhere, the eternal mushroom of humanity — Jews and more Jews". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 123).

Here Mohamed Talab Hilal somewhat reverses historical roles. Is it not known that it was British gold that financed the tribal chiefs of the Hejaz and the revolt of the Sherif of Mecca? Are people unaware that it was British arms that supported "the Arab King of Iraq" Faisal the First against the revolt of the Kurdish people? But the author continues:

"Yes, the Kurdish movement showed itself more active at the beginning of the 20th century in conformity with the plans of imperialism and its agents. The Kurds then formed associations, newspapers, such as "The Kurdish Sun", "The Kurdish Cultural Association", the "Hevi" student organization, a committee for Kurdish independence... and finally the well-known organization "Khoyboun"... which was then the same size as the Kurdish Democratic Party of today.

Yes, imperialism knows who are the outlaws and the highway robbers of the Middle East. They had only to adopt their cause, which since that time began to conform to the desires of every imperialist state. This period of the history of states and of the Kurds is characterized by the efforts of the former, each for himself and in his own interests, to win the favours of these brigands" (p. 12).

4. In the chapter devoted to "The Kurdish Question Between the Two World Wars" (pp. 13-14) the author speaks of the failure of the Kurdish "rebellions and mutinies" emphasizing that "the world press discussed this question as if it were a national question, as, in fact, it was treated by the Kurdish press itself, for during this period Kurdish activity and propaganda developed through every medium and on all levels, incited by the great powers".

"Since then imperialism has been trying to confront the Arabs with a fait accompli, as they did on the subject of Israel. The Arabs say: there was in the past no Kurdish nation but a Muslim religion. The religion has been driven away and Islam transformed into a communist, democratic, Kurdish religion. Yes, formerly enthusiastic Muslims, the Kurds have become enthusiastic communists. Alas! imperialism whose vision is blurred by the idea of peoples right to self-determination does not see it, and it is impossible for us to convince the world of the contrary, for imperialism wants things to be the way they are" (p. 14).

"...the Jews in their Marxist and democratic press proclaimed to the whole world the lie about "German militarism". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 272).

"In Russian Bolshevism we must see the attempt undertaken by the Jews in the twentieth century to achieve world domination". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 661).

5. In the paragraph entitled "International Milieux and the Kurdish Question" (pp. 14-15), the author states that this question arose at the Peace Conference and that the Sèvres Treaty of 10 August 1920, in its articles 62, 63 and 64, recognised the right of ancient Ottoman Kurdistan to autonomy and independence. But following the entente between the great powers and Turkish Kemalism, the project of a Kurdish state was abandoned, "which aroused the Kurds' indignation and incited them, in conformity with an (imperialist) plan, to adopt a more rigid attitude and to resolve their problem by their own means. But in fact they had fallen into the toils of imperialism where, contrary to what they claim, they remain" (p. 16).

If we are not mistaken, the project of a Kurdish state recognised by the great powers was an imperialist plan; the abandonment of the plan by these same powers was equally an imperialist plan, the action being directed, in both cases, against the Arabs.

6. But the future Syrian Minister has not done with repeating himself, for in his chapter entitled "The Attitudes of Imperialism Towards the Kurdish Question" (pp. 16-18) he reaffirms that it is imperialism on the "universal plane" which is trying "to create that which it calls a Kurdish people and nation" before speaking to us of the attitude of the French, the Germans, the English and the Russians on this question:

The French, one learns "were at first allied to the Turks against the Kurds, to fight Britain", but since 1928, "they needed reactionary forces to combat the Syrian National Front, and this led them to understanding with the Kurds with this end in mind".

As to the Germans, "they set up a programme of Kurdish language radio broadcasts" at the "Near East Station" after contacts at Aleppo during the war.

The British, having occupied Syria during the war, also had contacts with the Kurds.

As far as the Russians were concerned, "It is known that Russia has long since been seeking to reach the warm seas. In Communist Russia, this tendency has been transformed into a consistent policy of creating troubles in the region, regarded as an arena of conflicts among imperialists. Communist Russia seeks thereby to aim a blow at Turkey, the Arab states and the interests of Western imperialism" and the author adds:

"Moreover the Kurdish movement is in every sense of the term a Russian, meaning communist, movement, particularly since the creation of the Kurdish Democratic Party, which saw the light of day on the knees of the Soviet Union and was delivered into the world by Mustafa Barzani, who spent some time in that country". This party, like Khoyboun before it, crystallizes the activity of all the Kurds, with the difference that

the Kurdish movement today has a higher faith in its destinies and conducts a more sustained combat" (p. 18).

7. In the chapter entitled "The Kurdish Problem After the Second World War" (pp. 18-25), the author first discusses Mustafa Barzani, the Barzani supporters, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan and its clandestine political press, and then continues:

"Since the end of the Second World War, the Kurds appear to have increased their activities and become more obstinate about realizing the Kurdish homeland. But they saw at the beginning that circumstances were not favourable for unleashing an armed movement, especially since their people knew nothing of their own history and culture. They therefore changed their outlook and clandestinely began to conduct a wisely chosen campaign of educating the people in the light of their history and reinforcing Kurdish national consciousness in all states. They adopted Latin characters for the transcription of their language, and a new era of organization then commenced. Kurdish history was profoundly studied, their poets and men of letters set themselves to sing the praises of their national heroes throughout the ages, thus developing the Kurdish national literature... Kurdish language publications began to be circulated on a very wide scale. Once made aware of their national personality, the Kurds commenced their efforts to lift their cause out of its narrow confines and present it as an international problem, profiting from the cold war between East and West. The first to support them in this were the Russians" (p. 19).

In the second part of the same chapter, we are edified with "The Kurdish Question Under Abdul Karim Kassem" (pp. 20-25). The author reproaches the former Iraqi dictator "with having authorized more than 15 Kurdish newspapers, permitted the teaching of the Kurdish language in their schools, inaugurating a special Kurdish-language programme on the radio and television... and amnestying their exiled leaders, headed by Barzani. Barzani left Russia to re-enter Iraq, via Suez, aboard a Soviet vessel, and was received as a hero by Kassem". Thanks to this Arab generosity, "the Kurds' hope was rekindled. They established a redoubtable organization and criss-crossed the country with clandestine networks, with a view to setting up their state... They claimed that the creation of a Kurdish state was an Arab debt which Abdul Nasser must pay, since their ancestors had chased out the crusaders under Saladin the Ayoubid".

After the revolt of Colonel Shawaf with the connivance of Abdul Nasser and his agents, "Kurdish power increased even more for Kassem relied on them and on the communists to check the revolt. Thus Nasser's personal power encountered that of Kassem on the

soil of Iraq and of the she'oubiyyeh, conspiring against the cause of Arab nationalism."¹⁵ But the Kurdish question was to take the form of a bloody armed revolt:

"Yes, the question turned into an armed revolt led by Barzani... And the revolt pursues its separatist action until today with the support of all the She'oubiyyeh, of Arab political careerists and of imperialism of all kinds... But today is not yesterday. Today the Arab army of the two Syrian and Arab territories has achieved its unity and this legendary question, fed by imperialism and the she'oubiyyeh, is beginning to be deflated..."¹⁶

The Kurds of Djazireh, of whom we shall speak in the following chapter, are organically related to the Kurds of Iraq, of Turkey and of Iran, for the question is the same and the aim identical..." (pp. 22-23).

Mohamed Talab Hilal concludes his opening chapter with the following:

"Such, in broad outline, is the history of the Kurdish question, from the beginning up to the present day. This question, deriving its sustenance as it does from all elements hostile to Arabism, old and new, abroad and at home, jeopardizes the Arab entity. It is therefore necessary to take all appropriate measures to put a definitive stop to it, thus relieving the Arabs of a major preoccupation, so that they are free to direct their attention to their own national problems. This question must therefore be solved in a drastic fashion. The plans for this are being drawn up jointly by the two fraternal territories of Syria and Iraq.

The prime and most far-reaching danger threatening Djazireh and the North of Iraq is the Kurdish danger. All other dangers are as nothing compared to this. For the Kurdish situation has developed in the same way as the Jewish situation in Palestine. Waves of immigrants have been allowed to break into Djazireh under any and every form and name. There are today more than 160,000¹⁷ Kurds in Djazireh. They have immigrated according to a carefully worked out plan, the aim of which is to people every vacant corner of their so-called homeland with Kurds. They are building large numbers of new houses and have succeeded in partially

15. The term "she'oubi" (pl. "she'oubiyyin") originally referred to non-Arab ethnic elements, after the Muslim conquest, seeking liberation. It has today in Arabic a pejorative implication being applied to non-Arab Mohammedans "conspiring against Arabism". A literal translation would be "populist" and "populism".

16. The author is here referring to the expedition of the Syrian army against the revolution of Iraqi Kurdistan, which failed as did the campaign of the Iraqi Baathists in autumn 1963.

17. There are about 300,000 Kurds in Djazireh.

colonizing even the village of Hasaka where an entire quarter is populated with Kurdish immigrants. But the local authorities, having been alerted to this danger, have long since forbidden Kurds to build new houses, ...the Kurds in Djazireh are even prepared to try and prevent the Syrian army from intervening in favour of the Arabs in Iraq against the movement led by Barzani... but today they are anxious and afraid, since the declaration of military union between the two countries.

THE SECOND CHAPTER

"The Kurdish Question in the Province of Djazireh"

(pp. 26-48)

1. In the paragraph entitled "Kurdish-Populated Regions" (pp. 26-27) the author tells us that "The Kurds in this province live in closely knit communities all along the Turkish border, from the region of Ras-al-Ain in the west, to the region of Malikiyyeh in the east¹⁸, the belt widening towards the south, from 15 to 35 kms. They are thus concentrated in the most fertile regions where one cannot possibly find the smallest Arab enclave, especially in the regions of Malikiyyeh, Qoubour al Bid¹⁹, Qamishli and Amouda. They occupy the best lands and those with the highest rainfall (from 400 to 500 mm. annually)...

"The Arab element lives mostly in the southern part of the province, where the annual rainfall does not exceed 200 mm. This is probably due to the fact that the Arabs are for the most part nomads and have only recently begun to know a settled existence. They are a migratory people, unaware of what is going on around them and of the conspiracy against them."²⁰

"In the north of the Kurdish belt, the author continues, live the Kurds of Turkey. The Kurds in the above regions are thus blood brothers and many of their tribes are even divided between Syria and Turkey, and also, of course, Iraq. Amongst themselves they are brothers and cousins, on horseback at the frontiers, awaiting the realisation of their golden dream, a Kurdish homeland, Kurdistan. They have close ties amongst themselves

18. The east-west length of the Kurdish region of Djazireh is about 300 kms.

19. The Arabized name of Goré-Spi (Tombeaux-Blancs), al Malakiyyeh being the new Arabic name of the Kurdish village of Derik.

20. The population of Djazireh numbers about 390,000 of whom, as we have said, about 300,000 are Kurds, country or town-dwellers, 50,000 Arabs mostly of semi-nomadic tribes, 40,000 Assyrians and Christian Chaldeans, living among the Kurds and speaking Kurdish as well as ancient Syriac and Arabic. The Kurdish population of Syria is about 500,000, or 10% of the total Syrian population, and lives in 3 principal regions: Kurd-Dag (110,000 Kurds), Ain-Arab (about 50,000 Kurds) and Djazireh — the region under discussion. The overall size of the Kurdish people is about 14 million, of whom 7 million live in Turkish Kurdistan, 4.25 million in Iranian Kurdistan, 2 million in Iraqi Kurdistan, 0.5 million in the Kurdish regions of northern Syria and bordering on Turkish Kurdistan, and 0.15 million in the Transcaucasian Republics of the U.S.S.R.

across the frontiers, which they cross easily, and this has consolidated their sense of unity and cemented their ties. This makes the task of keeping track of them very difficult and you will rarely find a Kurd willingly to collaborate with you²¹. The non-Kurds understand nothing of what they say. For they speak Kurdish among themselves in your presence and you will understand nothing. If you ask a Kurdized Arab (Kurdized by the fact of his contacts with them), or an Arabized Kurd, if one may use the expression, to translate for you what they say, you become the object of their natural suspicion. Added to this is highly organized Kurdish Democratic Party, which has purposely alienated them, preventing you from getting to know their plans and projects. All this works in their favour. All these factors have brought about the Kurds' powerful organizational situation. They are also harsh, rude and strong-willed. They show you their loyalty while hiding their guile."

2. In the following paragraph, devoted to "Kurdish Tribes" (pp. 27-36) we are told:

"that the Kurdish tribes of Djazireh, despite their long-standing quarrels, are all united and animated by one idea, that of "the Kurdish race", having but a single hope, that gives them strength: the dream of a Kurdish homeland which is today clearly engrained in the mind of every Kurd, can largely be attributed to the education we have generously lavished upon them, and which is being turned against us like a weapon in their hands. The idea of Arabizing them by instruction is misguided, for the results are the opposite of what we expected".

The "Tribe of Haverkan" (pp. 28-30), which we are told was famous during the Ottoman era for lawlessness, now enjoys great prestige among the Kurds of Syria and Turkey, and is regarded as the "organizational centre" of the KDP-S, meaning the communist organization; these devil-worshippers are working hard towards the creation of the Kurdish homeland of Kurdistan. They number a thousand families, all prepared to sacrifice themselves under the orders of the leading clan of Hajo, and can mobilize five hundred specially armed men, not to mention their influence on the other tribes". That is why "the entire Hajo clan must be removed to the interior and a radical solution found to this problem, according to the saying of the Arab poet: if you are a man, cut off the serpent's head after his tail".

Of "the Dakori tribe" (pp. 30-32), we learn that it is devoted to agriculture, and occupies 120 villages on the most fertile soil of

the region, has made of the town of Amouda "a second Moscow", is numerous and powerful and ignores the Syro-Turkish frontier, maintaining close relations with the Dakori of Turkey. "Just like the Haverkan, the Dakori now ignore the Muslim religion, which was the only link between them and us".

"Yes, they are communists at the same time as being members of the Kurdish Democratic Party, since for them there is no longer any difference between the two organizations. The communist organization and that of the KDP-S has penetrated this tribe like the others. Even their religious mullahs are now no more than a screen, they conspire with the youth at Mohammedan assemblies and have become the vehicle of the communist culture of the KDP-S... They pretend to devote themselves to Islam, but in fact are working for their Kurdish nationalism and for communism."

The "Kiki tribe" (pp. 32-33), we are informed, occupies the entire region of Derbasiye, engaging in agriculture in 150 villages, and divided into the clans of Sarokhan, Koskan, Omeran, Hiskan and Ismailan and "even if it demonstrates friendship for the Arabs, it remains vitally attached to the other Kurdish tribes". As for the "Mersini tribe" (pp. 33-34) "which engages in agriculture and stock-farming... and which was famous in the past for brigandage", it "also ignores the frontier", its members "living just as if they were in the dear Kurdistan, and all they lacked was a simple formality, the political proclamation of the forming of a Kurdish government".

We are further informed, in like style, about the Milli, the Barazi, the Kitkan, the Muhallami, the Dorkan, Jabyan, Hassanavhan, Miran and Pinar-Ali (pp. 34-36).

3. Under the sub-title "Our Traditional Attitude Towards the Kurds" (pp. 36-37), the author states that the Arabs traditionally considered the Kurds as a minority all the more deserving of their compassion (marhama) as being of Islamic persuasion and as, in common parlance (Arabic) "the name Kurd was associated with the idea of discipline, respect for the law, loyalty towards the state, its defence and protection". But this attitude "is false and shows a misunderstanding of nationalism". Moreover, "imperialism has played a part in strengthening this attitude in us for its own ends, seeking to lead the Arab people into error, in order to plant yet another dagger in the back of Arab nationalism and the Arab cause as a whole". The time has therefore come "to reject this attitude and adopt a national, scientific, authentic one, and to separate religion from the sphere of nationalism":

"Religion is, for the rest, no more than a manifestation of Arab thought at the time of its blossoming, the humanitarian product of the Arabs of a past era. But we must not become petrified in admiration of this era,

we must renew the Arab mission in its historical context, break out of this halter of charlatanism and let the everlasting dynamism of Arab thought run its course.

"The racially pure movement must not be the champion of other peoples, but the vanguard fighter of its own".

(Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 653).

4. A "new attitude towards the Kurds", is therefore needed (para. 4, pp. 37-39), based on the following considerations:

"1) It is indisputable that on the ethnic plane, the Kurds are totally different from the Arabs. No resemblance, no relationship exists between them on the psychological, physiological or anthropological levels:"

"2) As to religion, it has become the protective screen of conspiracy and treachery... Moreover, the majority of the ulemas of Islam in Djazireh are Kurds, and do not even speak a decent Arabic. This makes us think of the poem of an Ummayyad governor: "I see beneath the coal a spark, which soon will come ablaze".

"The use of Czech pastorates and their spiritual shepherds was but one of the many means of attaining this goal, a general Slavization of Austria". (Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 109).

5. In the fifth paragraph of this chapter we are told of the "Democratic Party of Kurdistan" ("Al Parti")²² (pp. 39-40) the fifth article of the Iraqi PDK programme being cited as a crime against Arabism. But here is the text, quoted by Mohamed Talab Hilal: "To work for the strengthening of fraternal and amicable relations among all the nationalities of which the Iraqi nation is composed: Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans, Assyrians, Armenians and other minorities". This is what Hilal finds scandalous:

"This article in fact brings to light the Sheoubi and communist trend of the KDP. Not only does this party work towards Kurdish nationality, but at the same time it undertakes to destroy Arab nationality, by attempting to revive ancient nationalities, in accordance with communist ideology. This party has conviction ('aqa'idi), a solid and powerful organization, and has become the great organizer of all Kurds, whether party members or not.

The fact is that "For the Kurds, even for their ulemas, Islam is no more than an old legend. It is their educated youth who lead the struggle, and they are atheists, who believe in their religion only to the degree that they can exploit it. If some day their dream is to be realised, and we pray God that it will never be, the Kurds

22. The Arabs use the Kurdish word "parti" meaning "party" as in English, and add the definite article "al" to designate the KDP or the KDP-S. They also use it as an adjective "al-haraka al partiyeh" meaning the "movement of the Party" — the Kurdish movement inspired by the KDP.

will then throw off their mask, and their state will be a communist state which will follow in the wake of the Soviet Union". It is for this reason that "it is necessary in our relations with them to jettison all religious considerations, just as we did with the Turks". And Hilal concludes:

"We must regard the Kurds as a group of people putting all their efforts and everything they possess, into creating their imaginary homeland. They are therefore our enemies, and religious ties notwithstanding, there is no difference between them and Israel, for "JUDASTAN" and "KURDISTAN"²³ so to speak, are of the same species. To this must be added imperialist considerations and imperialist action against Arab nationalism. Such is the genuine case for drawing up a general plan to combat this pressing danger, and rejecting any improvised or partial solution".

6. Our attention is now drawn to "The New Kurdish Generation" para. 6, pp. 40-43). We learn that "the old generation is, or rather was, truly pious", for an elderly Kurd, no matter how deeply imbued with the spirit of Islam, will not reveal to you the secrets of his activity in "al parti". The old generation has moreover, been overtaken by events, and "is completely powerless and beginning to see the truth of the younger generation's ideas."

Thus it is "the sons, the grandsons, or the younger sons, who conduct the struggle. This new educated generation is the dangerous element which leads the party. Our Arab schools in the Kurdish regions might be said to be nothing but factories for the production of members of the KDP and communists."

"We used to say "Arabize them by knowledge". But in their hands, knowledge has become their chief weapon, their intellectual weapon ('aq'idi) side by side with their firearms"... Yes, in our attempts to arabize them, whether undertaken in good or bad faith, we have succeeded in creating enemies — dangerous enemies. Close and powerful enemies whose audacity is combined with faith (al'aqideh), dialectic intelligence (al-houdjeh) and eloquence (al-bayan).

The struggle of ideas is so enormous. Besides such a struggle, all else is easy. Yes, the new generation is a generation of profound convictions (aq'a'idi), atheists, who believe in the party and in themselves".

Behold then the new Kurdish generation raised to the level of an atheistic and "'aq'idi" youth, privileges formerly reserved to the élite of the Baathist youth. But Mohamed Talab Hilal does not tell us in so many words whether the Kurds have become a nation. He is content to find it scandalous and criminal that a Kurd should

23. The words "JUDASTAN" ("Yehoudistan" in Arabic) and "KURDISTAN" are in capitals in the text.

love Kurdistan, of which he cites, "among a thousand other examples" a love letter written by a young Kurd to a young Kurdish girl, and which he, the policeman, chief of the "political police", had confiscated, doubtless in the course of one of the nighttime police raids, whose terrible memory the Kurdish families of Djazireh can never forget. The youth had written to the girl: "I love you, I swear it by God, and if you do not believe me I swear it on my honour, and if you do not believe that I swear by Mustafa Barzani, and if you still do not believe, I swear it by our beloved fatherland of Kurdistan, to which we have decided to dedicate our whole lives". And Hilal himself affirms: "Yes the new Kurdish generation is a generation of 'aqa'idi, which has faith in its 'aqa'idi(ism)²⁴ and in its fatherland, and for this it is prepared for any sacrifice":

"That is why we propose to adopt a policy of obscurantism (al tadjhil)²⁵, for we have no need to ceaselessly renew the training of this new generation by the intermediary of schools and institutions of state, experience having refuted the Arab dictum: teach them to write and they will become arabized...

To persevere would be to contribute to the conspiracy against Arabism...

The new Kurdish generation has swept away the debris of the ties which still linked the Arabs and the Kurds, it has tossed them onto history's dung-heap.

All this goes on while we blissfully delude ourselves that the question is easy... But we must face facts, bitter though they be. We must draw up plans scientifically and coolly which will put an end to this question.

If we do not, we shall be guilty of self-neglect, and then, very soon, on this Arab land which has fed and lodged them, but which must do so no longer, the struggle (kampf) between ideas will reach its climax and at that stage we shall no longer be able to do anything (pp. 42-53).

"It requires all the force of a young, Missionary idea to raise our people up again to free them from the snares of this international serpent". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 662).

7. But before unfolding his plan, the Baathist theoretician and future minister must needs come back to "The pro-Kurdish Imperialist plot" (para. 7, pp. 43-45). We learn that:

24. The reader will have noticed a certain hesitancy in our translation of the terms "'aqa'idi" and "'aqa'idiyeh" which we have sometimes rendered "belief" sometimes "conviction", "faith" or "idea". Specifically Baathist, the term implies the idea of the total dedication of self, by conviction and discipline, to the service of the fatherland and of the nation.

25. By this the author means the closing of the (Arab) schools in the Kurdish regions.

“In their struggle for hegemony, never have the two world camps been better understood than in the tragedy of Kurdistan, of Arab Kurdistan in particular”.

“Arab Kurdistan”, first as distinct from the Kurdistan of Turkey and Iran, and secondly, most important because the parts of Kurdistan which world imperialism delivered, bound hand and foot to Arab domains, to “the Arab King of Iraq”²⁶ and Faisal the First, its protégés at that time, constitute an integral part of the Arab homeland. This land on which the Kurdish people has been living for thousands of years, long before the Arabisation of Syria and Lower Mesopotamia, and on which it erected states and principalities and created a civilization, is not Kurdish country, but Arab country, a conception which the national-socialist Baath inherited directly from imperialism. But to return to our author:

“The capitalist camp has long since been preoccupied by the Kurdish question and continues to support it, simply with the aim of engaging the Arabs’ attention and diverting them from their unity and their mission. They also do it to maintain their own interests, on the principle of ‘divide and rule’, and take up different causes, depending on the circumstances in the name of nationalism, in the name of religion and now in the name of suffering humanity.

They have done this so well that the Kurdish question has managed to occupy the place it has today on the international plane, and the movement has become a sort of world organization, attached, one would almost say, to the United Nations. Proof can be found in the official western press and western radio broadcasts. Offices have been opened for the movement in Switzerland and in other foreign countries, to the degree that in the western mind this question has come to acquire the same importance as that of Berlin or of Germany as a whole”.

The author is then unaware that the Kurds themselves are, to borrow his expression, those who “opened (offices) in Switzerland and other foreign countries”, he is unaware what sacrifices they consented to, what privations they had to accept all the way, along this Calvary, so that the plight of their people could be raised to international level, to be seen by the world. He sees nothing but a giant octopus, O Mein Kampf! with head and stomach in the Arab pantry and tentacles in East and West, in North and South, fed by capitalism, communism, humanism and whatever else blows in the wind:

26. This expression is attributable to Lord Curzon, in the minutes of the Conference Lausanne in 1922-23. (See also the chapter on the “Vilayet” of Mosul in our work on “The National Question of Iraqi Kurdistan, study of the 1961 revolution” (still in manuscript).

“the Eastern camp, continues Hilal, has not contented itself with what it has done in Palestine, for today it meets once more its enemy, the western camp, so that together they may play out a new tragedy on Arab soil. Behold how the eastern camp, in press and radio, is publicly supporting the Barzani rebellion and the Kurdish movement, in the name of humanity and of the right of the peoples to self-determination. This calls to mind the question of Palestine, but the Arabs must not let themselves be twice bitten by the same snake. The communist party wields enormous influence among the Kurds²⁷, and this is what the eastern camp is counting on to appropriate to itself a new bridgehead on the eastern frontiers, there creating a communist state which will be under the orders of Moscow. Did not the west create the state of Israel with the collaboration of the Eastern camp? The latter is now requesting in return — and its request will be granted — the aid of the west in creating Kurdistan”.

“Our German people, today broken and defenseless, exposed to the kicks of all the world, are now most in need of that force which will inspire their confidence in themselves”. (Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 411).

As soon as the Kurdish movement “completes its first phase” namely “continual immigration and settling of Kurds in Arab regions²⁸, it remains for it “to begin its second phase, which Barzani has done on the national and international plane, in that strategic country which is the world’s reservoir of petrol and where the Soviet Union stubbornly and obstinately persists in wanting to create a Kurdistan”. That is why “the Arabs are alone in the arena²⁹ and must rely solely on themselves and their revolutionary avant-guardists, to defeat the plans and the plots being woven against Arab nationalism”. But in the Arab world, not all is in conformity with the desire of the national-socialism of the Baath:

“Unfortunately, the leaders of Cairo, but not its people, believe in a peaceful solution between the Arabs and the Kurds. How like this attitude is to that of Kassem! when his accomplices shouted out what was a mockery of Arab-Kurd fraternity, with no other motive than charlatanism and the she’oubiyyeh...

27. It is common knowledge that the Kurdish democratic parties and other specific Kurdish organizations are alone in conducting the struggle for the national liberation of their people, there being no question of any communist organization or movement. But the author seems to have become confused.

28. Here too the roles are reserved, for at the time when Hilal penned these lines, the military forces of the Baath in Iraq had already expelled 40,000 Kurds from the region of Kirkuk (summer 1963) while the Syrian army was ingloriously fighting in a country not its own: the part of Kurdistan linked to Iraq.

29. To the best of our knowledge, the MiGs, the Hawker-Hunters and the napalm which these aircraft dropped on the Kurds were manufactured neither in Baghdad nor in Damascus.

The attitude of the rulers of Cairo on this question is a she'oubi and a superficial attitude. But they are the last to be superficial. Their attitude, consequently, can be motivated by nothing but hidden designs. How regrettable it is that for these designs, and by treachery, they are collaborating with both eastern and western imperialism in order to realise personal gains, for the construction of an empire in an era when the day of the empire is over, for the consolidation of personal power in a century when personal power is no longer counts.

O miserable dreams so detrimental to Arab nationalism ! There is nothing for it but organized popular action to save the people of Egypt from its tyrants, that it may come to meet us, and together we may undertake to act in the service of the nation, with common ideas, attitudes, methods and 'aqa'id" (p. 45).

"How easy it is for a tyranny to cover itself with the cloak of so-called "legality" is shown most clearly and penetratingly by the example of Austria.³⁰ The legal state power in those days was rooted in the anti-German soil of Parliament with its non-German majorities and in the equally anti-German ruling house". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 97).

"The German bourgeoisie... is pacifistic to the point of positive self-abnegation, where internal affairs of the nation or state are concerned... To make possible the waging of any serious struggle the Pan-German movement should above all have dedicated itself to winning the masses". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 101).

"Any attempt to combat a philosophy with methods of violence will fail in the end, unless the fight takes the form of attack for a new spiritual attitude. Only in the struggle between two philosophies can the weapon of brutal force, persistently and ruthlessly applied, lead to a decision for the side it supports". (Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 172).

8. In the paragraph entitled "Proposed Solutions to Kurdish Question" (pp. 45-48), the author explains first of all that "plans must be scientific, the result of a joint study of the question, in the perspective of the historic era through which we are passing and in the light of the armed and ideological ('aqa'idi) combat which we are pursuing in the north of our Iraqi Arab territory, for it would be useless to end the question there, only to let us raise its

30. Hitler refers here to the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

31. The author then was sure that the intervention of the Syrian army alongside the Iraqi army, in autumn 1962, would do away with the question of Iraqi Kurdistan.

head here"³¹. "The plan for Djazireh must then be complete, integral and radical, so that the question cannot reappear in the future". It must also take into account the fact that "the Kurdish regions as a whole are welded together, across the frontiers, from Turkey to Iraq, to Syria and even to Iran", and "the present attitude of Turkey, who deports dangerous elements to the interior, should not be taken for granted for this attitude may change in the future, according to the wishes of imperialism."

The final solution, the Endlösung that Mohamed Talab Hilal proposes to his chiefs is presented under guise of a "plan", having twelve points:

- 1) **The State must embark on an operation to transfer the population and disperse it in the interior. Beginning with the most dangerous elements the plan could afterwards be extended over two or three years.**
- 2) **Political obscurantism: not to open schools or scientific institutions in the region, since these have produced the opposite results to those anticipated.**
- 3) **The great majority of the Kurds of Djazireh are of Turkish nationality³². The errors of our civil registration must therefore be corrected, and this is now being done, but in addition it is necessary to expel the elements whose nationality (Syrian) has not been proved and hand them over to the authorities of their country of origin. Moreover, the nationality of Syrian elements should be upheld only within reason, after examining the manner in which this nationality was acquired, as Syrian nationality is properly granted only by presidential decree. The case of those whose nationality was acquired without presidential decree should be carefully checked, in such a way as to allow retention of nationality only to the less dangerous elements, while the others should be divested of their nationality and handed over to their countries of origin. There is also the case of those who possess two or three nationalities: they must revert to their first nationality. What is important is to take note of the results of the latest census³³ and then continue with the expulsion programme.**

32. This is not an accurate statement. The Kurds of Djazireh had papers proving their Syrian nationality — as further perusal of the text will show. But the author seems to regard any Kurds having relatives across the border as of Turkish extraction and who must hence be deprived of their nationality and expelled.

33. The author alludes here to a special and arbitrary census organized ex-

4) **Stop employment: opportunities of work should be closed to Kurds, in such a way that they are no longer in a position to move but in a state in which they are prepared to leave the country at any moment. This then is the task of the agrarian reform authorities: the Kurds must be forbidden to possess or to rent (lands), especially since Arab elements are available and, by the grace of God, numerous.**

5) **Unleash a vast anti-Kurd campaign among the Arabs, first of all to condition them against the Kurds, then to undermine the situation of the latter and sow in their midst the seeds of distress and insecurity.**

6) **The Kurdish ulemas must be deprived of their religious authority and replaced by pure Arab ulemas (Arab "ay'ha'h"). The Kurdish ulemas may also be transferred to the interior, for their assemblies are literally Kurdish assemblies and not of a religious character. Imagine, when they send us telegrams, they are not acting against Barzani but to stop the blood of Muslims from being spilled!**

7) **The Kurds must be antagonised against each other. This should be easily done, by inciting those elements who claim to be of Arab origin against the dangerous elements. This will moreover provide an opportunity to find out whether these pretenders are indeed of Arab origin³⁴.**

8) **Settle Arab nationalist elements in the Kurdish regions, the entire length of the borders. These elements will be our future outposts, and can at the same time supervise the Kurds until their transfer. For this purpose we suggest taking people from among the Shammar, for that tribe is the poorest in land, and one hundred per cent guaranteed on the nationalist level.**

9) **Proclaim the northern belt a military zone, in the same way as the front³⁵, and station there army de-**

clusively in the province of Djazireh in November 1962, by virtue of Order in Council No. 93 of 23 August 1962 and conducted solely for the purpose of depriving the Kurds of their Syrian nationality. We have mentioned this census in the brochure on "The Kurdish Problem in Syria..."

34. Under the influence of Islam, certain traditional Kurdish chiefs maintain pretensions to Arab origin or even to being descended from the prophet Mohammed; they are then called "Seyid".

35. Reference is to the front against Israel.

tachments whose task it will be to settle Arabs and expel the Kurds, according to the plans drawn up by the state.

10) Create collective farms for the Arabs who will be settled in the northern belt, in order to train and arm them militarily, exactly like the Jewish frontier colonies.

11) Disenfranchise all persons in these regions who do not speak Arabic of the right to elect and be elected.

12) Absolutely refrain from conferring Syrian nationality upon those who want to settle in this region, be their original nationality what it may, always excepting Arabs, etc.

Hilal adds:

“These proposals are not in themselves sufficient, but we wished to make use of our experience, in the hope that they would be the starting point of an integrated and thoroughgoing plan”.

These proposals, as we said in our introduction, have been adopted by the Syrian Baathist government, in their entirety, as attested by the anti-Kurdish policy they have since pursued.

It should be added that the Syrian government has only been able to begin to carry out these plans, although they included the two other Kurdish regions of the country. The regime at present finds itself acutely embarrassed in face of the virtual failure, despite all efforts made, of its policy. Virtual, because the Baath has still not renounced its plans of genocide, but nevertheless failure, first of all because of the passive resistance of the Kurdish population, its solidarity and national cohesion, and then because of the increasing criticism by Arab public opinion, both in Syria and abroad. As to Hilal's proposal No. 3, it could only be partially put into practice: some 120,000 Kurds were indeed deprived of their Syrian identity cards, without it however having been possible to hand them over to Turkey, for the simple reason that they are not of Turkish origin, and the government of Ankara refused to be a party to the game of the rulers of Damascus.

“...The State (should) not leave the settlement of newly acquired territories to chance, but subject it to special norms. Specially constituted race commissions must issue settlement certificates to individuals. For this, however, definite racial purity must be established”.
(Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 405).

“A philosophy of life which endeavours to reject the democratic mass idea and give this earth to the best people — that is, the highest humanity — must logically obey the same aristocratic principle within this people”. (Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 443).

“If we speak of soil in Europe today, we can primarily have in mind only Russia and her vassal border states”. (Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 654).

THE THIRD CHAPTER

“Some Documents and Letters Exchanged Among Kurds in their Various Regions” (pp. 49-82)

In this chapter the author publishes seven documents purported to be incriminating evidence against the Kurds. It would take too long to give the gist of them and discuss it. The first “document” is not even from a Kurdish source. It is a “secret letter” from General Shishakli, Syrian Chief of Staff, to his subaltern in Qamishli. The second is devoid of any references and may well be a sheer fabrication, as indeed may the third too. The fourth is a strictly personal letter from an Iraqi Kurd to a Syrian Kurd, and we have no proof of its not having been “edited”. The fifth is an article from the review “Voice of Kurdistan”, published by the revolution of Iraqi Kurdistan, where reference is made to the victorious resistance of the Kurdish people against the aggression of General Kassem and the echo which this resistance aroused in world press. The sixth document is a letter addressed by the KDP-S to the Association of Kurdish Students in Europe, on the occasion of the VIth congress of that organization, where the message reads: “our Arab brothers must understand that the question of nationality cannot be resolved by terror, prisons and arrests, as indeed their own experiences with imperialism would indicate”. What is worthy of reproach in this? And the sentiment of love that a Kurd has for his own people, and which moreover never crowds out his friendship towards others. Is this a crime? The seventh document consists of twelve pages extracted from an interview which we gave, in 1959, in writing, to a Greek journalist, and which was published in brochure form, in Greek and French editions, by the Association of Kurdish students in Europe³⁶. The subject discussed is the struggle of the Kurdish people for national liberation and the friendship which links the Arab and Greek peoples.

36. We still have available copies of the French edition. This brochure was translated and published in Arabic by the KDP-S, and the author is referring to the Arabic edition. But the Arabic translation given here by Hilal is in such bad Arabic (from a grammatical point of view) that one wonders whether it was not deliberately altered by him.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER

“Political Parties in Djazireh”

The author opens this chapter with an introduction. The following is an extract:

“How numerous are they, those who do not belong to my nation, and what a grudge they bear it! When they see their treacherous plots fail, or their perfidious designs exposed, they take refuge in dark recesses, sheltered from watchful eyes and then, like mad dogs, they treacherously set upon parts of this homeland. Woe unto this dear part of our great fatherland devoured by treachery and treason, crying out to the faithful to come to its rescue, crying “IT IS TIME THESE MAD DOGS DIED”³⁷ (pp. 82-83).

The author divides into two categories “the parties hostile to Arab nationalism”; 1 — “the atheist, aqa’idi” subversive parties and 2 — “the religious she’oubi parties”. He begins with the first category “composed of two large parties which form the framework of subversive she’oubism, i.e. the Kurdish Democratic Party (Al-Parti) and the communist party”. But we should begin with the first “for the Kurdish Democratic Party is today the most common framework among the Kurds and which presents the greatest danger, but these two parties live in peaceful co-existence, i.e. they even cooperate in a fashion”³⁸.

On the subject of the KDP-S (pp. 84-91) we are first told about the period 1923-46 when the Kurdish movement in Djazireh was animated by young people, such as the poet Cegerxwin³⁹ and other cultured elements: then of the creation of the KDP by Mustafa Barzani in 1946, and of the influence this party exerted on all Kurds. Hilal presents us with the KDP programme, obviously confusing this party (of Iraqi Kurdistan) with the KDP-S (in Syria)⁴⁰:

37. In large type in the Arabic text.

38. There exists in Djazireh today only one large party having a popular base: the KDP-S. Before this party was formed in 1957 it was the Syrian Communist Party which to a much lesser extent held this role, but since then, and because of the indifference it has displayed on the Kurdish national question it has lost its hold over the masses to the KDP-S whence the curt relations between the two parties. As for Arab parties in Djazireh, now the Baath and formerly nationalist parties, they have only cadres artificially implanted in the region and financed by the government without either bases or troops: They can in fact have no hold on the masses while the Arab population of the region, in its great majority composed of semi-nomad tribes, has not yet reached that stage of social evolution at which it feels a need to be organized politically. The Kurdish peasantry of Djazireh is remarkably and completely politically organized, much more so even than that of Iraqi Kurdistan.

39. Cegerxwin (pronounced Gegerkhuine, “bleeding heart” in Kurdish) is one of the greatest contemporary Kurdish poets.

40. The Democratic Parties of Kurdistan, or Kurdish Democratic Parties, are as bodies officially independent of one another. The KDP-S programme for example is not the same as that of the KDP and its organs are independent of the latter organization.

"It is clear, says he, that the party centre is in Iraq, from where it spreads in sections in the neighbouring countries and states". Having affirmed that the KDP "is nothing but an important branch of the world communist party" and that "its founders and the state which conceived it, cherish a dream that it will become the local communist party of the future State of Kurdistan". The author adds: "It is clear that we have here a party organized in a rigorous scientific fashion, one of the best and most modern structures among the best political parties". The former Chief of the "Political Police" having thus respectfully acknowledged his enemy's qualities, is also forced to admit the robustness and efficiency of the KDP-S in Syria:

"The Al Parti" party in Djazireh has today become the first and the supreme organizer of all Kurds⁴¹ in general and of those of this region in particular. It is the party of Kurdish nationalism, the militant and active framework of the region and of the Kurds. These latter have abandoned all considerations of a local order and have merged in the melting pot of this party. The least of Kurdish families has become, when at home, in its house, like a sort of cell, a link in the chain of organization of this party. And this progress, this conscience, forges ahead, because of the material and moral resources of the party. Its organization reaches out to all corners and touches even the smallest groups. By all available means it continues to disseminate Kurdish national consciousness... it is a clandestine 'aqa'idi party. Its material power derives from the support of imperialists the financial sacrifices of its members, partisans and sympathisers, not only in Syria and Iraq, but even in Turkey and in Iran, as well as financing and services rendered to it by the Tudeh communist party in Iran⁴². It also receives funds from Islamic "zakat"⁴³ collected for it by the Kurds... Without exaggeration it may be said that the ulemas in all modesty and deference give the zakat to the party leaders, because it is in their eyes a sacred duty, when it is question of the party of the self-styled (future) State of Kurdistan... The material conditions of the Kurds of Djazireh are, it is common knowledge, excellent, and they do not skimp on the means they offer to realise their golden dream" (pp. 89 90).

41. Reference is to the Kurds of Syria.

42. These gratuitous allegations, fabricated by a Chief of Police who stands powerless in one face of an organized popular movement, are hardly such as to warrant rebuttal.

43. The zakat is an Islamic religious tax established by the Prophet to ensure a steady revenue to the public treasury.

What is to be done in the face of so redoubtable an enemy? How to go about reducing him to silence? This is what the author of the Arab "Mein Kampf" prescribes:

"Yes, it is extremely difficult to destroy this party, due to its age, its organizations, its membership, both educated and active, except by (al tahdjir al da'im) transfer, the continual transferring of these people to other areas.

Such is the KDP-S, 'aqa'idi party, working for the Kurdish cause. It resembles the communist party insofar as it leans on the new educated generation, its organization, its cadres and its faith, which withstands all tests. It constitutes an insurmountable obstacle in the march of the holy Arab conquest (al-za'hf al-arabi al mouqaddass), and there is no war as difficult as the war between ideas. We are convinced that this party cannot be destroyed except by exterminating the Kurds as a whole in the region, by one means or another, for it has become their life-blood, their very life, and time is working in its favour, mental evolution and circumstances mediate in its favour, if the Kurdish population remains what it is in the North of Djazireh and in the North of Iraq" (p. 91).

Yes, that is right: to destroy the Kurdish Democratic Party there is but one way: to destroy the Kurdish people. And the task is to be embarked upon by scientific planning, now in the process of implementation: Is it really necessary to comment?

Of the communist party, the author says "that it is known to be the oldest 'aqa'idi she'oubi party of the region", that it has "acquired a certain importance among the Kurds in general and the Syriac, orthodox, Armenian and other communities" and "that it reached the peak of its power in Djazireh between 1954-56, since when it began to shrink little by little, but it is not yet dead" (p. 92)⁴⁴.

Hilal then sets out to attack the "Syrian Nationalist Party", "loyal to France", "composed of bands of criminals and hooligans, having no importance, instrument of separatist she'oubism and of communism"; the "Muslim Brotherhood" party, "brothers of the Turks and of the Kurds in the name of Islam" and "friends of the Kurdish Democratic Party", but "the Kurds are more intelligent than they, and do nothing but exploit their Islamism", proof of which is that no Kurd is a member of the "Muslim Brotherhood"; the local traditionalist parties", "a miserable remnant of the past, with vested interest rather than faith as its motivating power"; "recent mercenary parties", "created by Nasser", such as the group of "Arab

44. Here Hilal indirectly confirms what we have already said, that the Syrian Communist Party lost its influence in Djazireh after the creation of the KDP-S in 1957.

nationalists, which first saw the light of day at the American University, and which is inspired by imperialism", the group of "Socialist Unionists", which is "in the process of disappearing", the "United Front", "which bought the conscience of the poor classes, before disappearing like all mercenaries", and the "(Arab) Socialist Union", "agent of Nasser and which has no foothold in Djazireh".

THE FIFTH CHAPTER

"The Arab Tribal Situation" (pp. 110-132)

This situation Hilal describes in the following terms:

"With the exception of the sheikhs, the material circumstances of the Arab tribes are bad. The proportion of the literate among them does not exceed 3%. Most of these tribes are not yet settled, except for the Djoubours, whose agricultural know-how is a little better... but they are unimportant. The other tribes are at a stage between the nomadic and the settled life... but certain of them are still nomads, continuing their migrations, such as the Shammar and the Bakkareh" (pp. 110-111).

We are then told about the tribes of Shammar, Tai, Sherabiyyin, Djoubour and Bakkareh "who are frequently in a state of war against each other". But it would be pointless to follow the author through these details. Speaking of the Arab tribes' relations with the Kurds, the author finds it regrettable that "Ottoman imperialism and later western imperialism have tried to strengthen the religious sentiment among them, so successfully that the relations between Arabs and Kurds were seemingly friendly, the Arabs being unaware of the terrible plans being elaborated to their detriment". But they are proud of the fact that this situation is beginning to change. As to his "Proposals on the subject of the Arab tribes", (pp. 131-132), the author advocates the opening of schools for them, as well as the "distribution among the Arabs of lands requisitioned by the agrarian reform", and "the transfer of other Arab elements from the interior and their settlement in reasonable circumstances in Djazireh".

In the paragraph entitled "Other Ethnic Minorities in Djazireh" (pp. 132-137), which the author includes in Chapter V, devoted to Arab tribes, he speaks first of all of the Assyrians, betrayed by the English after the First World War, thrown out of Iraq following a military campaign and "for whom imperialism and the League of Nations could find as a land of refuge none but Syrian territory". They still dream of ancient Assyria, but they are of no political importance, and as their numbers have dwindled, it is possible to arabize them. Their arabization would already have

been accomplished had not imperialism installed them in a single region". The Armenians live in the principal towns of Djazireh, where they excel in the mechanical trades. "They present no danger to national security, being widely dispersed and few in number". The Chaldeans are very sparse in numbers and are no more than a religious community. The Chetchans are of Circassian origin and few in number. "They live among the Kurds and have become kurdized, which is why we have spoken of them in the chapters devoted to the Kurds. They have become Kurds by language and tradition, and consistently support Kurdish claims". The Jews had their origins in Zhako and the region of Mosul, whence they came to Djazireh five hundred years ago. The majority of them emigrated to Israel. "Those who remain in Djazireh are completely paralyzed, their goods having been confiscated by a committee which administers them. They are of no importance".

The VIth chapter entitled "The Community Situation and Political Trends in Djazireh" (pp. 138-156) is devoted mainly to religious communities. Under this chapter heading the author speaks of the Yezidis "who in the first and last analysis are "apostate" Kurds, and differ not an inch from the other Kurds in political trends, but "they are exploited and present themselves as a religious community". Mohamed Talab Hilal completed the editing of his work at Hasaka, on 12 November 1963.

ANNEX I

Declaration of the Movement of Arab Nationalists in Syria

This declaration was published in a weekly newspaper of the movement *Al Hurriyeh* (liberty), Beirut, on 12 August 1968. The following are some lengthy extracts:

"While the petit-bourgeois military regime in Syria continues to repress the movement of the Arab working masses, putting hundreds of democratic activists in prison and oppressing the workers as the avant-garde of the great popular masses, it practices the most hideous methods of racial persecution against the Kurdish minority in the north of Syria.

It recently drew up the "Arab belt" plan, following which several thousands of Kurdish peasants had to be expelled from the Turko-Syrian frontier region and deported to the interior of Syria, so that Arab peasants would be settled in their place, out of fear that the Kurds might in the future demand independence and separation from Syria. The application of the agrarian reform was suspended and the lands were not distributed to the Kurdish peasants, but were left for the Arab peasants. Moreover, since 1963, the Baathist regime has practiced a policy of "racial discrimination" which has been growing more pronounced to the point where educated Kurdish elements find themselves excluded from teachers training colleges, from public office and from the Military College. The Kurds' own national language and culture have been suppressed. The Syrian regime continues to withhold the nationality of several thousands of Kurds from whom it was stripped by the reactionary regime of 1962. Hence they become the victims of a tragedy with all its consequences.

Confronted by these acts of chauvinism, the Arab Nationalists Movement in Syria declares as follows:

1. By its actions the regime has created a problem which did not previously exist. No Kurdish source is known to have caused, by its demands, any damage to the unity of Syrian soil (...);
2. Operations of deportation and of the "Arab belt" being conducted under the name of "State farms" and under cover of agrarian reform, are blame-worthy acts of oppression and dispersion, be their justification what it may;
3. (...) The Kurds in Syria have always stood side by side with the Arab people in the national struggle, and through all the country's difficulties. The Arab Nationalist movement in Syria views this question as follows:

1. The Kurds in the north of Syria constitute a "national minority" and must enjoy all rights pertaining thereto, which may be summed up as follows:

- a) Full equality of rights and duties between Kurds and other citizens;
- b) The right to develop their national heritage, to be proud of their nationality, to develop their own language and to have their own schools.

2. Severity should not be practised against Kurdish youth when it expresses sentiments of solidarity with the revolution of its Kurdish brothers in Kurdistan, nor should any meaning be read into these sentiments which was not intended, and which is not compatible with the geographic and social situation of the Kurds in the north of Syria.

3. The solution of this problem and the ceasing of racial oppression in Syria depend on the solution to the Syrian crisis in general, which implies the country's being freed from this petit-bourgeois chauvinist regime which is incapable of bringing the task of the national and democratic revolution to fruition (...)⁴⁵.

45. In the same edition of its organ "*Al Hurriyeh*", the Arab Nationalists Move-

ANNEX II

Political Parties and Groupings Presently Active in Syria

1. The Regional ("qutri", also meaning territorial) Leadership of the Baath in Syria : this is the framework which, representing a minority, having no popular base, monopolizes power in the state, and is supported by part of the military and the chauvinistic intelligentsia. Among its leaders are Dr. Nur A Din Al Atassi, President of the Republic, Dr. Zouayyen, Premier, and General Salah Jedid, Secretary of the Baath Regional Leadership.
2. The National Progressive Front, in opposition, is composed of three groups: the Arab Socialist Democratic Party of Mr. Akram al Haurani, the National (Arab or pan-Arab) leadership of the Baath, whose foremost leaders are General Amin al Hafez, Mr. Salah al Din Bittar and Mr. Michel Aflaq, and the (Nasserist) Arab Socialist Union which is very weak in Syria.
3. The Democratic Constitutional Front, also in opposition, which has no popular support, and has bourgeois, parliamentarist leanings, is composed of personalities of the former regime, such as Messrs Marouf Al Dawalibi (former Premier), Maamoun al Kouzbari (former Premier), Rashad Djabri (former Deputy) and Mustafa Barazi.
4. The Arab Nationalists Movement in Syria, nationalists of the non-communist extreme left, active in the opposition. Originally pro-Nasserist, it now keeps its distance from the President of the U.A.R. Among its leading members are Mr. Georges Habash and the Dhabi brothers.
5. The Syrian communist party, led by Mr. Khaled Bakdash, now somewhat sclerotic and lifeless, has been overtaken and outdistanced by the nationalist parties of the left and the extreme left (Arab and Kurd). In its apparatus, it is reminiscent of the Stalinist system; it is pro-Soviet. It supports the Baath regime while at the same time reproaching the latter with having monopolized power and abolished the parliamentary system.
6. An extreme-left of pro-Chinese group, led by General Afif al Bizri, simultaneously supports and criticizes the Baath regime.
7. The Kurdish Democratic Party in Syria (KDP-S), is the only party enjoying popular support in the Kurdish regions. It also has support in the principal Arab towns, and does not confine itself to a regionalist attitude. Since the Kurdish problem crystallized inside Syria and aroused echoes in world press, the Arab opposition parties have been seeking contact with it, with a view to toppling the regime. The ruling wing of the Baath unofficially seeks the same contact promising to put a stop to its anti-Kurdish policy, whereas its aim, pending proof of the contrary, is to gain time and lead the Kurds to lower their vigilance and stop their anti-Baath campaign. The regime's plans against the Kurdish people are still on the agenda. The KDP-S publishes a central newspaper entitled "The Democrat".

ment in Syria published another declaration recognising the existence of Iraqi Kurdistan as a Kurdish country, the justice of its struggle for autonomy and the right of the Kurdish people to self-determination as a means of solving its national problem. Thus according to this movement there is a question of Iraqi Kurdistan which is a proper national question and the Kurdish question in Syria, which is that of a Syrian national minority.

ANNEX III

Certain Press Articles on the Kurdish Problem in Syria — 1968

1. "Basler Nachrichten" of 22.3.68: "Ein Volk wird vertrieben".
2. "Solothurner Zeitung" of 28.3.68: "Kurdeverfolgung in Syrien".
3. "Alpydubladet", Reykjavik, of 18.2.68: "Er Man rettinda arid ordin tom", by E. Haraldsson.
4. "Sam Vinnan", Reykjavik, No. 2, 1968: "Meo Kurdum a nyjan leik", by Haraldsson.
5. "Voix ouvrière", Paris, of 10 April 1968: "On Ismet Cheriff Vanly's brochure: The Kurdish Problem in Syria".
6. An appeal by several personalities, including R. P. Pire, Nobel Peace Prizewinner, to the President of the Syrian Republic, on the subject of the Kurdish question (in an edition of Le Monde, spring 1968).
7. "Rheinischer Merkur", Cologne, 10 May 68: "Endlösung in Kurdistan".
8. "Sonntags Illustrierte der Neuen Berner Zeitung", Berne, of 25/26 May 1968.
9. "Rheinischer Merkur" of 31 May 1968: "Kurden und Syrer (reply of a Syrian diplomat to an article of the same newspaper of 10 May).
10. "Dag og Tid", Oslo, of 11 January 1968: "Det finst fleire Vietnam Krigar" (There are other Vietnam Wars) by T. Kongslein.
11. "Dag og Tid", Oslo, of 11 January 1968: "Kurdarane — eit Folk utan Fedreland.
12. "Arbeiterbladet", Oslo, of 6 June 1968: "Kurdarane i Syria", by T. Kongslein;
13. "Atlas, a Window on the World", New York, August 1968: "The Anguish of the Kurds".
14. "Digest des Ostens", Frankfurt/Main, August/Sept. 68: "Zur Kurdenfrage in Syrien: Endlösung in Kurdistan"?

(No mention has here been made of articles which have appeared in the Kurdish or Arab press, or in that of the pro-Kurdish organizations and committees abroad).

