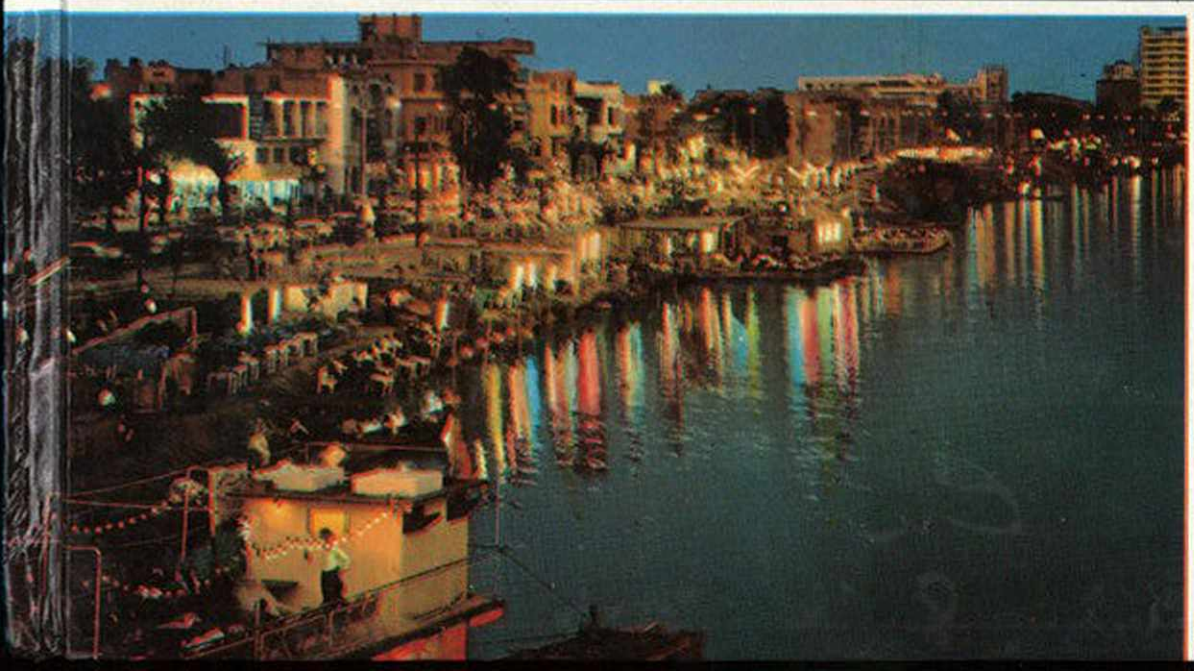


FASCINATING LIFE AND SENSATIONAL DEATH

Fully Illustrated

By Gourji C. Bekhor





FASCINATING LIFE AND SENSATIONAL DEATH

The Conditions in Iraq Before and After the Six-Day War

By Gourji C. Bekhor

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Cover photos

Upper photo – A streamlet, with a canoe with passengers, in a suburban village of Basra with fascinating rows of palm-trees on both sides.

Left under photo – A night view of the Russafa river-bank of Baghdad beyond the South Gate with the lighted privately hired motor-boat "Al-Mansour" moored beside it and with illuminated cafés all along the bank.

Right under photo – The fascinating grilling operation of the "Shabbout" fishes, the "Muzgouf".

מדינת ישראל
دولـة اسـرائيل
STATE OF ISRAEL

ديوان رئيس الدولـة
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

לשכת נשיא המדינה

Jerusalem, 16th May, 1990
152/LL

Dear Mr. Bekhor,

It is very good to know that your thorough and fascinating volume on Iraqi Jewry is to be published. We at the President's Office read it very carefully and were deeply impressed, perhaps particularly because it is a unique source of first-hand information on developments after the Six Day War. Then, too, your own distinguished personality and story as revealed in the book, are among its most telling aspects.

You have added new knowledge and perspectives for all of us interested in the history, the rise and the sad end of Iraqi Jewry, one of our people's great, historic communities.

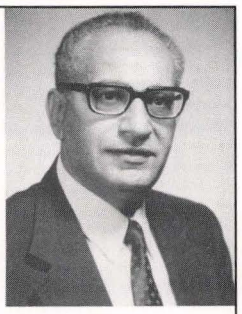
What you have to tell is of special importance in Israel where we must know, understand and respect all the groups that make up our nation.

We send best wishes to you and for the success of the book.

Sincerely,

Shulamit Nardi

Shulamit Nardi
Assistant to the President



חבר הכנסת
Mordechai Ben-Porat

הכנסת
KNESSET

2nd May, 1977

Mr. Gourji C. Bekhor

Dear Mr. Gourji,

I have studied the manuscript "The History of the Jews of Iraq before and after the Six-Day War", and found that you have put a great deal of effort into the gathering of evidence in order to achieve a maximum of factual accuracy. Undoubtedly, this work constitutes a historical document about a sad chapter in the story of Iraqi Jewry before and after the Six-Day War, and I hope it will be read by many people when published.

Sincerely yours,

Ben Porat

Mordechai Ben-Porat, M.K.
(Ex-Minister without portfolio)

Chairman,
Interior and
Environment Committee

הכנסת
KNESSET



יושב-ראש
ועדת הפנים
ואיכות הסביבה

14.2.1978

Dear Mr. Bekhor,

I would like to thank you for sending me the manuscript of your book about the plight of the Jews of Iraq, which I read thoroughly and found it of great interest.

I would like to especially congratulate you for the chapters dealing with the so-called trials of Bagdad, for which many innocent Jews had to pay with their lives.

By proving with documents and minutes of the so-called trials the innocence of its Jewish victims, you have given a clear picture of the vicious persecutions of the Jewish community in Iraq. I think that the book has to be re-read and re-studied in order to understand the dubious nature of the Iraqi regime and the fate of its old and magnificent Jewish community.

Please accept my best thanks and appreciation.

Sincerely,

Shlomo Hillel

Shlomo Hillel, M.K.
(Ex-Minister of Police and Interior
and Ex-Speaker of the Knesset)

To Mr. Gourji Bekhor
With kind regards

Shlomo Hillel
MINISTER OF POLICE

Shlomo Hillel

JERUSALEM ISRAEL



ABRAHAM HALIMA

November 27th. 1977

Dear Mr. Bekhor,

I have read your manuscript about the Jews of Iraq before and after the Six Day War, and found, according to my best knowledge, that the political, legal and logical ideologies expressed therein are right. The chapter "proof of premeditated executions" is correct from the legal point of view. The manuscript, and its classifications, deserves appreciation and is worthy to be read by the public.

Yours Sincerely,

A. Halima

A. HALIMA

Judge of the District Court

in Tel Aviv.

(Now Justice of the Supreme Court)

in Jerusalem

WOJAC

הארגון העולמי של יהודים יוצאי ארצות ערב

المنظمة العالمية لليهود النازحين من البلدان العربية

WORLD ORGANIZATION OF JEWS FROM ARAB COUNTRIES

ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES JUIFS ORIGINAIRES DES PAYS ARABES

Tel-Aviv, November 2nd, 1986

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The aim of our Organization is to win international recognition of the rights of the Jews who have left Arab countries as refugees, and to expose the oppression and humiliation they have been subjected to in their countries of origin.

Mr. Gourji C. Bekhor has written a most interesting and important manuscript on the Jews of Iraq before and after the Six-Day War, in line with our programme and supporting our aims and activities.

We therefore recommend the extensive circulation of the book when published, so that the legitimate rights of those Jews who left Iraq should become widely known inside and outside Israel.

We thank very much all those who read the book.

Sincerely,

Ben Porat M.

Mordechai Ben-Porat
Chairman of the World Executive
WOJAC - Israel.

Dedication

The author has the honour to dedicate this book to Mr. Alain Poher, President of the French Senate, as a manifestation of deep gratitude for his noble humanitarian struggle for the deliverance of the Iraqi Jews who were terribly persecuted by the Iraqi regime after the Six-Day War.

Exclusively on humanitarian grounds, Mr. Poher with some French eminent personalities initiated the creation of the Committee: French Friendship for the Deliverance of the Jews in the Middle East under his presidency. It was the prime stimulus for the creation of similar Commitees in the world for the same purpose. For taking more effective efficacious measures, he held the International Conference for the Deliverance of the Jews in the Middle East under his presidency.

Mr. Poher's endeavours awakened the conscience of the world, and animated the humanitarian members of the various Committees and their distinguished collaborators, who vigorously protested the persecutions of the Jews. As a consequence, the Iraqi Government relaxed many important discriminatory measures.

Mr. Poher's distinguished personality thus fully deserves the highest respect, appreciation and admiration from people all over the world in general and the Iraqi Jews in particular, for his meritorious efforts to fight persecution and protect human rights. His efforts were in conformity with the tradition of France, the country of the declaration of human rights. Mr. Poher reaped laurels and glory.

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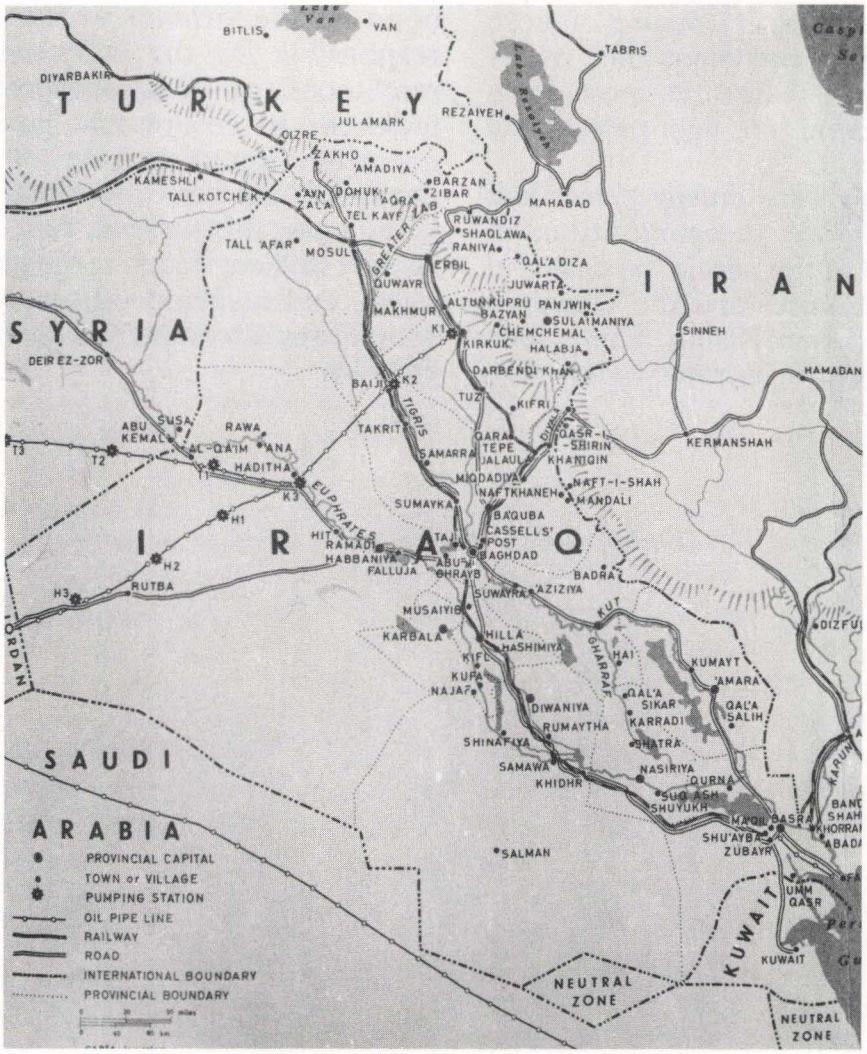
Foreword

This book propagates the necessity for the adherence to the fundamental principles of the international human rights. It vigorously advocates the protection and respect of those rights, and violently condemns their violations. The desire to realize the most noble aspiration of mankind is to fight persecution in the world.

The Jews in Iraq were cruelly persecuted because of religious discrimination, in flagrant disregard of the normal processes of justice, the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Those Jews are an integral part of humanity, and when persecuted, the welfare and dignity of all humanity are seriously impaired.

The United Nations, which is the very backbone of the official world organization responsible for the adoption of decisive resolutions on international problems, should intervene to ensure that government signatories effectively respect and strictly implement the principles of its Declaration. By attaining this supreme goal, humanity will achieve brilliant victory in the scope of human rights, and mankind will enjoy everywhere without any discrimination liberty, justice and equality.

The Map of Iraq



Introduction[1]

The history of the Jews of Iraq goes back to the time of Abraham, the patriarch, from whom all Jews trace their descent. Abraham was born around 1850 B.C. in Ur, an ancient city in the south of Iraq. Abraham migrated around 1800 B.C. to Canaan, the ancient name of Palestine, because of religious intolerance.

Iraq lies in the Middle East. Its boundaries extend to the north by Turkey, to the east by Iran, to the south by Kuwait, and to the west by Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. It was the center of the ancient civilizations of Sumer, Assyria and Babylonia. It was formerly known as Mesopotamia, a Greek name meaning "land between two rivers", the Tigris and the Euphrates, and central Iraq was Babylonia, and its capital Babylon on the Euphrates. After the Arab conquest of Babylonia, it was called Iraq, and its capital Baghdad on the Tigris.

Twelve centuries after the emigration of Abraham to Canaan, the Jews were brought back into exile to Babylon. In 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Babylonia (605-562 B.C.), invaded Judah, the south district of Palestine, and brought its Jewish King, Jehoiachin, and 18,000 of its leading citizens as captives to Babylon. Eleven years afterwards, in 587/586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar finally destroyed Jerusalem, the capital of Judah, massacred most of its four million inhabitants, and took 100,000 of its able-bodied Jewish men back with him to dredge the silting irrigation canals of Babylonia.

The Jewish captives bemoaned the destruction of the First Temple throughout the generations, and remained firmly attached to the traditional heritage of their fathers. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat, and we also wept when we remembered Zion", Psalms of David CXXXVII-I.

The remnants of the Lost Ten Tribes of ancient Jews, whom the Assyrians settled in the mountains of north Iraq in 733/2 B.C., were heartened by the presence of Jews in Babylonia, and together they assumed greater importance. Those remnants spoke the Kurdish dialect and were dressed in similar fashion of the Kurdish inhabitants. Those remnants remained in the mountains until the legislation of the denationalization law by the Iraqi Government in 1950. In 1951 they renounced their Iraqi nationality and were flown to Israel.

In 539 B.C. Cyrus II the Great, King of Persia (558-28 B.C.), founder of the Persian Empire, conquered Babylon and offered to repatriate the liberated Jews. Only 40,000 returned to Judah, and the rest stayed in Babylonia where they prospered in the fertile land between its rivers.

During the Persian regime, the Jews of Babylonia were given an autonomous Jewish State headed by a hereditary Exilarch, "Resh Galoutha" (in Aramic), head of captivity, the title given to the leader of the Jews in the Babylonian exile. He was descended from the Jewish King Jehoiachin who is said to have been the first Exilarch. He ranked as King with the other Provincial Governors of the Persian Empire, taking fourth precedence after the Shahinshah or King of Kings. The

1 Some information from an article "The Jews of Iraq" by Naim Dangoor issued in the Congress Bulletin Vol. 27 No. 4 dated May/June 1971 published by the Canadian Jewish Congress, Montreal, Quebec.

Jewish King had his courts and prisons and collected taxes, half of which went to the central Persian Government. At one time, Babylonian Jewry numbered one million and constituted the majority of the country's population.

Relations between the Persian Empire and the Jews generally remained very good. In 485-465 B.C.[2] Esther became Queen of Ahasuerus (Xerxes), King of Kings of the Persian Empire. In 400 A.D. at least one other Babylonian Jewish Princess, Shushan Dukht, was Queen of the Persian Empire, who founded the Jewish colonies of Esfahan and Hamadan. However, towards the end of the Persian Empire, Zoroastrian fanatics, believers in a special religious system, made life unbearable for the Jews.

Babylonia became the cultural and spiritual center of Judaism. From the midst of the Babylonian Jewish community emerged spiritual giants, prophets, writers and religious leaders, who for many generations moulded the religious and spiritual character of the Jewish people throughout the diaspora.

The Babylonian Jewish high priest Joshua as well as Ezra the scribe and priest, both of the fifth century B.C., went up successively to Jerusalem to reconstruct the Second Temple. They were preceded by the prophet Ezekiel of the sixth century B.C. All returned to Babylon to retire, where they died and were buried. Their shrines are still venerated by Jews and Moslems as well. It was Ezra who established the basis of the rabbinical system in Palestine. He changed the Hebrew alphabet, set up synagogues, and made the Torah the governing force in Jewish life. In virtue of this, he was in a real sense the true founder of Judaism, from which emerged Christianity and Islam. Centuries later, the Babylonian Hillel (Babylonia 70 B.C.-Jerusalem 10 A.D.) went up to Jerusalem where he established the "Mishnah", the oral Torah.

In Babylonia were established famous vast Jewish academies, which served as prototype for the first European universities of the twelfth century, where it took the Babylonian Talmud three hundred years to develop. The heads of the Jewish academies, later named "Gaons", were regarded by Jews all over the world as the highest authority on religious matters. There were eminent "Gaons" who left their imprint on every aspect of civil, cultural, religious, biblical, theological and historical Jewish life. The main academies were closed in 1038 when the center of Jewish learning moved to Spain. The Jewish communal constitution, serving as a model to the whole Jewish people was largely maintained until recent times. The Babylonian Talmud and the literature of the "Gaons" are among the priceless and eternal treasure bequeathed by the Babylonian Jewish community to world Jewry.

In 634-41 the Arabs conquered Babylonia. Under the Caliphs the Jews paid a head tax, but enjoyed communal and religious freedom. In 762 Caliph Al-Mansur of the Abbasids dynasty established his capital near the Jewish settlement in Baghdad. The authority of the Jewish Exilarch extended as in Persian time to all parts of the Abbasids Empire. He was greatly honoured at the Royal Court as befitting a descendant of King David.

In 1258-59 Hulagu, the Mongolian Ruler, conquered Baghdad and massacred a million inhabitants. The Jews were spared through the influence of Hulagu's Jewish physician, whose son, later, rose to become Chancellor of the whole Mongolian Empire. With his fall, the Jews suffered terribly at the hands of the populace in the pogrom in 1291. Many Jews were

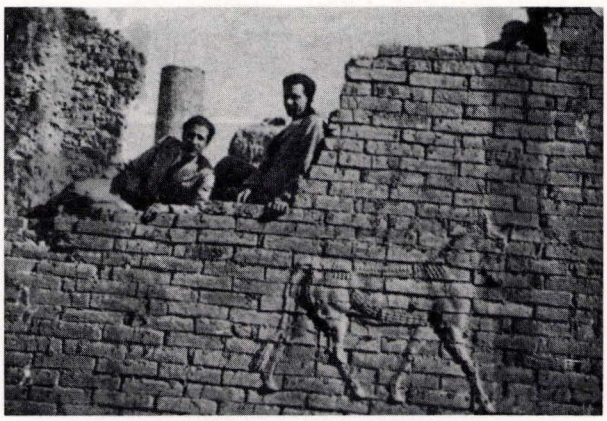
2 Lamatkhil No 1068 d. 1.3.77 and No 1098 d. 11.10.77.Date suppositional.

forced to embrace Islam. In 1400 Tamerlane, the Mongolian Ruler, killed more Jews.

During the Mongolian regime, the Jewish Exilarch ended in the thirteenth century. The Babylonian Gaonate, which for six hundred years spread culture to all Jewish communities in the world, disappeared. The Jews in Iraq during these and other upheavals lost most of their valuable records.

After the end of the Mongolian regime in 1410, Iraq was then dominated by successive several invaders.

Babylonian Ancient Monuments



Remnant of an outside wall of the Temple



Inside remnant of the Temple

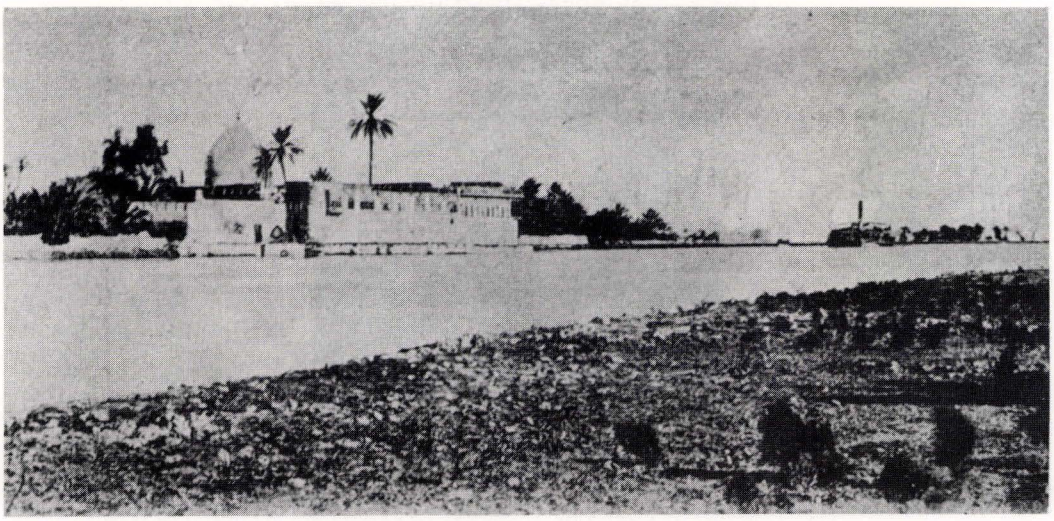


Tower of Babylon

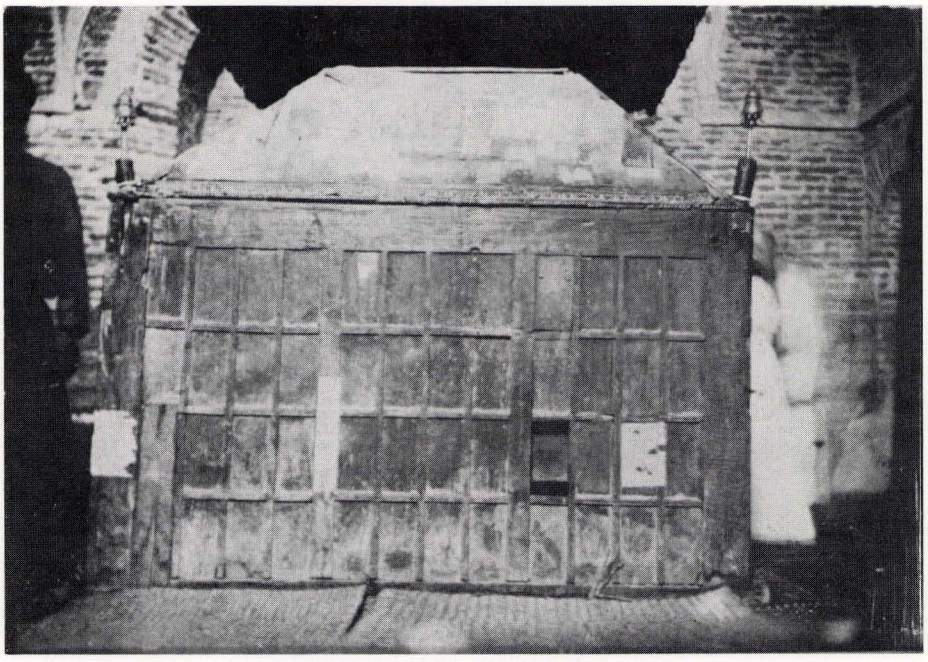


Lion of Babylon

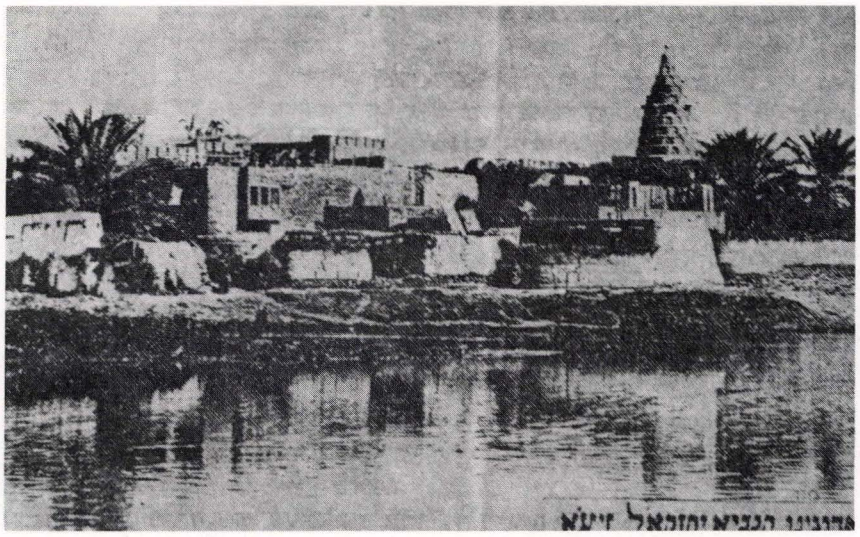
Babylonian Jewish Shrines



The outside view of the shrine of Ezra the Scribe
at Al Uzayr, a village on the Tigris near Basra



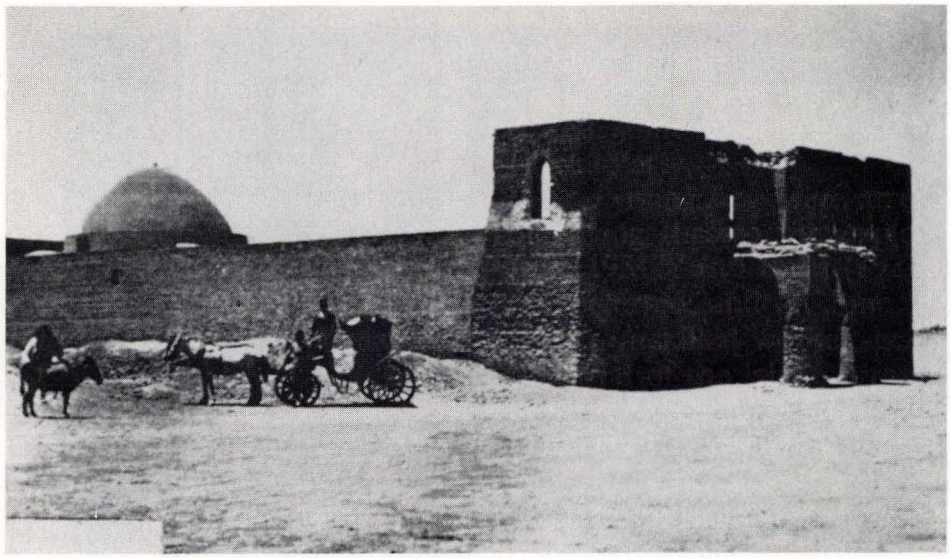
The inside view of the tomb of Ezra the Scribe



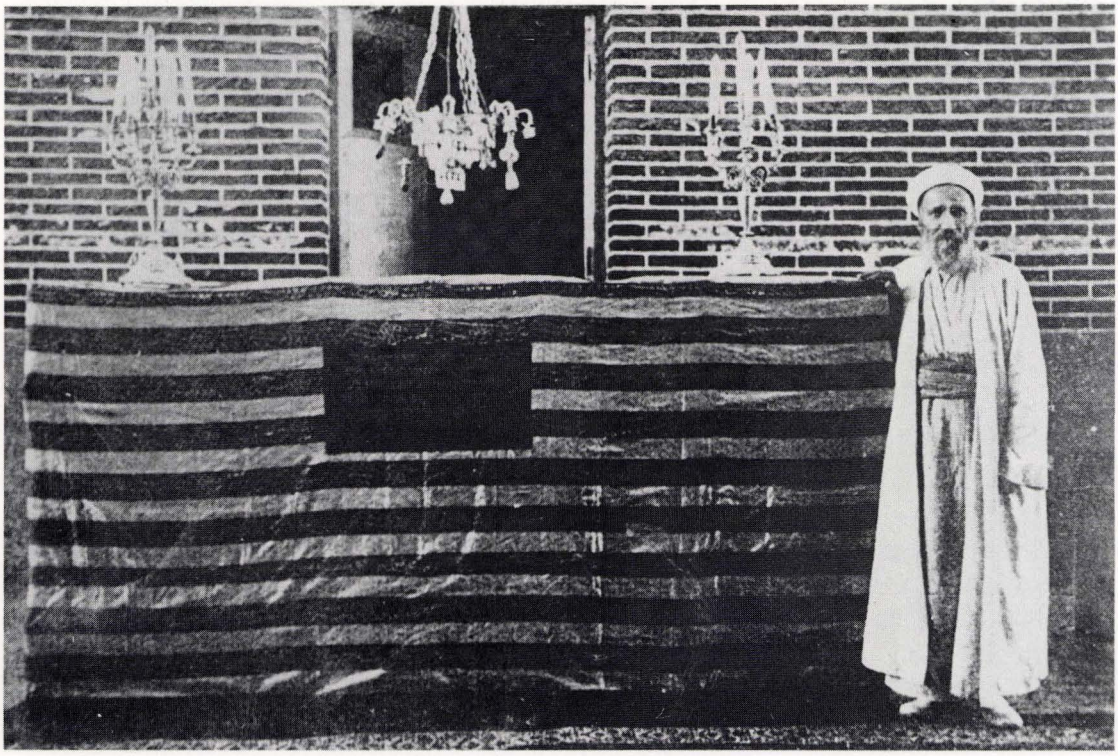
The outside view of the shrine of the prophet Ezekiel at Al Kifl, a village at a short distance from the Euphrates near Al Hillah



The inside view of the tomb of the prophet Ezekiel



The outside view of the shrine of the high priest Joshua in the northern outskirts of the Karkh of Baghdad

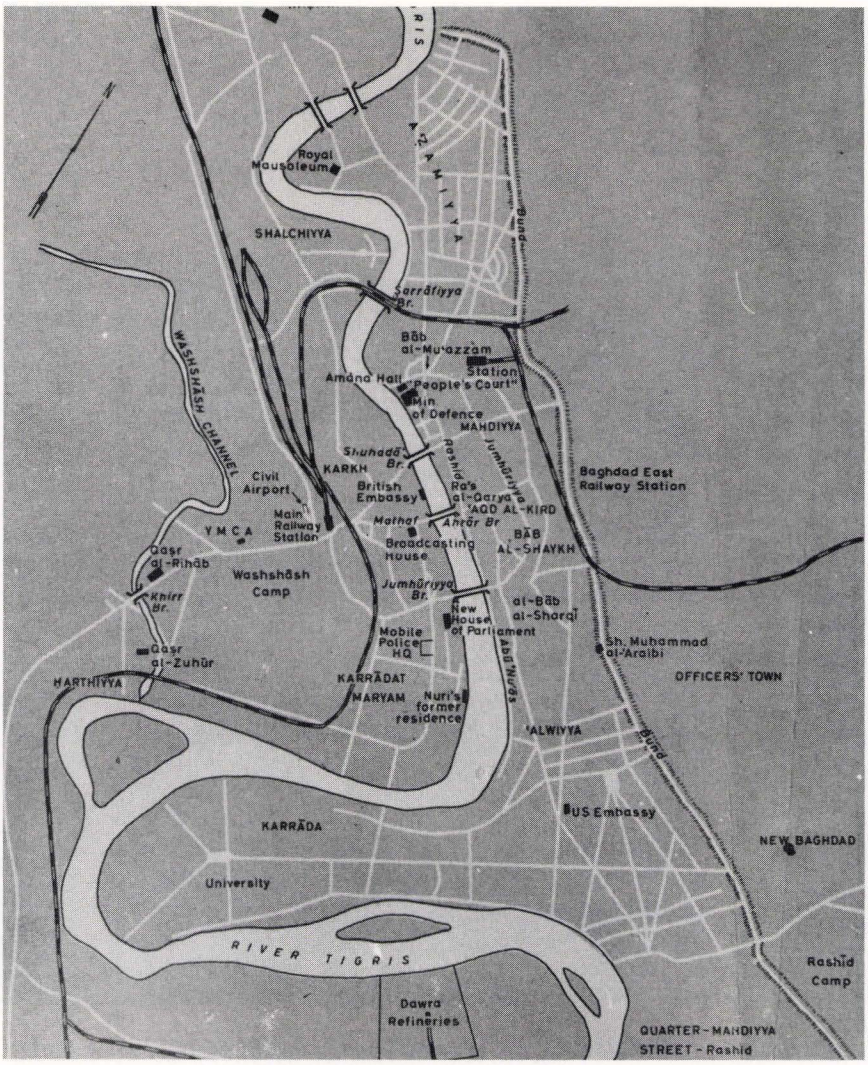


Rabbi Ezra Dangoor beside the tomb of the high priest Joshua



The outside view of the shrine of the minor prophet Jonah at Nineveh,
a village at a short distance from the Tigris near Mosul

The Map of Baghdad



1. The Ottoman Regime

In 1638 the Ottoman Turks defeated the Persians, who invaded Iraq again, and conquered the country for the second time. Murad IV (1609-40), Ottoman Sultan (1623-40), came with a large army including 10,000 Jewish officers and men and conquered Baghdad the capital.

Baghdad is divided by the Tigris river into two banks, the left and the right. Russafa is on the left, and Karkh on the right bank. Russafa is the core of the city in modern times. It was otherwise under the Abbasids.[1] It has two Gates, the South and the North.

Since ancient times, the Jews were and remained living in the Russafa. The former Jewish quarter was east of its center, and since the British Occupation, the Jews started to move beyond the South Gate.

During the period 1707-1831,[2] the Ottoman Empire reigned in Iraq through the administration of the Mamelukes. The Jews suffered terribly during their aggressive regime. The President of the Jewish Community, usually very wealthy, was *ex officio* treasurer to the Mameluke Governor in Baghdad. The last Mameluke Governor was the despotic Da'ud Pasha.

In 1827 Da'ud Pasha assassinated in Baghdad the President of the Jewish Community, Ezra Yusuf Gabbay, who was his treasurer since 1817. In the same year, Ezra Gabbay's brother, Yeheskel Gabbay, who was Counsellor to Mahmud II (1784-1839), Ottoman Sultan (1808-39), was also murdered in Istanbul.[3]

Since 1781 the President of the Jewish Community, Sassoon Saleh David, was treasurer to Da'ud Pasha. After extorting large sums of money from him, Da'ud Pasha imprisoned his son, David, and plotted to kill the son in Baghdad in 1822. Sassoon Saleh David paid a very large sum of money in bribes to help his son escape to Bandar e Bushehr port in Persia. After a short time, he also escaped with his family and joined his son in that port. In 1830 Sassoon Saleh David, who was by then quite old, died in Bandar e Bushehr. In 1832 his son, David, settled in India.[4]

1 Dann.
2 Encyclopaedias.
3 Avnei p 59/60
4 Avnei p 59/60

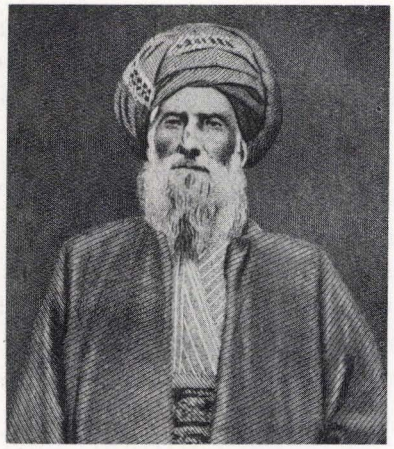


Rabbi David Papou "Hakham Bashi" in Baghdad in (1906-11) wearing his decorated uniform and medal.

In 1831 Da'ud Pasha revolted against the Ottoman Empire, but was defeated by Mahmud II. After the end of the Mamelukes regime, Mahmud II introduced administrative reforms. Each of the successive Ottoman governors in Baghdad bore the title of "Wali". The Jewish community was headed by "Hakham Bashi", a Turkish word meaning Chief Rabbi. The Chief Rabbi was elected by the community and approved by "Firman", royal decree, by the Ottoman Sultan[5]

During the last era of the Ottoman regime, the Iraqi Jews were blessed with great men, rabbis and public figures, who progressed and flourished in various fields outside and inside Iraq especially in Baghdad. Some Jews emigrated to India, China, England and other countries, where they established most extensive prosperous businesses and became distinguished figures abroad. They raised Iraq's reputation and were an honour to their native country.

The most prominent were Sir Albert David Sassoon and Sir Elly Kadoorie. They built in Baghdad the first schools which taught foreign languages to Jewish boys and girls. They were the fundamental factor which promoted the gradual reform and modernization of the social life of the Jews in Baghdad. The biographies of these 2 great men are given in this chapter.



David Sassoon

Sir Albert David Sassoon (1818-96), born in Baghdad, was the son of David Sassoon (1792-1864). In India David Sassoon became a millionaire. Some of his sons settled in England and were awarded medals for the valuable sincere services rendered by them to this country. One of his descendants, Sir Philip Sassoon, became British Air Minister during the twenties. David Sassoon's philanthropic family built schools and charity institutions for Jews in England, India, China and other countries.

5 Avnei p 59/60



Sir Elly Kadoorie wearing his medals



Lawrence Kadoorie



Horace Kadoorie

Sir Elly Kadoorie (Baghdad 1865-Shanghai, China February 8, 1944) emigrated in 1880 at the age of 15 and resettled in India and China especially in Hong Kong and Shanghai, where he founded firms and became a multimillionaire.[6]

He was one of the greatest philanthropists the world has ever known. He built schools, hospitals and social institutions for Jews and non-Jews in Iraq, Syria, Israel, Persia, Turkey, India, China, France, England and Portugal. He was the first to provide educational facilities for girls in many countries of the Middle East.[7]

In recognition of his world wide benevolence, many countries awarded him medals. Conferred the Order of K.B.E. bearing the title of Sir by His Britannic Majesty, 1926. Created Commandeur de la Légion d'-Honneur. Awarded Grande Médaille d'Or de l'Académie Française, Médaille de la Reconnaissance de France. Conferred Médaille d'Honneur du Mérite de Première Classe Or, 1933. Awarded First Class Gold Medal of the Chinese National Government. Conferred the Order of the Brilliant Jade, 1923/24.[8] (His biography continued in "the Kingdom", "The First Arab-Israeli War", and "President Ahmad Hasan Al- Bakr").

His brother, Sir Ellis Kadoorie K.T. (1865-1922), was also a famous philanthropist who founded several schools in China and Hong Kong and two large agricultural colleges in Palestine.[9]

Sir Elly Kadoorie's two sons: Sir Lawrence (Hong Kong June 2, 1899) and Horace (London September 28, 1902), following their father's philanthropic example, founded benevolent societies and contributed to charitable and social works in many parts of the world and were also awarded many medals.[10]

Sir Elly Kadoorie was the maternal uncle of Menashe, Zion,[11] Aiber, Juda, and Loolou Gurji (Abraham Nahum's wife).

* * *

In 1869[12] the Suez Canal was opened which facilitated the expansion of trade between Asia and Europe. In 1903[13] the construction of the first railways in Iraq was undertaken which promoted trade inside the country.

The Jews in Baghdad established foreign trade relations with India, China and England, where they founded branches and became prosperous in commerce and finance. Textile importers were Jews.

6 Association
7 Association
8 Association
9 Association
10 Association
11 Zion's wife was the maternal cousin of the author's mother.
12 Avnei p. 61
13 Encyclopaedias

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Rabbi Solomon Bekhor Hutzein (1843-92)[14] was considered as the inaugurator in Baghdad of the first printing press, known as the Bekhor Printing Press, which printed at the time mostly prayer and religious books. Rabbi Bekhor was a descendant of Rabbi Sadkah Se'adya Hutzein.

In 1904 Rabbi Ezra Dangoor (1848-1930) founded the Dangoor Printing Press in the same city. (His biography continued in the kingdom)

During the reign of Abd Al-Hamid II (1842-1918), Ottoman Sultan (1876-1909), some Jewish eminent personalities from Baghdad held high Government positions. At the beginning of 1877, Menahem Saleh Daniel was elected deputy for Baghdad vilayet to the first Ottoman Parliament established by Abd Al-Hamid in Istanbul.[15] From the end of 1881, Sir Sassoon Eskell held several high posts in the Government in Baghdad and Istanbul, and in 1908 was elected deputy for Baghdad to the Ottoman Parliament. Da'ud Samra and Naim Zilkha were judges in Iraq.

In 1909 Abd Al-Hamid was dethroned and replaced by his brother Mohammed V (1844-1918), called Reshad, Ottoman Sultan (1909-18). After Reshad's accession to the throne, he appointed Hussein Nazim Pasha new Wali in Baghdad in 1910-11.[16] Nazim Pasha appointed 2 Jews, Abraham Elkabir as his counsellor and Abraham Haim Muallem Nissim as his secretary.

Nazim Pasha made liberty, justice, equality and fraternity available to all citizens of all races. He inspected the citizens in their houses personally, and helped those who were destitute by distributing bread and money to them constantly, and giving them seasonal cloth to make their clothes.

The Jews in Baghdad frequently suffered, with the rest of the population, from terrible epidemic outbreaks which took a most heavy toll. Many thousands of people died, among them Government personalities and Rabbis.

In 1742 a dreadful epidemic broke out in Baghdad, and almost all the Rabbis died. When it was over, the Jewish Community invited in 1743 Rabbi Sadkah Se'adyah Hutzein from Aleppo (Haleb) in Syria, to be a Chief Rabbi and religious judge in Baghdad and also to train new Rabbis to replace those who died.[17]

Rabbi Sadkah served as a Chief Rabbi in Baghdad for thirty years (1743-73), during which period he made big reforms in the spiritual characters of the Babylonian Jewry. The teaching of the Torah in his time flourished and reached a new peak, and thus he re-created a new generation of Rabbis. He set up new ways of life and made reforms in the Babylonian Jewish religious customs. He wrote interesting books.[18]

14 Described by Abraham Ben-Jacob in his book "Kitzur Toledot Yehudei Babel" page 103: He was a distinguished scholar of the Law, excellent writer, one of the great disciples of Rabbi Abdallah Somekh. He had perfect wide knowledge of all sciences of Judaism, of the Jewish history and Hebrew literature. He was also intellectual, liturgical poet and prominent communal worker.
He was representative of several journals, published in different countries, in which he wrote hundreds of articles in excellent style on interesting subjects.
Moreover, he wrote some 10 books on different subjects, most of them were printed in his press. He was also a merchant of books, imported by him, and had trade relations with all the countries of the Middle East.

15 Eskell's biography

16 Kitzur p. 92

17 Avnei p. 56

18 Kitzur p. 88

In order to avoid further epidemic outbreaks, Nazim Pasha took personal interest in the cleanliness of the city. He supervised the food selling shops personally, and insured the cleanliness of their food and fruits. He demolished the dirty old narrow zigzag lanes, in which the sun could not penetrate, and transformed them into clean streets.

Baghdad was frequently flooded, and many times the Jewish quarter was inundated, and several houses were destroyed. In order to protect the city from inundation, Nazim Pasha erected a bund along the whole eastern suburb of the Russafa. The bund was named after him, Nazim Pasha Bund.

Nazim Pasha was so esteemed by all citizens of all races that most of new-born babies during his time were named after him as an appreciation by the public for his valuable services rendered to all citizens, the male babies Nazim, the female babies Nazima. The Iraqi people of all religions still use these names for their babies up to the present time.

* * *

At that time the Jews in Baghdad had neither schools nor hospitals. They had only very old fashioned synagogues which had been built since many decades.

During the Ottoman Regime Jewish philanthropists started to build or endow schools, hospitals and synagogues for the Jewish Community in Baghdad.

Schools

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Jewish youngsters got their education at the "Heders", private religious teachers. As the parents of the Jewish poor class could not afford to pay the minimum educational fees, the children of that class were illiterate.

In that epoch, Rabbi Moshe Samuel Levi Ha-Hassid suggested that a "Midrash", an institute for teaching the Jewish religion, be opened for free education to the poor children. In fulfilment of his father's wish, his son Rabbi Aharon Levi, with the help of other Rabbis, collected donations from rich Jews for this purpose. In 1832 the first "Midrash Talmud Torah" was founded in Baghdad, to provide free primary education and lunch to such children.[19]

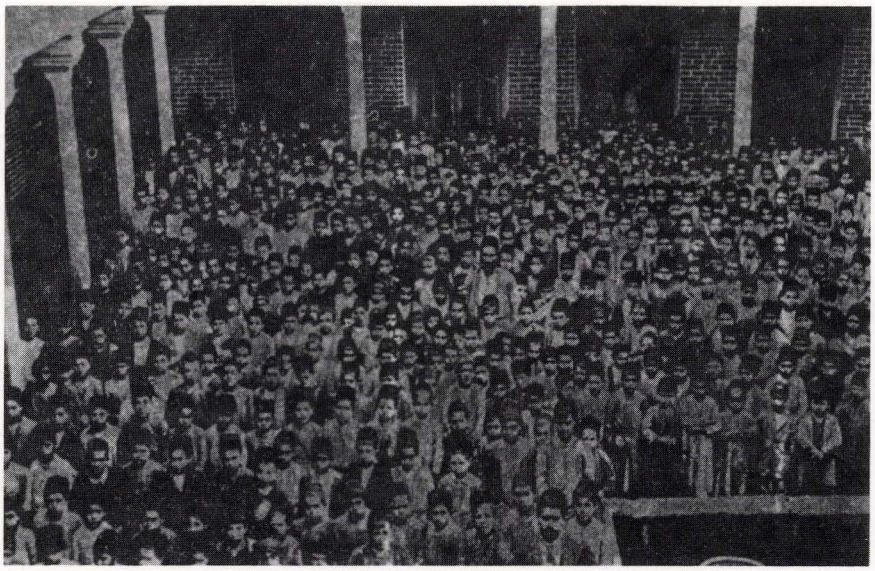
After some time, Yeheskel Reuben Menashe Zubaida[20] constructed a large building for the "Midrash"[21] in the former Jewish quarter in Baghdad to accommodate hundreds of pupils. In 1906 the Midrash was rebuilt by two philanthropists: Menahem Saleh Daniel and Meir Eliahou, who made it larger.[22]

19 Golim V p.60

20 Described by Abraham Ben-Jacob in his book "Kitzur Toledot Yehudei Babel" pages 97 and 103: He was one of the noblest, richest and the greatest philanthropists.
Abraham Ben-Jacob also wrote in the same book in page 141: Yeheskel Reuben Menashe Zubaida built a big synagogue "Bet Yaakov", known as the "Hurvah of Rabbi Judah Hassid", in the Old City of Jerusalem, as inscribed on the memorial stone on the framework of the building. (It was a famous synagogue destroyed by the Arabs in 1948).
In 1838 he built a big synagogue, "Yeheskel Synagogue", in the name of "Rabbi Moshe Al- Sheikh", in Safad in the north of Israel, which is still in existence.

21 Golim V p.60

22 Golim V p. 60



Pupils of Midrash Talmud Torah in the courtyard of the Midrash in 1931

The Alliance Israelite Association in Paris was instrumental in opening in Iraq schools which gave the Jews vital education and culture.

In 1864[23] the Association founded the first small Alliance school for Jewish boys in a rented house in Baghdad.

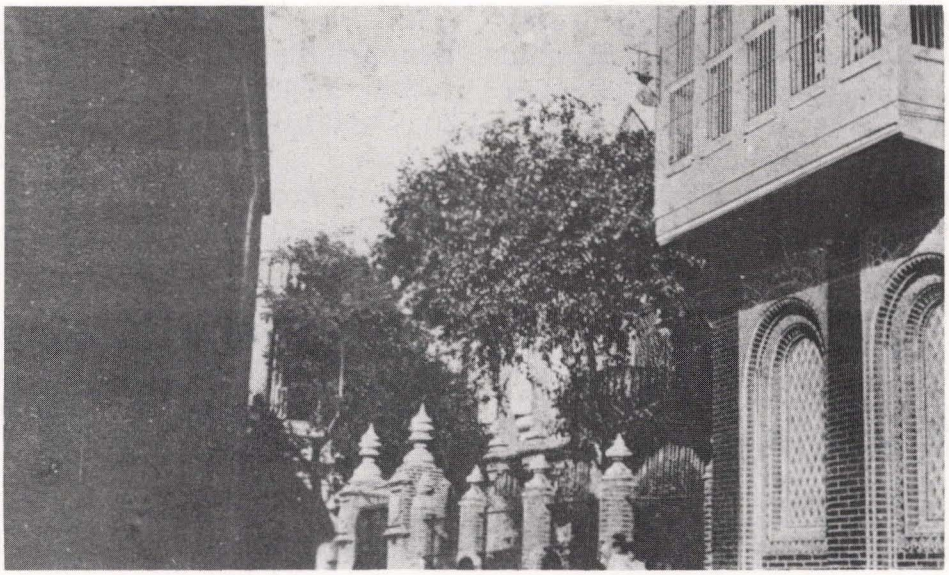
In 1874[24] Sir Albert David Sassoon built an oriental building for the school under the name of: Alliance Israelite Universelle - Albert David Sassoon School for Boys, adjoining the "Midrash Talmud Torah". The school was endowed to the Jewish Community on trusteeship. In 1902 Menahem Saleh Daniel built an extension to the school.[25] In 1906 an additional wing in the name of Narciss Leon was built.[26]

In 1893 Danon, the Principal of the Alliance School for Boys, encouraged the opening of the first small Alliance school for Jewish girls in a rented house in Baghdad. He appointed his wife as Lady Principal of the school.[27]

In 1911[28] Sir Elly Kadoorie built, under the administration of the Alliance, in oriental style a most modern and magnificent school with two spacious courtyards for Jewish girls with a kindergarten, under the name of: Alliance Israelite Universelle - Laura Kadoorie School for Girls, after his late wife. It was built near the Alliance School for Boys in Baghdad, and was inaugurated by Nazim Pasha. The school was endowed to the Jewish Community on trusteeship.

In 1906[29] Menahem Saleh Daniel transformed his large private oriental house, at a short distance from the Alliance School for Boys in Baghdad, into a kindergarten, the Gan Menahem Daniel, and he moved into his new residence on the bank of the Tigris. The school was private.

23 Golim V p. 64
24 Golim V p. 64
25 Golim V p. 64
26 Golim V p. 64
27 Golim V p. 75
28 Association
29 Golim V p. 229



The entrance of Laura Kadoorie School for Girls

Other elementary schools for Jewish boys with kindergartens were opened in the former Jewish quarter in Baghdad, some of them by the Daniel family.

Hospitals

In 1910[30] the Jewish philanthropist, Meir Eliahou who belonged to Shlomo David upper class family, built in oriental style a modern and vast hospital with a large garden for Jews, under the name of: Meir Elias Hospital. It was erected in the northern suburb of Baghdad, the only Jewish institution exception beyond the North Gate. Meir Eliahou invited Nazim Pasha to inaugurate the hospital officially with a silver key. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Baghdad's top government officials and public personalities. The hospital was endowed to the Jewish Community on trusteeship.

Synagogues

In the forties of the nineteenth century, Yeheskel Reuben Menashe Zubaida built a series of three synagogues,[31] where Laura Kadoorie School for Girls was, later, built in front of them.

The first was the "Bet Midrash Abu Menashe", with a class for teaching senior students higher studies of the Jewish religion.

The second, the "Zilkha Synagogue", with "Yeshiva", a seminary for rabbinical study, headed by an eminent Rabbi. In 1840 Yeheskel built the synagogue, and took charge of all expenses and requirements of the students of the "Yeshiva" and of their wives and children.[32]

The third, he reconstructed the Big Synagogue similar to its ancient architectural style. According to tradition, it was built at the time of the Jewish Exilarch Jehoiachin two thousands and five hundreds years ago.

After Yeheskel's death in 1851, his two sons[33] Menashe and Sassoon Zubaida contributed more donations and effected improvements and extensions to the synagogues constructed by their father in Baghdad.[34]

Hakham Eskell, of Shlomo David family, the father of Sir Sassoon Eskell, built in oriental style a modern synagogue, the Hakham Eskell Synagogue.

After Meir Eliahou's death, his heirs endowed his newly built, vast and magnificent oriental residence situated in the former Jewish quarter to the Jewish Community on trusteeship. The residence to be a synagogue under the name of: Meir Eliahou Synagogue. It was the best Synagogue in Baghdad.

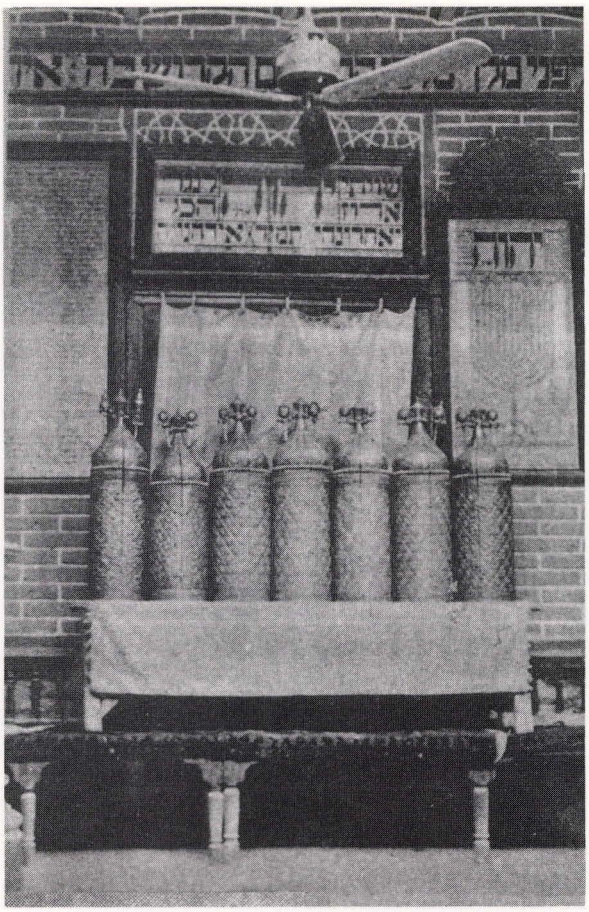
30 Avnei p. 64.

31 As confirmed by the late Rabbi Eliyahu Yehoshu'a Habba (1893-1974) before his death.

32 Kitzur p. 97

33 Menashe and Sassoon Zubaida described by Abraham Ben-Jacob in the same book in pages 98, 103/104 that they were 2 of the noblest, richest and the greatest philanthropists who contributed generous donations for benevolence and charity in Baghdad and Israel.
Abraham Ben-Jacob also wrote in the same book in page 141: Menashe and Sassoon Zubaida contributed an enormous sum of money for the building in Hebron of a big synagogue "Maghen Aboth", with "Yeshiva", a women's gallery, a ritual bath, and a house for the attendant, as inscribed on the memorial stone therein. They also contributed for other seminaries for rabbinical study.

34 Kitzur p. 98.



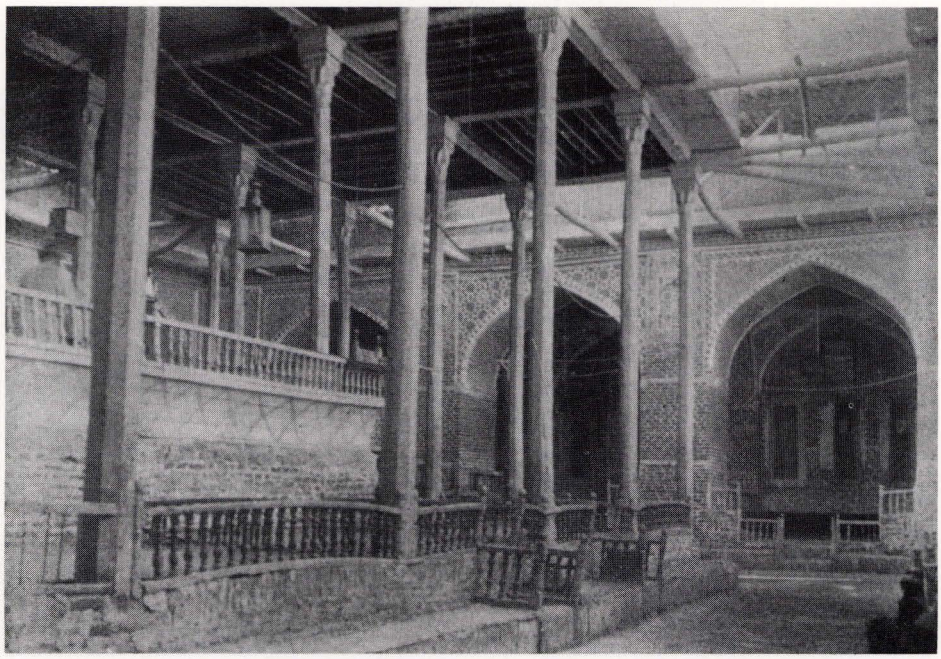
Meir Eliahou Synagogue



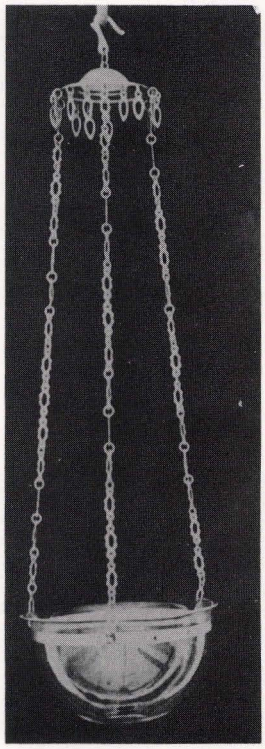
"Yeshiva" at Meir Eliahou Synagogue



Front inside view of the Big Synagogue



Back inside view of the Big Synagogue



The "Qurrayi", the
traditional Iraqi
Jewish ritual oil-lamp

* * *

Rabbis



Eminent Rabbi Yosef Haim
(1835-1909)



Rabbis

* * *

Herein under is a description of the settlements, houses, costumes, ornaments and customs of the Jews in Iraq during the Ottoman Regime.

Settlements

In the last few generations, the Jews in Iraq were concentrated in the large cities, which were commercial centers. About two thirds of the Jews settled in Baghdad. The second city in number of Jews was Basra, the port in the south of Iraq, and the third Mosul in the north. There were also Jewish communities in Kirkuk, Arbil, Sulaymaniyah, Khanaqin, Baqubah, Al Kut, Al Amarah, Al Hillah and An Nasiriyah. In addition, there were groups and individuals who lived in villages.

The Jews in the cities lived close together in their own neighbourhoods in the former Jewish quarter. The whole family lived in most cases in one house including the sons and their wives. Everyone paid respect to the head of the family.

Houses

The Jews lived in architecturally old-fashioned oriental houses, which were common in Iraq. These houses were composed of two floors with a large open square courtyard in the middle.

The first floor contained the kitchen, the bathroom, the toilet, the storage room and the hall, all of them were surrounding the courtyard.

The second floor contained the various family bedrooms, and had a wide balcony surrounding and overlooking the courtyard.

Rich Jews especially in Baghdad had large houses with a large cellar. Inside it was a deep well for bathing, washing and cooling. The well was also used as a "Mikveh", the ritual bath where Jewish women purified themselves by immersions after menstruation.

In summer, because of the dry warm climate, the people sleep on the flat roof of the houses under the open sky, where it would be cooler when a fresh breeze would be blown from the north.

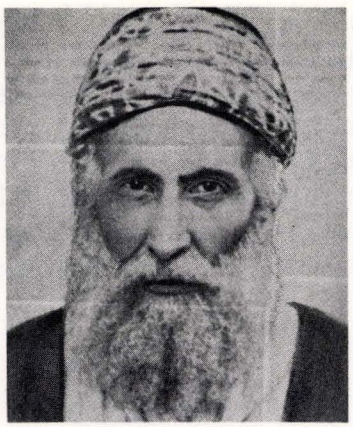
Costumes

The typical Jewish costumes were picturesquely fantastic.

Some Jews in cities especially in Baghdad were dressed in European fashion and wore on their heads the "Fez", a red felt cap like a truncated cone with a long black tassel falling from top, Ottoman national head-gear, and some were dressed in the popular old-fashioned costumes and wore on their heads the "Fez" or the "Fez and Chitayi", consisting of "Fez" with long band of linen, cotton or silk wound round it. Others wore other types of head-gear. Some men veiled their bodies in "Men's Abaya", outer garment of woollen material. Some Jews in towns and villages wore on their heads "Yashmagh and Agal", a coloured handkerchief with a black or white band 1" in diameter of linen wound round it. Rabbis who lived mostly in Baghdad wore special costume and head-gear.

Jewish women wore special ornamental attire and various types of head-dress. They veiled their bodies in "Izagh", superposed sack-like outer garment made of coloured thick silk woven material, and their faces with "Khiliyi", a black close-meshed fabric of coarse hair.

Jewish girls veiled their bodies in "Women's Abaya", outer garment made of black fine silk tissue, and their faces with "Poushi", a black close-meshed fine silk fabric.



A man wearing on his head "Fez and Chitayi"



A man wearing on his head "Yashmagh and Agal"



A man veiled in "Abaya"



Kurdish men wearing traditional dress



Women veiled in
"Izagh" and "Khiliyi"



Women veiled in
"Izagh" and "Poushi"



Girls veiled in
"Abaya" and "Poushi"



Kurdish girl wearing
traditional dress



Woman wearing on her head "Toupi", a fantastic old-fashioned women's traditional head-dress



Woman wearing on her head "Chati"



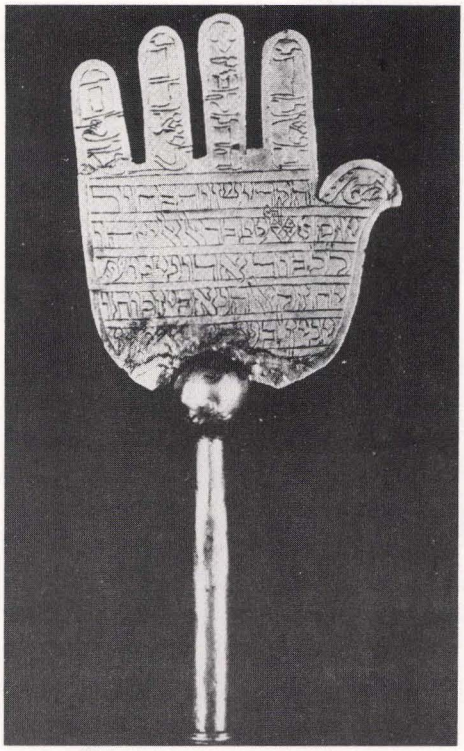
Rabbi Ezra Dangoor with his family wearing old-fashioned costumes.

Ornaments

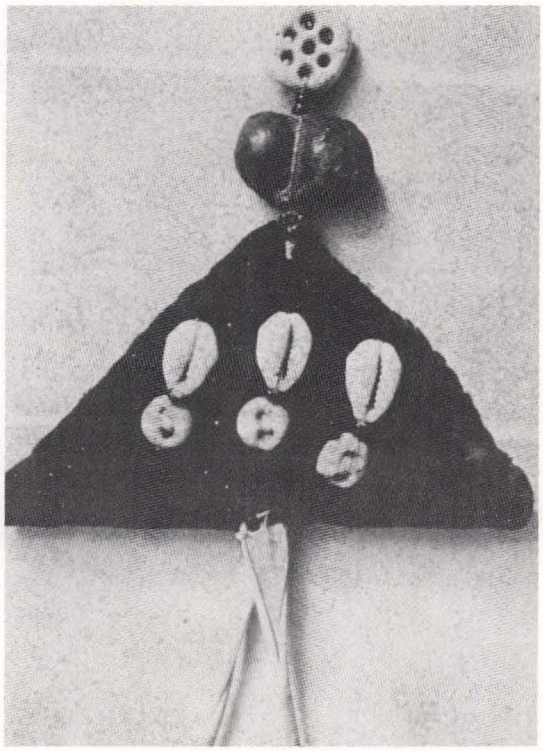
The distinctive Jewish ornaments were extravagantly fanciful.

Women wore "Hijil" or "Khalkhal", solid or ornamental gold empty anklets, around their ankles, that chinked when they walked, and "Dhafayir", ornamental gold egg-shaped empty balls, suspended on their tresses.

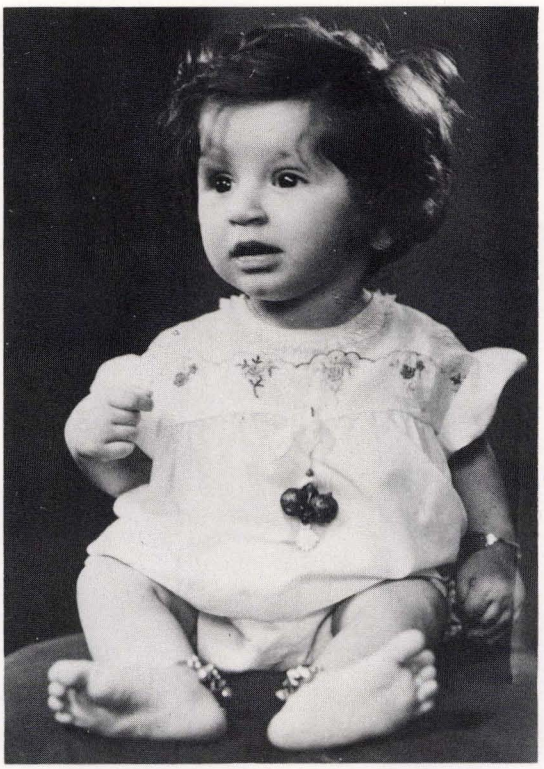
Babies and little children wore on their chests amulets, either in the shape of a silver hand with a charm inscribed on it, or in the form of a triangular stuffed cloth on which small shells and a gall-nut were hand-sewn, to ward off evil eyes, and around their ankles "Jinijil", silver empty anklets with balls.



Amulet in the shape of a silver hand with a charm inscribed on it



Amulet in the form of a triangular stuffed cloth on which small shells and a gall-nut were hand-sewn



A baby wearing gall-nuts on his chest and
"Jinijil" around his ankles

Customs

The Iraqi Jews were conservative in their traditional customs. They had special traditions and practices at births, circumcisions, and for the Bar-Mitzvah, the ceremony where a Jewish boy of thirteen assumes religious obligations. Wedding ceremonies and festivities and other facets of their life had special formalities and superstitions.

They were devotionally fanatic in solemnly performing the precepts of their religious rites, services, prayers, feasts and pilgrimages to sacred shrines of Jewish prophets in Iraq.

They enthusiastically preserved their traditional varieties of Iraqi Jewish food specialities. Such food requires a long time for preparation. One of the most delicious meals is the "Tabit", roasted chicken stuffed with rice and slices of chicken meat. On Fridays, the housewife usually spent the whole day preparing food for the family for Friday and Saturday.

In keeping with the traditional orthodox practice, at meetings, during ceremonies and festivities, men and women sat in separate places, never together.

Their old-fashioned popular musical instruments of "Daqqaqa", "Tabul and Maziqa", and "Chalghi", with folk-songs and folk-dance were characteristic features at their festivities.

A man's wife was mainly chosen through the services of a marriage broker. An engagement ceremony which obligated both partners was performed by a Rabbi in the presence of their families and friends. The wedding celebrations went on for seven days. The first day was reserved for the "Henna" ceremony at the bride's home, in which the bride's fingers were smeared with extract of Henna plant as protection against the evil eye. On the wedding day itself, the wedding ceremony was performed.

It was the custom to perform "Capparot", expiatory sacrifices, at births, circumcisions, weddings and other festive ceremonies. Fowls or sheep were used in the "Capparot" ritual.



Procedure of sacrificing fowl on a girl

* * *

Mode of Life in Iraq During the Ottoman Regime



A farmer's wife bearing 8 large milk wooden cans on her head one over the other and walking to the market to sell them



The "Quffa", a large round canoe propelled by long paddle with one blade transporting water-melons from the Karkh riverside to that of the Russafa of Baghdad, and the donkey bearing the load to the market for sale



Hand Coppersmith Shop



Earthenware Shop

2. The British Occupation

During the first World War (1914-18), the British conquered Iraq, having occupied Basra in November 1914, Baghdad in March 11, 1917, and Mosul in November 4, 1918.

During the British Occupation, the Jews having enjoyed full freedom prospered and progressed in various fields especially in Baghdad.

Because many Jews learned English in the Alliance School for Boys, many young Jews held posts in the new administration, departments and services, especially in the Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones, in the Railways, Customs, and in the Electricity, in which most of the staff were Jews. Abraham Elkabir was appointed as Administrator of the deceased estates in Baghdad, and Abraham Haim Muallem Nissim as Assistant Political Officer in Al Hillah. The Jews also held posts in the Police Department. The prominent one was: Salman Hayya, a senior police officer.

The Jews also became successful in commerce particularly in the grocery, haberdashery and textile lines. They also progressed in finance and banking, and promoted the Iraqi business considerably.

The British Occupation was an important factor to modernize Jewish life. Since then, Jewish costumes and customs started to be reformed.

The British Occupation ended after the establishment of the Kingdom.

3. The Kingdom

After the first World War, the League of Nations was created in 1919 by covenant peace treaty, and Iraq was placed under the British mandate by the conference at San-remo in Italy on April 1920. In the same year, the Iraqi people revolted against the English, and the English gave them authoritative power to form a self-governing Kingdom under British advisory administration.

Faysal Al-Hashimi (At Ta'if, Saudi Arabia 1883-Berne, Switzerland 1933), the son of Hussein Al-Hashimi King of Hejaz, a region of Saudi Arabia on the Red Sea coast, was selected to be the King of the Kingdom. He was a commander of the Arab revolt against the Turks in that World War. On August 23, 1921 he was enthroned in Baghdad as Faysal I King of Iraq.

When Faysal I died, he was succeeded by his son Ghazi (Mecca, Saudi Arabia 1912-Baghdad 39), who was enthroned as Ghazi I King of Iraq. He married his paternal uncle's daughter, Alya, the sister of Abd Al-Ilah.

When Ghazi was killed in a car accident, he left a four-year-old son, Faysal II.

Faysal II's paternal uncle Abd Al-Ilah (At Ta'if 1913 - Baghdad 58), son of King Ali of Hejaz the son and successor of Hussein Al-Hashimi and the brother of Faysal I, was in 1939 set up as the Regent of Iraq in the name of Faysal II. Abd Al-Ilah remained in power until 1953 when Faysal attained his majority.

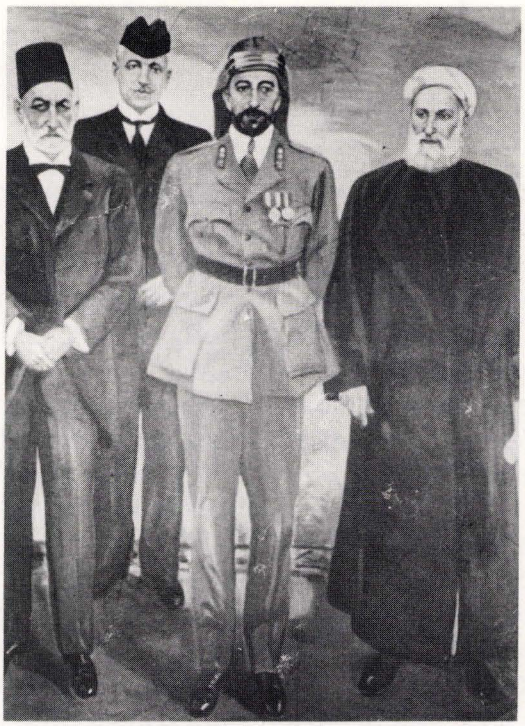
Faysal II (Baghdad 1935-58) was enthroned in 1953 at the age of 18 as King of Iraq, and Abd Al-Ilah became the Crown Prince. Faysal became engaged in 1957, but was assassinated before his marriage.

The prominent Prime Ministers during the Kingdom were Ja'far Pasha Al-Askari and Nuri Al-Sa'id. Ja'far's wife was Nuri's sister, and Nuri's wife was Ja'far's sister.

During the first period of the Kingdom, the Jews having enjoyed constitutional rights progressed in various fields especially in Baghdad. They were a vital element in Iraq, and contributed much to the political system, to the government administration, to the educational and cultural development, and to the commercial, industrial and financial prosperity of the country.

During this period, the relations of the Iraqi Jews with the monarchy were very good. Amicable close contact existed between government and Jewish personalities. In 1925 Sir Elly Kadoorie visited Baghdad and was cordially received by King Faysal I. When the latter visited London, he was the guest of honour at Sir Elly Kadoorie's mansion.

Prime Ministers Ja'far Pasha Al-Askari and Nuri Al-Sa'id with their wives visited London many times, and were also the guests at Kadoorie's mansion.



Chief Rabbi visiting King Faysal I
Right to left: Chief Rabbi Ezra Dangoor, King Faysal, Aide-de-camp Rustum Haydar, and Senator Menahem Saleh Daniel



King Faysal I at Sir Kadoorie's mansion in London
Left to right: King Faysal and Sir Elly Kadoorie



King Ghazi at Sir Kadoorie's mansion in London with Kadoorie's family
Right to left: 2nd Prime Minister Ja'far Pasha Al-Askari,
3rd King Ghazi,
4th Sir Elly Kadoorie

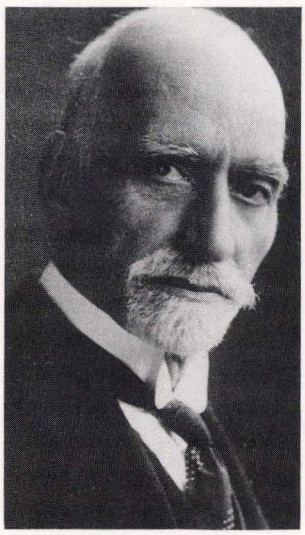


Chief Rabbi Sassoon Khedhouri greeting King Faysal II on the occasion
of the Moslem Feast, standing next to the King the Crown Prince Abd Al-Ilah

* * *

During the first period of the Kingdom, many Iraqi Jews held high government positions. Among the prominent ones were the following personalities:

Politicians



Sir Sassoon Eskell

1. Sir Sassoon Eskell (Baghdad 1860-Paris 1932), first Minister of Finance in the Kingdom and permanent member of Parliament. As Sir Sassoon was himself who founded the financial structures and laws of the Iraqi Government on sound bases, it has become most essential to record his biography in this book, to show the world that such structures and laws were founded by an Iraqi Jew.

Herein under is an English translation from Arabic texts by the author of a summary of Sir Sassoon's biography:[1] On March 17, 1860 he was born in Baghdad of Shlomo David upper class family. After having obtained his primary education at the Alliance School, he went to Istanbul, at the age of 17, at the beginning of 1877 to continue his studies there. He was accompanied by Menahem Saleh Daniel who was elected deputy for Baghdad to the Ottoman Parliament. He then went to London and Vienna where he received his higher education.

At the end of 1881 he came back and was appointed translator for the vilayet of Baghdad, in which post he remained until 1904. In 1908, after the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution, he was elected deputy for Baghdad to the Ottoman Parliament, and re-elected until the end of the first World War, when Iraq was detached from Turkey in 1918.

In the Ottoman Parliament he showed extraordinary tact and ability. He worked as a member of various committees, was Chairman of the Budget Committee, and was deputed to London and Paris on special missions. In 1913 he was appointed Advisor to the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture.

After the end of the First World War, he came back to Baghdad in 1920, and was in the same year appointed Minister of Finance in the provisional Government that had just been formed under the premiership of Abd Al-Rahman Al-Naqib.

In March 1921 he was a member of the Iraqi deputation to the Cairo Congress with Ja'far Al-Askari, the Minister of Defence. In that historical Congress the pillars of the Kingdom were founded.

When Faysal I was enthroned as King of Iraq, a new Ministry was formed on September 1, 1921 by Prime Minister Abd Al-Rahman Al-Naqib in which Sir Sassoon was re-appointed Minister of Finance. He was re-appointed Minister of Finance again in the successive other Governments of Abd Al-Rahman Al-Naqib, Abd Al-Muhsin Al-Sa'dun and Yasin Pasha Al-Hashimi.

1 Documents relating to Eskell's biography from one of his relatives

He was the first to be appointed Minister of Finance in the new Kingdom. He remained Minister of Finance nearly five years successively, with the exception of an interval of some months in 1923-24. During that period he founded the financial and budgetting structures and laws of the kingdom on sound bases, and looked whole-heartedly after the interests of the monarchy and the proper fulfilment of its laws.

One of the important deeds he had done, which Iraq remembers with appreciation and admiration, was that, when he participated in 1925 with Prime Minister Abd Al-Muhsin Al-Sa'dun in the Oil negotiation with the Turkish Oil Company, later known as the Iraqi Oil Company, he insisted on the necessity of payment in gold for the Iraqi Government's share. At that time, his insistence, according to his point of view, appeared strange, as the pound sterling was based on gold currency. Later, his text benefitted Iraq considerably when the pound sterling went off the gold currency. He thus secured many additional millions of Iraqi Dinars for Iraq.

In 1925 he was elected deputy for Baghdad in the first Parliament of the Kingdom, and was re-elected to the successive Parliaments until his death.

In the Iraqi Parliament he was Chairman of the Financial Committee, and was regarded as the Father of Parliament, in view of his vast parliamentary knowledge, wide experience, and old age. His advice was taken on all parliamentary matters, and his views were accepted whenever a difference arose concerning the enforcement of the internal regulations. He was a far-sighted statesman with a vast knowledge of Iraq and other countries.

He received his higher education in Europe, and visited most of the European countries and their capitals, where he spent different periods, and made acquaintances with most European statesmen.

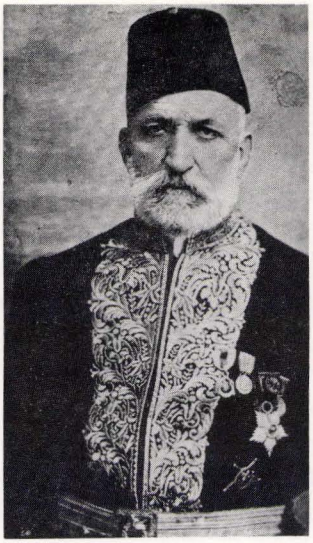
He had a full knowledge of many languages including Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Hebrew, French, English, German, and some Greek and Latin. His private library was one of the largest private libraries, containing the most precious books of eastern and western famous writers on important subjects.

In appreciation of Sir Sassoon's great services, His Majesty Faysal I conferred on him the Civil Rafidain Medal grade II, the Ottoman Empire decorated him with Al-Moutamayez Medal, His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah awarded him the Shirokhorshid Medal, and His Britannic Majesty conferred on him the Order of K.B.E. bearing the title of Sir.

In the summer of 1932 he went to Paris for treatment, but he died on August 31, 1932 and was buried there. On September 7, 1932 a commemorative service was held in Baghdad in his memory.

After his death, Prime Minister Yasin Pasha Al-Hashimi published an elegy, in an Arabic daily newspaper, in which he praised the late Sir Sassoon's character, culture, his outstanding personality, his vast knowledge, his sense of duty, and the proper fulfilment of that duty no matter how great the sacrifice was in time or in life. He said that the stupendous efforts, which had been exerted by the deceased in regulating and putting on sound bases the affairs of the Kingdom of Iraq during the mandatory regime, will be remembered by the future generations.

All leading Arabic daily newspapers eulogized the late Sir Sassoon's noble character, amazing knowledge, sound judgment, extraordinary tact, ability and genius, and his sense of sacred responsibility and sacrifice. They said that the services which had been rendered by the deceased for the welfare of his country will immortalize his great name. They added that the death of so great a man was really an irreparable loss to the nation.



Menahem Saleh Daniel wearing his decorated uniform and medals



Ezra Menahem Daniel

2. Menahem Saleh Daniel (1846-1940), Senator. Elected to the first Ottoman Parliament in Istanbul and was awarded high rank title and medals by Sultan Abdul Hamid II. He belonged to the highest social standing. A philanthropist, he founded educational institutions for Jews in Baghdad and Al Hillah, the birth-place of his family.

3. Ezra Menahem Daniel (1874-1952), bachelor Senator until his death. A philanthropist, he established educational and social institutions for Jews in Baghdad and Al Hillah.

Before his death, he made his last will and testament that all his property, including the institutions founded by his father and himself which were registered in his name, were to be endowed to the Jewish Community.[2]

2 As confirmed by El-Kabir.



Abraham Haim
Muallem Nissim



Farid Samra

4. Abraham Haim Muallem Nissim (1876-1952), member of Parliament. Graduated from the Ottoman Secondary School in Baghdad. He held high Government positions during the Ottoman Regime, the British Occupation and the Kingdom. He represented Iraq in the League of Nations.

5. Farid Samra (1910-82), member of Parliament. A graduate from British university in electrical engineering with a B. Sc. degree. Having been elected to Parliament twice. Was President of the Jewish Lay Council in 1953-58.



Abraham Nahum



Khedouri
Shukur



Reuben Somekh



Dr. Yahya Sumeika

6. Abraham Nahum (1888-1968) Loolou Gurji's husband, member of Parliament.
7. Khedouri Shukur (- 1946), member of Parliament and business man.
8. Reuben Somekh member of Parliament.
9. Dr. Yahya Sumeika (1875-1928), member of Parliament.

The Jews elected to the first Iraqi Parliament established in 1925 were: Sir Sassoon Eskell and Naim Zilkha for Baghdad, Reuben Somekh for Basra, and Dr. Yahya Sumeika for Mosul. Menahem Saleh Daniel a Senator.

Judges



Da'ud Samra wearing his medal

1. Da'ud Samra (1878-1960), Chief Justice of the Court of Cassation until he was pensioned off at the extended pensionable age. A graduate from Istanbul Law College in 1905. Was a judge and a lawyer during the Ottoman regime.

He held the highest judiciary post in Baghdad since 1917 until his retirement in 1946. At the compulsary age of retirement, the age of 63, a special law was passed by Parliament, the first of its kind and the first for any Iraqi, to extend his services further five years.

Was a Professor at the Law College in three subjects in Civil Code in 1919-52 continuously. Had three publications in law reprinted several times. Having been awarded the Order of Al-Rafidain in the late twenties. On his retirement, he practised as a legal advisor.



Naim Zilkha

2. Naim Zilkha (1879-1929), a senior judge. Graduated from Istanbul Law College in 1905. During the Ottoman regime, he served as a judge in Iraq until 1909, and was transferred to Beirut as a senior judge at the Court of Appeal until 1920.

Upon the establishment of the Kingdom, he came back to Baghdad and was appointed Vice-President of the Court of First Instance in Diala Liwa.

In 1925 he was elected to represent the Jews of Baghdad in the first Iraqi Parliament, and was re-elected in 1928 until his death. He was a Professor at the Law College in 1926-28, and President of the Jewish Lay Council in 1925 until his death. (He was Farid Samra's maternal uncle).



Reuben Battat

3. Reuben Battat (1888-1962), a senior judge. A graduate from the Law College in Baghdad. In 1919-23 was Vice-President of the Courts of First Instance in Baghdad and Basra, and elected to Parliament several times.

Senior Civil Servants



Abraham Elkabir

1. Abraham Elkabir (1885-1973), Director General of the Ministry of Finance. He was educated at the Alliance School and the Ottoman Secondary School in Baghdad. He held high Government posts during the Ottoman Regime, the British Occupation and the Kingdom.

He was one of the leading Iraqi political economists. He represented Iraq in all financial organizations of the world. He fixed the value of the Indian Rupee in comparison to the Iraqi Dinar. He organized the internal loans and systematized the Government accounts. He won the confidence of all the Finance Ministers of all Governments. He held his post until his retirement.



Selim Terzi

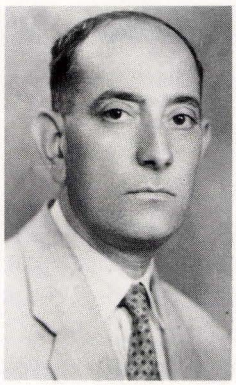
2. Selim Terzi (1900-75), Director General of the Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones Directorate.

In appreciation of his services, the Iraqi Government awarded him a medal, and His Britannic Majesty conferred on him the Order of O.B. E. for his services to the second World War effort.

3. Yusuf Shaul (1900), Assistant Director General of the Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones Directorate.

4. Moshe Shohet (1894-1977), Assistant Director General of Railways.

5. Zion Zilkha (-1970), 1st Secretary to the Minister of Labour.



Ezra Bilbool (Lev)

6. Ezra Bilbool (Lev) (1903), private and first Secretary to the British Advisor and the Minister of Interior successively.



Meer S. Basri



Yaakov Ezra
Abdallah(Elkabir)

7. Meer S. Basri (1912), Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, Assistant Director-General of the Date Association of Iraq, etc. Was Vice-President of the Jewish Lay Council in 1947-50.

He is praised as a poet, political economist, a literary man, and a translator into Arabic of famous French and English writers. (His biography continued in "Deputations").

8. Yaakov Ezra Abdallah (Elkabir) (1904), Accountant General of the Ministry of Justice. He worked in that Ministry since the establishment of the Kingdom in 1921.

After the Second Israeli-Arab War, the remnants of Jewish officials were discharged from the Government service. He was the exception because no one could be found to carry out his work. In 1958, after the revolution, he applied for health reasons to be placed on the retired list.

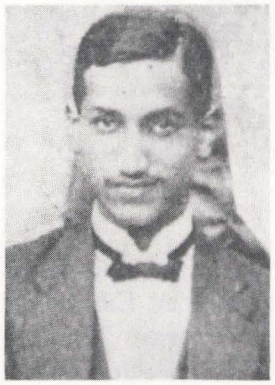
He was a member of the Jewish Lay Council on different periods. He was also Secretary of the Rafidain Club.

The Vice-President and the Director of the Chamber of Commerce were Jews. Other Jews were members of Parliament, judges, and many other Jews held high government positions.

* * *

During the Kingdom the Jews flourished in medicine, pharmacy, law and engineering. They progressed too in poetry, literature and journalism. They also prospered in business, industry, finance and banking. Among the famous ones were the following:

Doctors



Dr. Gourji Raby



Dr. Jack Aboodi Shaby



Dr. Ezra Korine



Dr. Noury Murad in military uniform

Among the distinguished Jewish doctors in Baghdad were the following:

Dr. Gourji Raby, specialized in internal medicine in England.

Dr. Jack Aboodi Shaby (1910-80), specialized in neurology in England.

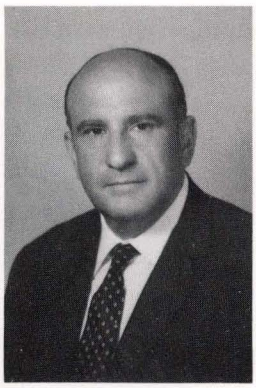
Dr. Ezra Korine (1908-76), specialized in ears, nose and throat diseases in Paris and London.

Dr. Noury Murad, specialized in internal medicine. Was by monarchic decree appointed as Military Doctor of the Royal family and guards.

Pharmacists



Jackob Dellal



Aboodi Haim

Among the known Jewish pharmacists in Baghdad were the following:

Jackob Dellal (1915), and Aboodi Haim (1918). Both graduated from the College of Pharmacy in Baghdad.

Lawyers



Salman Shina



Joseph Elkabir

Among the prominent Jewish Lawyers in Baghdad were the following:

Lawyer Salman Shina (1898-1978), graduated from the Law College in Baghdad. Was a legal advisor to the British Consulate, the British banks and companies.

Lawyer Joseph Elkabir, graduated from the Law College in Baghdad. Practised as a legal advisor to foreign firms, and was a lecturer at the Law College in Baghdad for two years.

Engineers



Joseph Mayer

Among the famous Jewish architects in Baghdad was the following: Joseph Mayer, graduated from the Engineering College in Baghdad.

Poets, Writers and Journalists



Anwar Shaul



Murad Mikhael



Ezra Haddad

Among the outstanding Jewish poets, writers and journalists in Baghdad were the following:

Anwar Shaul (1906-84), a talented poet, writer and journalist. Wrote interesting poetical and literary books, and published in 1924-28, with the co-operation of lawyer Salman Shina, "Al-Misbah", the torch, a weekly general literary magazine, and in 1929-39 himself alone "Al-Hasid", the harvester, a weekly literary magazine.

Murad Mikhael (1909-86), published poetical and literary books, and wrote many metaphorical rhymed prose poems in various newspapers in Baghdad.

Ezra Haddad (1900-72), was a skilled orator, writer and journalist. Wrote several books in Arabic and Hebrew of considerable interest.

Business Men



Yeheskel David
Shemtov



Sassoon Ezra
Khazzam

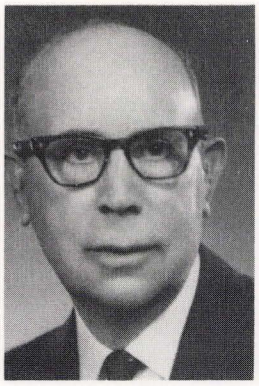
Among the prominent Jewish business men in Baghdad were the following:

Yeheskel David Shemtov (1884-1954), and Sassoon Ezra Khazzam (1890-1935).

Enterprisers



Khedouri M. Lawee



Ezra M. Lawee



Eliahou Dangoor



David Shohet

Among the famous Jewish enterprisers in Baghdad were the following:

Khedouri M. Lawee (1891-1968) and Ezra M. Lawee (1894-1982) were the first agents for cars, the General Motors.

Eliahou Dangoor (1883-1976), paper merchant and landed proprietor. Managed the Dangoor Printing Press founded by his father Rabbi Ezra Dangoor, and published the first guide of Iraq.

David Shohet (1899-1986), established the first silent and talking cinemas.

Bankers



Khedouri Zilkha



Salman Zilkha

Among the distinguished Jewish bankers in Baghdad were the following:

Banker Khedouri Zilkha (1886-1956). Left Iraq in 1927 and settled abroad where he founded several banks in many countries.

Banker Salman Zilkha (1900-75). Left Iraq in 1951 and continued to work as banker in his new settlement. After his death, his banking office was being run by his two sons.

* * *

Schools

During the Kingdom Jewish philanthropists built more modern schools, hospitals, synagogues and social institutions for Jews in Baghdad and in other cities in Iraq.

In the following pages are scenes of the important historical events which were held at the Alliance Schools for boys and girls in Baghdad. These schools were built during the last era of the Ottoman Regime.



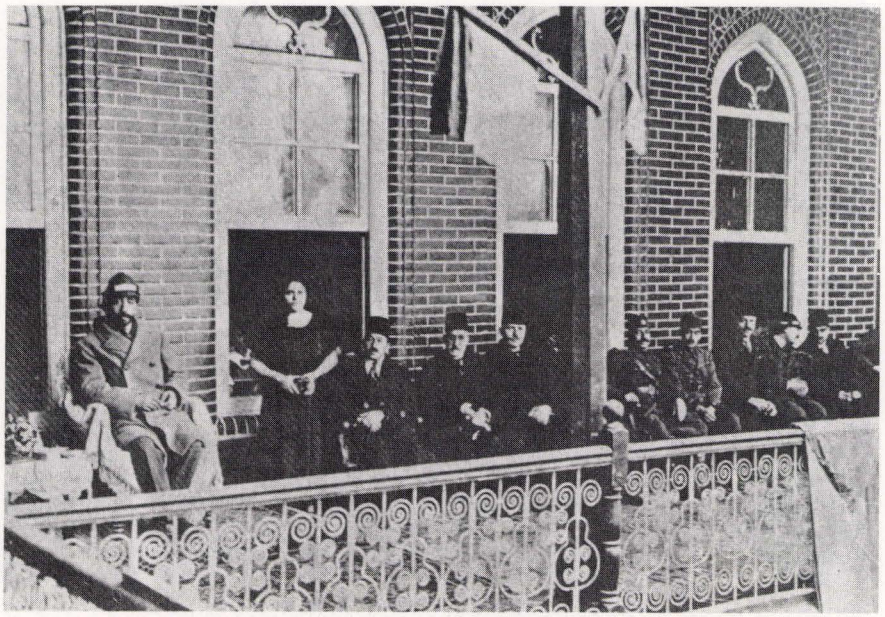
Pupils of Albert David Sassoon School for Boys (Alliance) in the courtyard of the school in 1924



Pupils of Laura Kadoorie School for Girls (Alliance) in the courtyard of the school in 1924



King Faysal I visiting Albert David Sassoon School in 1924
Left to right: Mrs. Sassoon, Menahem Saleh Daniel, King Faysal I, Mr. Sassoon the Principal of the school,Prime Minister Ja'far Pasha Al-Askari, and other Government and Jewish personalities.



King Faysal I visiting Laura Kadoorie School in 1924
Left to right: King Faysal I, Mrs. Sassoon the Lady Principal of the school, and other Government and Jewish personalities



Sir Elly Kadoorie visiting his school "the Laura Kadoorie" in 1925. Kadoorie standing on the decorated balcony with palm-branches and seizing a bunch of flowers. He is surrounded by his 2 sons and by Prime Minister Ja'far Pasha Al-Askari and by Government and Jewish personalities.



Sir Elly Kadoorie sitting at the front of carpeted floor in the courtyard of his school during the same visit. He is surrounded by his 2 sons and by Jewish personalities

Among the new elementary schools in Baghdad were the following:

Menahem Saleh Daniel established a co-educational school, the Menahem Saleh Daniel School, with a kindergarten, in Sinak below the South Gate. It was private.

Yeheskel David Shemtov built a co-educational school, the Masouda Shemtov School, with a kindergarten, at a short distance beyond the South Gate, named after his niece Masouda Joseph Shemtov.

Meir Tweg's widow founded the Meir Tweg School for boys with a kindergarten, in the vicinity of Battaween beyond the South Gate. It was named after her late husband.

Among the new secondary schools in Baghdad were as mentioned in the following pages:

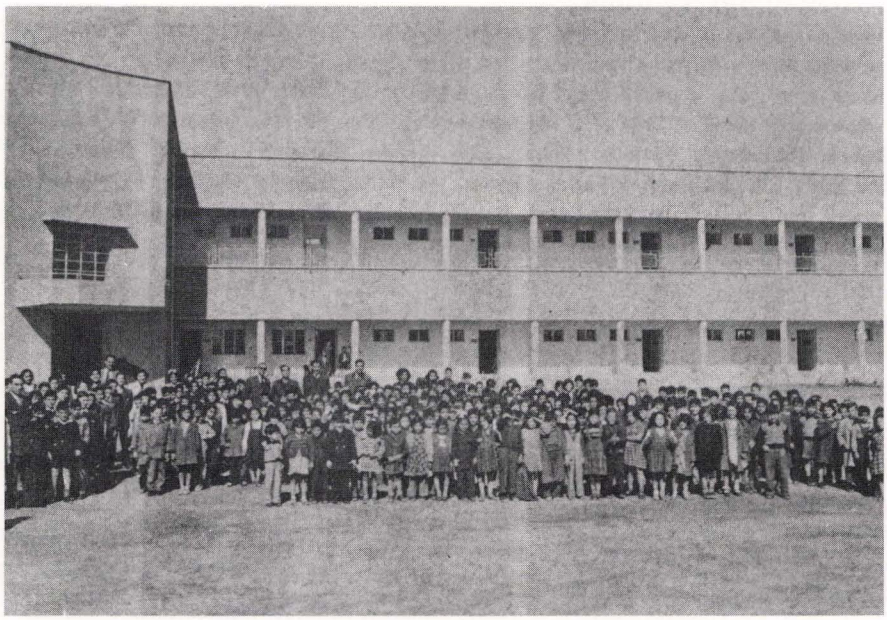


Frank J. Iny

On October 1941 an Iraqi Jew, Frank J. Iny (1892-1976), who left Iraq in 1948 and settled abroad where he became a millionaire,established an elementary school on a rented house.

In 1949 he built in European style a most modern co-educational elementary, intermediate and secondary school, the Frank Iny School, with a vast garden in the southern outskirts of the Russafa beyond the South Gate. The school had two laboratories, large conference and lecture hall, reading hall, sports hall, library, a cinema-hall,and sports courts: two tennis-courts, two volley ball courts, two basket-ball courts, and one foot-ball ground. It was private.

The school was run by the efficient Iraqi Jewish Principal, Abdallah Ovadia, who acquired his higher education at the American University in Beirut.



Co-educational students of Frank Iny School in the courtyard of the school on April 1951



Elia Shahmoun

Elia Shahmoun (1868-1955) who had emigrated abroad built the Rachel Shahmoun School for Boys in the former Jewish quarter. It was named after his late young daughter who died on the day of her wedding.

Zion Bekhor built an extension to the school on similar dedication.

Among the new elementary schools in other cities and towns were the following:

Sir Elly Kadoorie built under the administration of the Alliance two modern schools in each of Basra, Mosul and Kirkuk, one for boys and one for girls. The schools in Basra were endowed to the Jewish Community on trusteeship. Those in Mosul and Kirkuk were private.[3]

The Daniel family established private schools in Al Hillah.

Vocational Schools

Among the new vocational schools in Baghdad were the following:

In 1923[4] Sir Elly Kadoorie established a vocational section in the Laura Kadoorie School for Girls, the "Atelier", which taught Jewish girls the art of first-class ladies' dressmaking and embroidery especially bridal and wedding dresses.

After the death of Sir Sassoon in 1932, his brother, Shaul Eskell who presided over the Jewish Lay Council for many years, built with Sir Sassoon Eskell's funds in European style a most modern and magnificent college, the Professional College, for Jews. The college to give training and practising in the professions of the local industries.[5] It was built in the southern corner of Battaween. It was private.

In 1947 Ezra Menahem Daniel founded the Yeheskel Menahem Vocational School for Girls in Sinak. It was named after his late brother Yeheskel. The school gave elementary education as well as training and practising in various professions and housework especially in sewing and needlework. It was private.

In 1935[6] Sir Elly Kadoorie established the Silas Kadoorie Institute for Blind in the former Jewish quarter, and was named after his late father. It was endowed to the Jewish Community on trusteeship. The institute provided the pupils with board and lodging, clothing, Braille education, handicrafts and musical lessons. In 1951, during the mass emigration, all the pupils were flown to Israel.

3 As confirmed by Kadoorie's Baghdad last agent.

4 Golim V p. 146.

5 As confirmed by one of Eskell's relatives

6 Association.



Graduation ceremony in which the pupils were entertaining the audience by their orchestral music held at the Laura Kadoorie School for Girls



Prime Minister Ja'afar Pasha Al-Askari sitting at the front of the audience

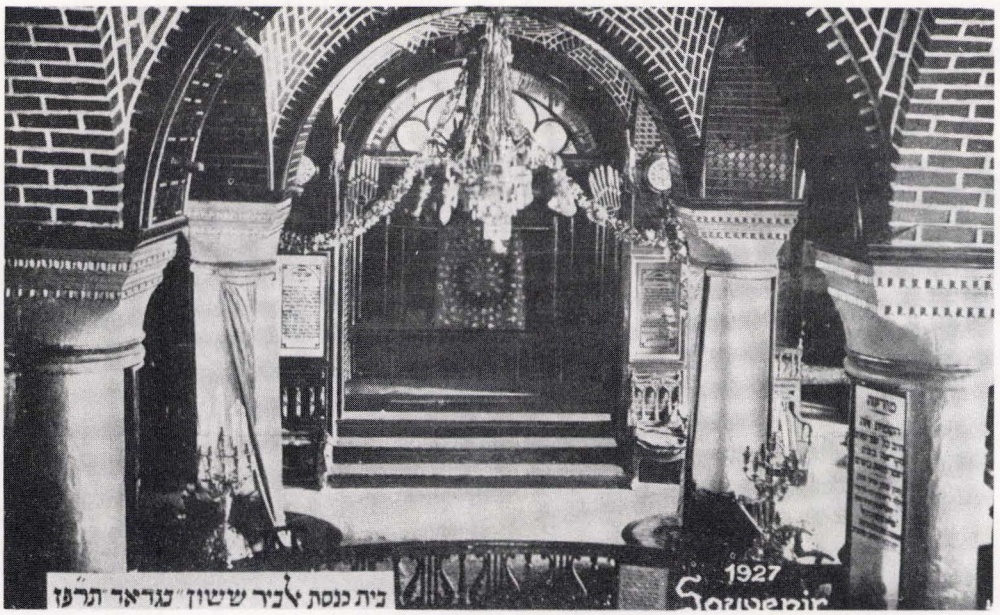
Hospitals

In 1935[7] Sir Elly Kadoorie built in European style a most modern and handsome ophthalmic hospital, the Rima Kadoorie Hospital, for Jews, in the former Jewish quarter in Baghdad. It was named after his late mother. The hospital was endowed to the Jewish Community on trusteeship.

Synagogues

Among the new synagogues in Baghdad were the following:

Some of those synagogues were constructed inside some modern schools. Their names were the same as those of the schools. They were: Albert Sassoon Synagogue, Masouda Shemtov Synagogue, Meir Toeg Synagogue and Rachel Shahmoun Synagogue. While others were built separately. Among them was Shammash Synagogue beyond the South Gate.



Albert Sassoon Synagogue

7 Association.

Clubs

The new clubs in Baghdad were the following:

In 1926[8] Sir Elly Kadoorie built in oriental style the first Jewish club in Iraq, the Laura Kadoorie Club, in the south of Rashid street, the main street, below the South Gate. It was a lovely, modern and spacious club with a vast garden. The club was used as a social meeting-place for modern Jewish families. It was built inside a land owned by Sir Elly Kadoorie, and shops were constructed all along the front.

One group of wealthy Jews built in European style the Zawra'a Club below the South Gate. It was used exclusively as a social meeting-place for upper class Jewish families. In 1942 it was rebuilt more modernly southwards of Battaween.

In 1932 another group of Jews built in European style the Rafidain Club in Sinak. It was used as a social meeting-place for middle class Jewish families. It was rebuilt twice, in 1937 eastwards of the South Gate, and in 1947 in Alwiya southwards of Battaween.

In 1933 another group of wealthy Jews built in European style the Al-Rashid Club eastwards of the South Gate. The club was most modern, tremendous and beautiful with an extensively vast garden. It was used as a social meeting-place for wealthy Jewish families. In 1942 it was rebuilt near the new premises of the Zawra'a Club.

Sports-Grounds

In 1942 Ezra Menahem Daniel established a vast sports-ground for Jewish boys and girls in the southern outskirts of the Russafa.

8 Association



Racing



Basket-ball players



Sports activities



The Chief Rabbi presenting cups to the winning contestants

* * *

Herein under is a description of the houses, costumes, ornaments and customs of the Jews in Iraq during the Kingdom.

Houses

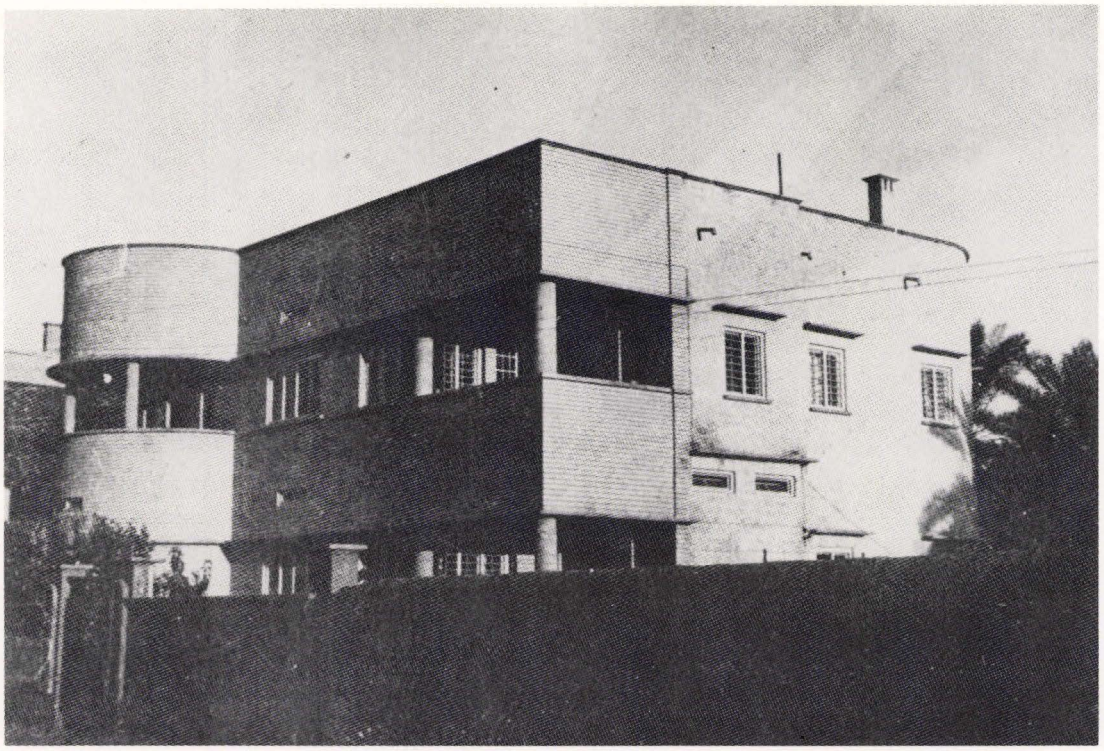
During the Kingdom, many Jews left their neighbourhoods and lived in mixed sectors in modern houses and even built their own residential zones. Many sons left the ancestral homes and lived separately.

The Jews in Baghdad started to build modern houses in European style in the new Battaween residential quarter beyond the South Gate. Within a short time, most of the newly built houses in the Battaween belonged to Jews. The modern houses of the Jews then extended from Battaween southwards up to Masbah, the new fashionable residential quarter, and along the river-bank, where many wealthy Jews built beautiful villas and houses with vast gardens.

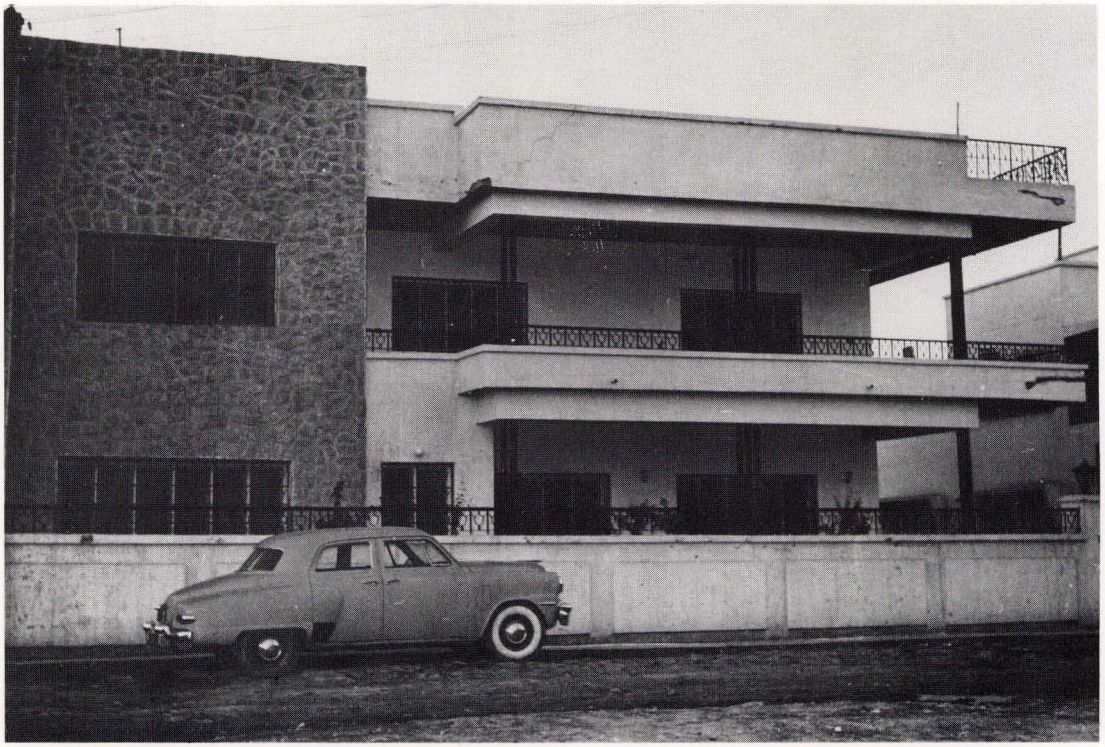
Some wealthy Jews, Shaul Sha'ashoua, Khedouri and Ezra Lawee and Sassoon Khazzam built beautiful mansions with vast gardens in Alwiya, Kard Al-Pasha and Karrada on the river-bank between the South Gate and Masbah.

Wealthy Jews had private sleep-in maidservants and nurses, and owned the latest model cars. They had private chauffeurs and gardeners.

Modern Jewish Houses



No. 1



No.2

Costumes

During the era of the Kingdom, the Iraqi Jews especially in Baghdad made real reforms in their old-fashioned costumes. Many Jews got rid of their popular old-fashioned costumes and head-gears, and were dressed in European fashion but wore the Ottoman head-gear.

A few years after the establishment of the Kingdom, the Iraqi Government changed the "Fez" to the "Sidara", black felt small cap, the Iraqi national head-dress. After another few years, the Jews in Baghdad were bare-headed, symbolizing the latest fashion.



Sassoon Murad

Many Jewish women and girls wore European dress, but most of them even in Baghdad still veiled their bodies and faces in the traditional outer veils when walking in the streets.

An enlightened distinguished Jewish merchant, Sassoon Murad(1870-1945), made the first call in Baghdad for the emancipation of Jewish women and girls from outer veils. His wife and daughters were the pioneers to walk in the streets without outer veils. Religious men at the start called Sassoon Murad "Poker," heretic, but his movement of reform was at last successful. In the following years, Jewish women and girls in Baghdad emancipated themselves gradually from the traditional outer veils piece by piece.

Ornaments

A basic reform was visibly made in the Iraqi Jewish ornaments.

Antiquated women's ornaments and embellishments, "Hijil" or "Khalkhal" and "Dhafayir" vanished, and were replaced by modern ones.

Babies' and children's amulets and "Jinijil" went out of fashion and were no more in existence.

Customs

After the exodus of the denationalized Iraqi Jewish refugees to Israel in 1951, a real reform was made in the Iraqi Jewish customs. The remnant of Jews especially in Baghdad were no longer conservative in their traditional customs. They had no more fantastic practices. The Jews were following modern, simplified birth, circumcision, Bar-Mitzvah, and wedding ceremonies and festivities. All their other conditions of life were also reformed,simplified and modernized. They were no longer superstitious.



Circumcision



Bar-Mitzvah performed by the Chief Rabbi

Devotional fanatism disappeared. The Jews were performing the precepts of their religious rites, services, feasts and pilgrimages to sacred shrines of Jewish prophets in Iraq in a simplified way.



Religious rite attended by the Chief Rabbi

The Jews no longer preserved their traditional Iraqi Jewish food specialities. They turned to European food that requires little time for preparation. Iraqi Jewish food specialities were still being served mainly at special parties, banquets and festivities.

By neglecting the traditional orthodox practice, at meetings,during ceremonies and festivities, men and women were being sitting together.

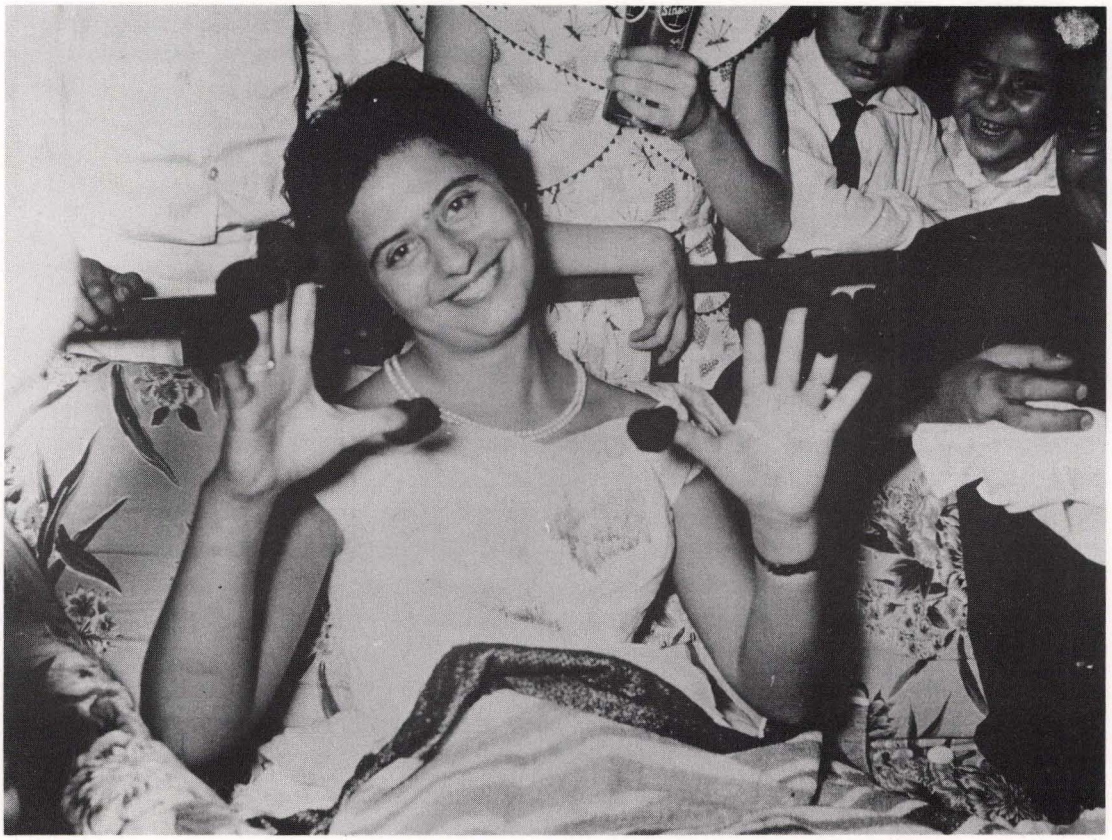
Their old-fashioned popular musical instruments, folk-songs and folk-dance were forgotten, and being replaced by modern music, songs and dance. "Chalghi" still being remained in existence.



"Chalghi"

Despite the fact that a man sometimes still married through the services of a marriage broker, most marriages were being concluded through acquaintances in modern mixed societies and parties.

Though the bride's fingers were still being smeared with the extract of Henna plant, the wedding celebrations were being reformed, simplified and modernized.



Bride's fingers smeared with the extract of Henna plant



Wedding Ceremony

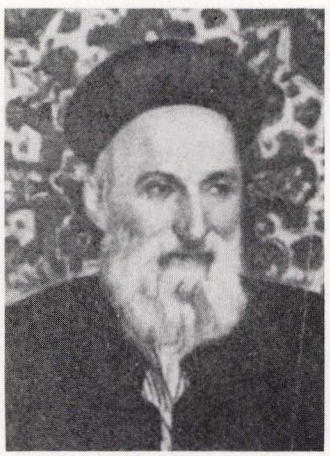


Sumptuous wedding banquet after the wedding ceremony attended by the Chief Rabbi and by mixed men and women gorgeously dressed in the latest European fashion

* * *

The Community

From the time of the Kingdom, the Jewish community was headed by the Chief Rabbi in his capacity as the President of the Community. He was assisted by a Lay Council, a Religious Court and a Schools Committee[9]. From 1954 the Lay Council was being called the Administrative Committee of Iraqi Jews.[10] The Community's income was being derived from the kosher meat tax and from rentals of estates endowed to the Jewish Community on trusteeship.



Chief Rabbi Ezra Dangoor (1923-28)[11] (His biography in "The Ottoman Regime")



Chief Rabbi Sassoon Khedhouri the successor (His biography in "Deputations")

9 The President of the Jewish Community and the Religious Court were being paid for. The Lay Council and the Schools Committee were being held in honorary capacity.

10 As confirmed by Basri.

11 He was the maternal grandfather of Basri.



The Lay Council (1926-28)

Right to left:

Sitting: The parliamentarian Reuben Somekh, advocate Reuben Battat, advocate Naim Zilkha the President, advocate Abraham Khazzoum, merchant Noonou Mukammal

Standing: Yeheskel Shemtov, Sassoon Khazzam, advocate Aboodi Saiti, merchant Ezra Eliahou Al-Iny



David Salman Yehuda
(Dr. Davide Sala)

The most prominent active member of the Jewish Community was: David Salman Yehuda (1914), later known as Dr. Davide Sala. His biography is of the greatest importance. Won a scholarship from the Iraqi Government for honours degree in his graduation from the Government Central Secondary School in Baghdad. Graduated from the American University in Beirut in Psychology and Economics with a B.A. degree. After working in Baghdad for two years as a teacher in government and Jewish communal secondary schools, he worked as commission agent.

In 1951 he left Iraq and settled in Europe, where he continued his higher education and graduated as Doctor in Business Administration. In business was highly successful and prospered tremendously.

While in Baghdad, he took great interest in the affairs of the Community. He exerted devotional activities in the various Jewish committees and welfare societies, in which he held top honorary positions, and rendered most valuable services to the Community.

While in Europe, he is still taking much interest in the welfare and progress of the Jews of Iraqi descent in Israel. He contributed enormous donations to their educational and cultural institutions.

* * *

Equal Rights to Jews

On October 3, 1932[12] Iraq acquired independence, and became a member of the League of Nations. An Iraqi deputation consisting of members of the Government and representatives of the various communities and minorities in Iraq went to the League of Nations in Geneva. The Government was represented by the Prime Minister Nuri Al-Sa'id and some Ministers. The Iraqi Jews were represented by the parliamentarian Abraham Haim Muallem Nissim and by the prominent business man Sassoon Khazzam.

The Iraqi Government undertook to guarantee the equal rights entitled to the citizens of the minorities irrespective of race,religion or language.

* * *

12 Date from Encyclopaedias.

Mode of Life in Iraq During the Kingdom



Kurdish inhabitants wearing new colourful costumes on a feast-day dancing folk-dance amidst trees and greens in the mountains in the north of Iraq



The popular grilling operation of "Shish Kabab" in Iraq

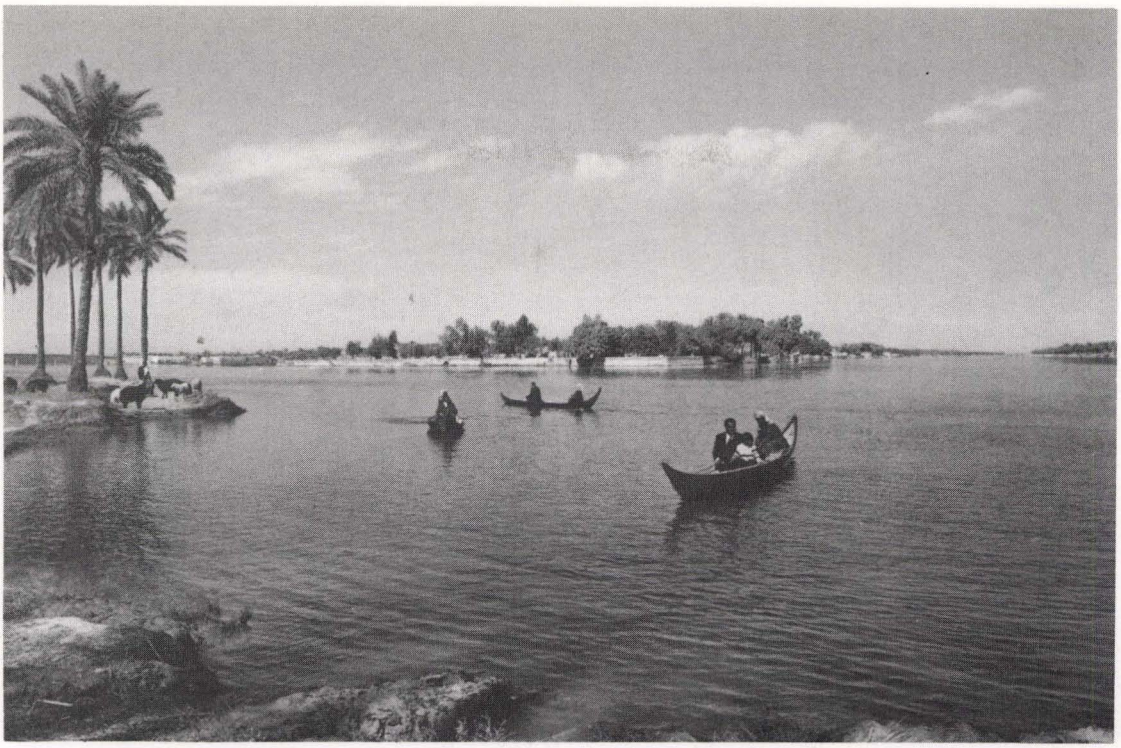
Scenes of Iraq



A road from Basra to Ciba district with beautiful rows of palm-trees on both sides



A streamlet, with a canoe with passengers, in a suburban village of Basra, the Paradise of the East, with fascinating rows of palm-trees on both sides



The Garden of Eden at Al Qurnah town below Basra where the river Tigris meets the Euphrates



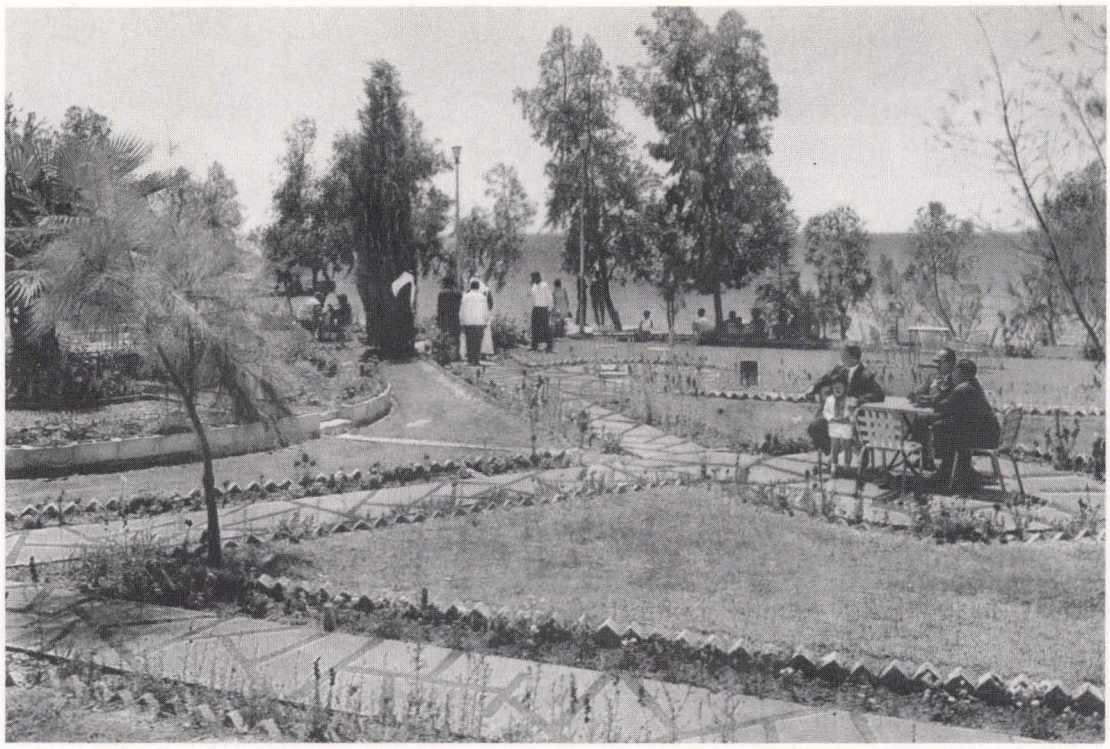
The splendid terrace of the hotel, with visitors, on the Tigris at Al Amarah city, the Paradise of Iraq, with condensed palm-trees on the opposite river-bank



A view of part of Abu Nu'as street on the Russafa river-bank of the Tigris beyond the South Gate of Baghdad



A full view of Abu Nu'as street



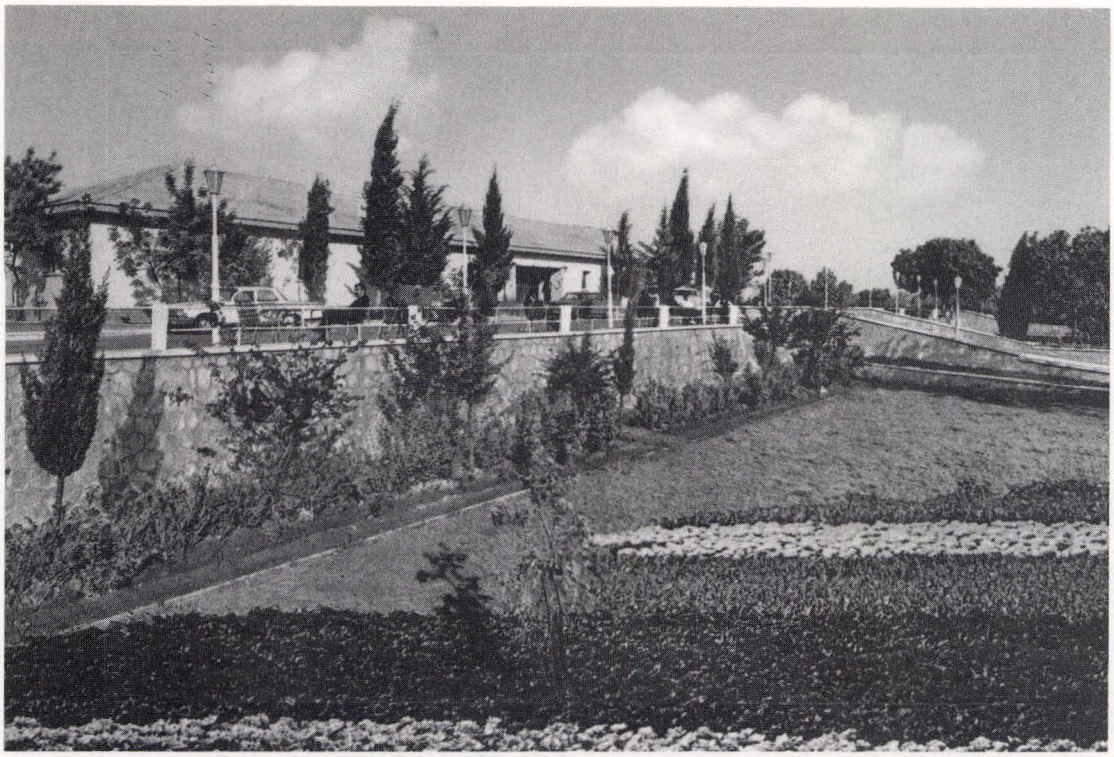
A view of the garden of the rest-house at Habbaniyah Lake
beyond the west of the Karkh of Baghdad



Habbaniyah Lake with its beach



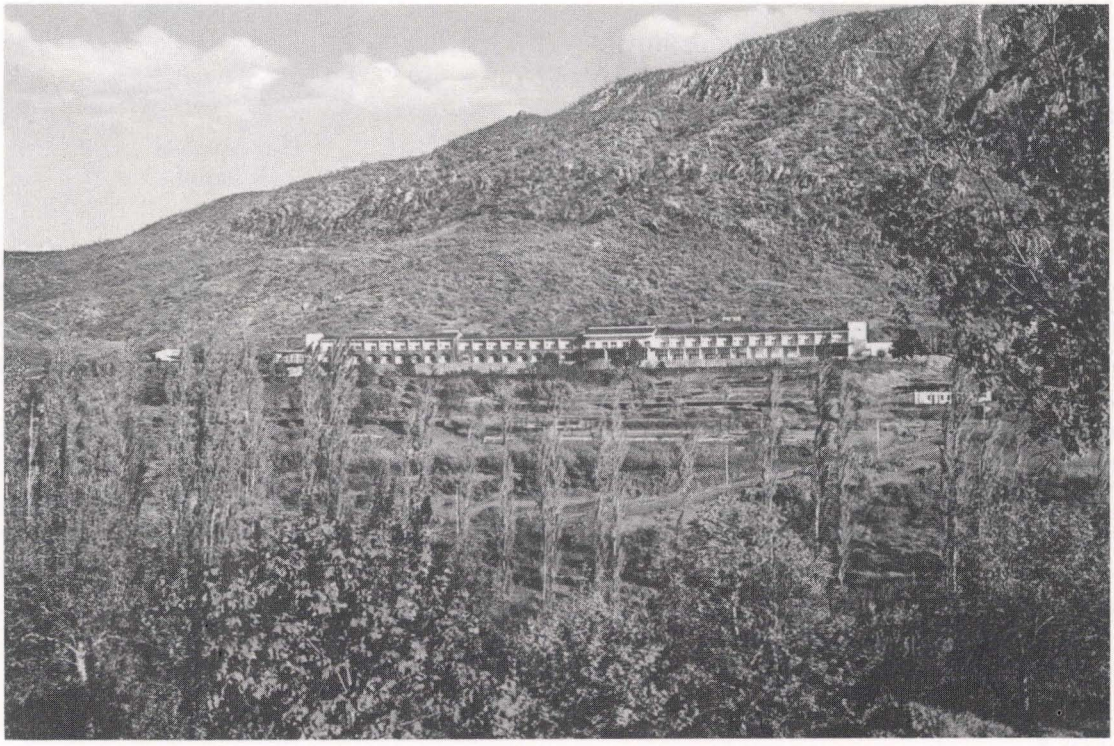
Most modern rest-house amidst a lake and green forest at Mosul



Salah Al-Din summer resort with its beautiful hotel overlooking greens, and flowers in the mountains of the north of Iraq



The beautiful Swaratoka summer resort and its modern hotel and cottages amongst greens and trees in the mountains of the north of Iraq



Sarsank summer resort with its Grand Hotel and beautiful gardens in the mountains of the north of Iraq

4. The Pogrom



Hitler

During the Second World War (1939-45) started by Adolf Hitler (1889-1945), the leader of the extreme anti-Semitic Nazi Party since 1919, Chancellor in 1933-45 and Führer of the German Reich in 1934-45), venomous manifestations of pro-Nazi anti-Semitism spread throughout Iraq.

Hitler, an Austrian born painter, dreamt of being the leader of Germany. He used his oratorial attack against the Jews as an instrument to crystallize his dream and achieve his aspiration. After having seized power, he planned to exterminate the Jewish people from the world.

In all ages, there were those who maliciously planned and attempted in vain to exterminate the Jewish people from the world, but instead, they themselves were annihilated with their criminal colleagues. Hitler, who suffered a humiliating defeat in the war, committed suicide, and his colleagues were executed.

In contrast, the Jewish people's survival culminated in the renaissance of the glory of their past history, when the invincibly strong and independent Jewish State of Israel was re-established.

"It was not one alone who rose against us to annihilate us, but in every generation, there are those who rise against us. But the Holy One, blessed is He, ever saves us from their hand", Haqqada of Passover.

Hitler was the prime cause of disseminating Nazi anti-Semitism among extreme elements all around the world especially in the Middle East, Arab countries and particularly in Iraq.



Haj Amin el Husseini

On October 16, 1939[1] some pro-Nazi Arab leaders of Palestine, which was under the British mandate, came from Syria and took up residence in Baghdad. Among the most important were:

Haj Amin el Husseini (1897-1974), the former Mufti of Jerusalem who for forty years led several revolts against the British mandate in Palestine and fought Jewish immigration,[2] and his old friend Fawzi Kawakchi, the Syrian guerilla warfare against the Jews,[3] with

1 Esrim p. 8.
2 Jerusalem Post No 14138 d. 5/7/74
3 Trial p. 382

their *entourage*. They were given courteous receptions by the Prime Minister Nuri Al-Sa'id.

They spread Nazi doctrines and malicious propaganda against the English and the Regent Abd Al-Ilah and his Prime Minister, and vehement anti-Semitism campaign, and called for the annihilation of the Jews.



Rashid Ali
Al-Gaylani

Four pro-Nazi Iraqi Lieutenant-Colonels nicknamed "The Golden Square", Salah Al-Din Sabbagh, Fahmi Sa'id, Mahmud Salman and Kamil Shabib,[4] adhered to the doctrines of the Palestinian Arab leaders. On April 3, 1941[5] the Golden Square rose in revolt against the legal Government in Baghdad and made a successful military coup.

They brought the pro-Nazi Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani, the ex-Minister of Interior and the ex-Prime Minister,[6] into power as the Prime Minister of the revolt.

Al-Gaylani appointed advocate Yunis Al-Sab'awi, a fervent anti-Semitic extremist, as Minister of Economics.[7]

The Regent Abd Al-Ilah and his powerful Prime Minister Nuri Al-Sa'id, Jamil Al-Madfa'i, Ali Jawdat Al-Ayubi and Da'ud Pasha Al-Haydari escaped. The British army took them to Jerusalem.

Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani re-established diplomatic relations, severed by Nuri Al-Sa'id, with Nazi Germany. The Nazi German Ambassador, Dr. Fritz Grobba,[8] returned to Baghdad with a large Nazi diplomatic and military corps. They instigated war against the English and disseminated provocative aggressive anti-Jewish campaign in Baghdad. This attracted fervent adherents of chauvinistic elements.

The British Government had a Royal Air Force base near Habbaniyah lake about 90 kilometres west of the Karkh, and a military base at Shu'aiba in the south suburb of Basra.

Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani's Government demanded that the British army should leave these two bases. But the English did not agree.

On May 1 the Iraqi army placed the British base at Habbaniyah under siege. On May 2 British war-planes from Habbaniyah bombarded Iraqi positions, and the Anglo-Iraqi war began. The Iraqi army suffered heavy losses, and were defeated within a very short time.

Whenever British war-planes bombarded Baghdad, Jews walking on the streets, who were lifting their eyes upwards or scratching their heads or straightening their head-gear, the Sidara, were captured by the hostile mobs, on false charges of giving signals to the British war-planes, and were taken to the police stations for investigation.

On May 6 Meir Elias Hospital was attacked by armed rioters on false charges that two British pilots had been hiding inside, and a British civilian had entered the hospital to give signals to the British war-planes.

4 Army p. 21-22-30.
5 Army p. 35/36.
6 Army p. 16 and 28.
7 Esrim p. 9.
8 As confirmed by Bengio

The rioters shot at everybody and destroyed everything. They looted and burnt the furniture. The pharmacist was fatally shot, and the accountant was gravely wounded. The patients suffered injuries. The rioters captured the doctors and the administrative Director and staff and took them to the police station.

By the intervention of the President of the Jewish Community to the Inspector General of Police, Husam Al-Din Jum'a, they were released. The Inspector also sent police to the hospital, who arrested few rioters and restored order.

From that time the gates of the hospital were locked. Many shocked patients went to their homes despite their weakness.

On Thursday the 29th of May, after about two months' rule, Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani, Haj Amin el Husseini, Fawzi Kawakchi, and the military and civilian leaders of the revolt, seeing that they lost the war, escaped to Iran. From there, Al-Gaylani and el Husseini went to Nazi Germany, and Salah Al-Din Sabbagh to Turkey.

On the same day, Yunis Al-Sab'awi appointed himself as Military Governor of Baghdad.(His rule lasted two half days i.e. one whole day).

On Friday the 30th of May, a Security Committee organized under the chairmanship of Arshad Al-Umari, the Amin Al-Asima, the Mayor of Baghdad, who was also the Chairman of the Red Crescent Association, and the Director General of Police and other top Government personalities signed an armistice with the English.[9]

Yunis Al-Sabawi having seen that the British army were to enter Baghdad with the Regent and Nuri Al-Sa'id, and following Nazi doctrines, decided to massacre all Jews in Baghdad and loot their houses, shops and stores.

He called the President of the Jewish Community, Sassoon Khedhouri, and ordered him to instruct the Jews that they should remain in their houses for three successive days, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, the thirty-first of May, and the first and second of June. It was the eve and the two days of the Jewish Feast of "Shavuoth",[10] Pentecost, the Jewish harvest festival observed on 50th day after the second day of Passover.

He had already instructed the semi-military "Katayib Al-Shabab", youth divisions, who were inspired with Nazi doctrines, to mark in red Jewish houses, shops and stores[11]for carrying out his criminal plan.

In the morning he sent a message to the Broadcasting Station asking them to demand the Baghdad public to massacre the Jews.

The Chairman of the Security Committee prevented the broadcasting of the announcement, and succeeded with the help of the police in arresting Yunis Al-Sab'awi and sending him to the Iraqi border.[12]

On the evening of Saturday the 31st of May, Baghdad radio announced the escape of the leaders of the revolt, the signing of armistice with the English, and asked the public to keep order and stability. The radio further announced that a welcome would be given by the notables of Baghdad to the Regent who would arrive at the airport in the West of the Karkh in the morning of Sunday.[13]

The British army near Habbaniyah lake had already come to Baghdad. They were stationed at the western suburb of the Karkh.

The news infuriated Yunis Al-Sab'awi's pro-Nazi followers, the "Katayib Al-Shabab" and

9 Esrim p. 10.
10 Esrim p. 10/11
11 Esrim p. 10/11
12 Esrim p. 10/11
13 Esrim p. 10/11

the Arab populace who were instigated by Nazi propaganda with aggressive attacks against the Jews. Seizing the opportunity of the political insecurity, Al-Sab'awi's followers decided to massacre the Jews in Baghdad and loot their houses, shops and stores.

On Sunday the first of June some young Jews went to the airport to welcome the Regent, they were stabbed on the way.

The Regent, after having arrived, went to his palace in the west outskirts of the Karkh.

At three o'clock in the evening on Sunday, the massacres of the Jews in Baghdad and looting their houses, shops and stores started, with an interruption from two o'clock at night till eight o'clock in the morning, and finally came to an end at two o'clock in the afternoon on Monday [14]

The Katayib Al-Shabab, fervent pro-Nazi students, disloyal policemen and lawless soldiers also participated in the massacres and plunder. Some even fought among themselves for their shares in the booty.[15]Armed with knives, revolvers and rifles, the rioters started the massacres by stopping all buses in the then Ghazi street leading to the former Jewish middle class quarter, taking out the Jews who were in the buses, slaughtering them and throwing their bodies on the streets. They shot the Jews who were walking on Ghazi street.

Reliable sources testified that many thousands of armed pro-Nazi Arabs had broken into marked Jewish houses savagely. They massacred or shot the children, women and old men. They violated and wounded many girls and women. They kidnapped the beautiful girls. They slaughtered some babies, cut open their abdomens, and removed their stomachs and intestines in front of the horribly terrified mothers and fathers. They then threw the bodies into the garbage cans, and finally shot the mothers and fathers. Afterwards they emptied the houses of all furniture, clothing and everything they contained.

Many Jews were saved by leaving their houses which were looted, and jumping off the flat roofs of their oriental houses to the adjoining ones of their Moslem faithful neighbours who protected them. Many righteous Moslems saved many other Jews by preventing the rioters to enter Jewish houses. Others protected Jews in their homes. Many hundreds of helpless Jews fled and went to seek refuge in the various police stations, where they remained the whole day.

Many thousands of furious armed pro-Nazi Arabs broke open with their weapons marked Jewish shops and stores savagely especially in Shorja Street, the main Jewish trading center, and looted everything in them. Unmarked non-Jewish shops and stores were untouched.

The plunderers broke into four old synagogues. They carried off the carpets, desecrated the sacred religious Scrolls of the Law, and plundered their ornamental silver coated cylinder-covers.[16]

The massacres of the Jews and looting their houses, shops and stores were advancing nearer to the South Gate, where the new houses, shops and stores of upper class of Jews were scattered. They came to an end by the rigorous measures taken by the Regent at noon on Monday.

Baghdad radio announced that the Regent had ordered the Kurdish division, which remained loyal, to enter Baghdad and open fire on the rioters. The Kurdish division shot at the rioters mercilessly and took control of the city. They saved the Jews from further massacres and looting.

14 Golim VI p. 31/32.
15 Esrim p. 11.
16 Esrim p. 13.

Jamil Al-Madfa'i, a righteous man, was charged by the Regent to form a government under his premiership. He proclaimed a curfew, and placed the loyal Kurdish soldiers with machine-guns and fixed bayonets in front of the doors of Jewish houses. He thus restored order and stability.

The Ministry of Health sent trucks which picked up the casualties from the streets and houses, and took them to the government hospital casualty ward. In this ward the Jews were separated from the Moslems.

One of the Jewish nurses, Violette Murad (Battat), gave secret information to the representatives of the Jewish Community that the Director of the Government Hospital, Sa'ib Shawkat, a pro-Nazi anti-Jewish extremist, was not interested to treat the Jewish wounded. It was feared that they might be poisoned. She added that if no immediate action was to be taken to save them, most of them would die.

The Chief Rabbi, Sassoon Khedhouri, immediately phoned Jamil Al-Madfa'i, the Prime Minister, and informed him of the situation. Al-Madfa'i promised that he would deal with the matter himself. He at once rushed to the hospital with conscientious doctors and asked them to do everything possible so that the Jewish wounded would receive prompt and proper treatment. He visited them again in the evening and in the morning of the next day to ensure their safety.

Al-Madfa'i ordered the reopening of Meir Elias Hospital, to where almost all the operated Jewish wounded were transferred. Most of the Jewish wounded were gravely injured, and by Al-Madfa'i's humanitarian prompt and proper action, they were saved.

The Jewish dead were sent by the Government Hospital to the Post-mortem Department to hand them over to the Jewish Community. They were buried all together in a common grave.



The common grave

The Jewish casualties were estimated at 179 killed who left 242 orphaned, and 2118 wounded. 2371 shops and stores were looted.[17] Some 2000 Jewish houses were plundered.[18] Some sources estimated the loss of Jewish property between three and three and a half millions pounds sterling, others estimated it at one million pound sterling only.[19]

A relief committee, consisting of humanitarian Jewish personalities, was formed under the auspices of the President of the Jewish Community. It was assisted by the Government and by the Chairman of the Red Crescent Association, to help the Jewish orphans and families who had become destitute, with food, clothing, accommodation and money. A fund was raised by the Jewish Community for 28,800 Iraqi Dinars,[20] and the Government contributed 20,000 Iraqi Dinars for this purpose.[21]

Jamil Al-Madfa'i's Government arrested the pro-Nazi leader of the pogrom, Yunis Al-Sab'awi, together with two of his collaborators in the Iraqi frontier, while they were attempting to escape to Iran.[22] On July 20, 1941 they were hanged in Baghdad near the entrance to Ghazi Street leading to the Jewish quarter, where the pro-Nazi Arab rioters had massacred the Jews. Their corpses were suspended from morning till noon on view to the public.

Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani and Haj Amin el Husseini, the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, were sentenced to death in absentia. The senior army officers and top Government personalities involved in the revolt were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

The 4 Lieutenant-Colonels, the Golden Square, the leaders of the revolt, were sentenced to death in absentia. They were handed over later to the Iraqi Government: Fahmi Sa'id, Mahmud Salman and Kamil Shabib by the Iranian authorities, and Salah Al-Din Sabbagh by the Turks. They were hanged in Baghdad: the first two on May 5, 1942, the third on August 16, 1944, and the fourth on October 16, 1945.[23]

The Government severed diplomatic relations with Nazi Germany again. Dr. Fritz Grobba with his diplomatic and military corps left Iraq anew. The status quo immediately returned to normal.

The Jews in Iraq at the time numbered 140,000.[24] After the pogrom, many Jews emigrated to any country which they could, such as India, where they established new businesses that flourished.

The other Jews on seeing that order and stability were immediately restored by the Government remained in Iraq and started new businesses again.

However, after the end of the Second World War, many Jews emigrated every year and resettled in various countries including Europe, America, Canada, Australia, Japan and Hong Kong, where they prospered.

17 Esrim p. 13.
18 Petel's estimate.
19 Esrim p. 14.
20 Golim VI p. 43
21 Esrim p. 14.
22 Golim VI p. 40.
23 Army p. 40.
24 Ben-Porat's estimate.

5. The First Arab-Israeli War



Theodor Herzl



Prof. Chaim Weizmann

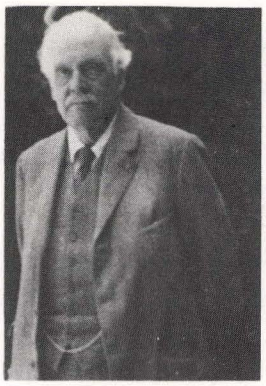
Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), a Hungarian Jewish writer and journalist, having seen that the Jews were persecuted in many countries had a vision in 1895. He predicted that the Jewish homeland in Palestine, the land of their ancestors, would be restored. Jews dispersed all over the world could settle in this homeland. They would secure their independence, equality and justice, and recover their national liberty and dignity.

Herzl died young and did not realize his vision. In virtue of his movement, he was the founder of the renaissance of the establishment of the State of Israel.

After Herzl's death, many Zionist leaders continued his movement. Among them was Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952), Professor of chemistry. Weizmann with many other Jews rendered valuable services to the British Government during the First World War.

At the time, Palestine was under the domination of the Ottoman Empire, and, during the first World War, was occupied by the English in 1917.[1] On June 24, 1922[2] it was placed by the United Nations under the British mandate. The mandate ended on May 15, 1948.[3]

1 Faits p. 13.
2 Faits p. 17.
3 Faits p. 20.



Lord Balfour
(Arthur James)



Lord Lionel Walter
Rothschild

The British Government recognized the right of the Jewish people to Palestine, and on November 2, 1917[4] Lord Balfour (1848-1930) the Secretary for Foreign Affairs[5] issued the famous letter known as the Balfour Declaration to Lord Lionel Walter Rothschild. Herein is a part of the Declaration: "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People."[6]

The Balfour Declaration recognized the right of the Jewish people to the country of Israel. This right was reaffirmed by the United Nations which accorded an official international recognition of the relations of the Jewish people with the country of Israel and their rights to re-establish there their National Home.[7]

In each anniversary, the local newspapers in Iraq published large head-lines condemning the black and sinister Declaration. Since then, the Jews in Iraq were persecuted.

* * *

On October 29, 1936,[8] during the reign of King Ghazi I, Brigadier Baqr Sidqi, of Kurdish origin, made a successful coup in Baghdad against the Prime Minister Yasin Pasha Al-Hashimi. Al-Hashimi escaped to Syria and Lebanon where he died a few weeks later, and Sidqi set himself up as the Chief of Staff. He assassinated Major-General Ja'far Pasha Al-Askari, the Minister of Defence and ex-Prime Minister,[9] and appointed Hikmat Sulayman as the Prime Minister.

Sidqi remained in power about ten months. He was killed on August 11, 1937[10] at Mosul airport through a conspiracy plotted by army officers.

His coup aggravated the persecutions against the Jews.

From time to time, anti-Jewish riots and demonstrations took place in Baghdad, Basra and Mosul. In Baghdad frightful terrorism against the Jews happened.

At night on September 17, 1936 Zaghayir Zubaida and Yusuf Huri were slaughtered

4 Trial p. 208.
5 Trial p. 203.
6 Trial p. 208.
7 Faits p. 9.
8 army p. 15.
9 army p. 17.
10 army p. 20

after having left the old premises of the Zawra'a Club.

At another night a group of anti-Jewish young Moslems suddenly assailed Laura Kadoorie Club and beat some members savagely.

At night on July 1938 a bomb was thrown over the courtyard of the Laura Kadoorie Club. One young guest, Edward Yeheskel Shammash, was injured. After one month at night, another bomb was also thrown over the same courtyard. By misfortune, the same guest visited the club at that night and was accidentally killed. One member, Ellis Khedouri, was injured and miraculously saved.

At night on June 20, 1939 an inexplosive bomb was thrown over the courtyard of the old premises of the Rafidain Club for the purpose of terrorizing the Jewish members

At the same time, there was an antagonistic change in the Government policy against the Jews. In 1933 the teaching of Hebrew in Jewish schools was entirely forbidden and restricted to the Bible and prayers. This condition has remained in force up to the present time. In 1935 some Jewish officials especially from Baghdad were dismissed from the Government service.

On November 29, 1947 the General Assembly of the United Nations approved the partition of Palestine,[11] and adopted a resolution for the creation of an independent Jewish State[12] to take effect after the cessation of the British mandate.[13] The resolution intensified anti-Jewish persecutions in Iraq.

After the resolution, daily huge demonstrations took place in Baghdad in protest against the partition of Palestine. Many Jews were arrested and many were murdered on false accusations of committing sabotage activities against the lives of the Moslem public. Jews were falsely charged with giving poisoned candies to Moslem children, and poisoning the drinking water.

The Iraqi Government took the following discriminatory measures against the Jewish minority:

1. Passports were not to be issued to Jews. Consequently, many young Jews and Jewesses, remembering the pogrom in 1941, escaped via Basra across the Shatt Al Arab river to Iran. From there they went to seek refuge in the new Jewish State.

2. Jewish students were not to be admitted to Government colleges especially the faculties of medicine, pharmacy and engineering.

On the eve of Saturday the 14th of May 1948 equivalent to the Hebrew year of the 5th of Iyar 5708, the members of the National Council representing the Jewish people of the country of Israel and the world Zionist movement, assembled in a solemn session in the city of Tel-Aviv on the day of the cessation of the British mandate, proclaimed, in view of the natural and historical rights of the Jewish people and of the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the foundation of the Jewish State in the country of Israel to be called "the State of Israel".[14]

On May 15, 1948, after the Proclamation, the first war between the Arab countries and Israel broke out. The armies of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Fawzi Kawakchi invaded the new State of

11 Faits p. 19
12 Faits p. 9.
13 Faits p. 20
14 Faits p. 9/10

Israel. But as a consequence of the heroism of its defenders, the invaders lost the war and returned to their borders in failure.[15]

After the war, Prime Minister, Mohammed Al-Sadr, a religious, righteous and conscientious man, endeavoured to restrict nationalistic aggressive activities against the Jews in Baghdad. Within a short time, during the Jewish Feast of "Shavuoth", his Government resigned, and a new Government was formed.[16]

Muzahim Al-Pachachi became Prime Minister and Sadiq Al-Bassam Minister of Defence. Both of them were anti-Semitic, the first secretly, and the second openly. They set up four military courts in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul and Kirkuk to try any elements especially Jews suspected of working for the interests of Israel or considered hostile to the Government's policy.

About 400 Jews were arrested on false charges of Zionism activities and were imprisoned in Baghdad, Al Kut and in the dreadful Nagrat Salman prison about 400 kilometres west of As Samawah town in the desert between Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

The Government took the following discriminatory measures against the Jews in Iraq:

1. The issuing of passports to Jews was still discontinued.

2. More Jewish officials were discharged from the Government service.

3. The Laura Kadoorie Club and the new premises of the Zawraa, Al-Rashid and Rafidain Clubs were occupied by Palestinian refugees by the Government for the purpose of closing them down.

Yaakov Ezra Abdallah (Elkabir) who was Accountant General in the Ministry of Justice was Secretary of the Rafidain Club. He affirmed that he received a telephone call from Sariya Al-khoja in her capacity at the time as a senior official in the Ministry of Defence and later as Iraqi Ambassadress in West Germany. She ordered him that the responsible men of each of the four Jewish clubs must write a letter to the Ministry of Defence in which they should donate the occupation of their clubs, with all available furniture and equipment, to the Palestinian refugees free of charge. The responsible men of the clubs done at once as ordered.

4. For the purpose of effacing any trace of the Laura Kadoorie Club, a whole block owned by Sir Elly Kadoorie, consisting of 6,500 square metres with a front of 110 metres containing the aforementioned club and the shops all along the front, was expropriated in 1953 by the Iraqi Government . A minimum sum of 105,000 Iraqi Dinars at the rate of 16 Iraqi Dinars per square metre was paid to the Baghdad agent of Sir Elly Kadoorie's sons. The proceeds of sale were officially transferred by the agent through the Iraqi Government to the sons.[17]

After having removed the Palestinian refugees, the block was demolished and expressly transformed into a parking place.

5. The Alliance schools for boys and girls in Baghdad were occupied by Palestinian refugees by the Government for the purpose of closing them down.

6. The Professional College was ultimately taken over by the Government and transformed into Ministry of Municipality.[18]

15 Faits p. 20.
16 Golim I p. 50.
17 As confirmed by Kadoorie's Baghdad last agent.
18 As confirmed by Elkabir.

7. The three centuries old large Jewish cemetery, containing tombs of many eminent Rabbis, situated in the small industries district in Baghdad, owned by the Jewish Community by "Firman" from the Ottoman Sultan Murad IV, was confiscated, destroyed and its graves were profaned.

At first, the Jewish Community was ordered to transfer the mortal remains of the Jewish corpses from the Cohenim section in the opposite side to the main cemetery. The ground of that section was then confiscated and transformed into a Telephone Exchange Department.

After sometime, the Jewish Community was ordered again by the Prime Minister Nuri Al-Sa'id to transfer the mortal remains of the Jewish corpses from 12,500 square metres of the main cemetery. The Jewish Community was compelled to buy a vast land in the eastern suburb of the New Baghdad town about 60 kilometres east of Baghdad and build a new cemetery. The ground of that part of the old cemetery was then confiscated and transformed into a Government Bakery and Administration.[19]

8. Ten wealthy Jews in Baghdad were arrested on false charges of participation in demonstrations and involvement in trade transactions with Russia in 1943-45. They were fictitiously tried, and each one was fined 10,000 Iraqi Dinars.

9. Any Jew who received a letter from relatives in the new State of Israel during March, April and the first half of May 1948 was arrested.

10. Hostile newspapers falsely accused prominent Jews especially from Baghdad with Zionism activities.

11. Jews falsely charged with Zionism activities were arrested, and each one was sentenced to a term of three to ten years' imprisonment.

12. Reuben Battat, a Jewish senior judge in Baghdad district who sanctioned the consecration of sacrifices to the Holy City of Jerusalem in 1924, was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.[20]

13. Young Jews started to escape to Iran to seek refuge in the new State of Israel. If arrested, each one was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

The plight of the Jews in Iraq became perilous. Frightened Jews sent their Holy Scriptures to Synagogues. They destroyed their "Tallith", religious fringed garment worn under clothes, and "Zizith", prayer fringed shawl worn over clothes, on which "Maghen David emblem", the Shield of David, was embroidered. At night the "Iraqi Gestapo" rang Jewish door-bells.

Menashe Za'arur, a respectable, veteran and expert Jewish journalist in Baghdad who left Iraq by the denationalization law at the end of 1951 and sought refuge in Israel, made investigations in Adas's dramatic tragedy. He published on March 4, 1962 an article in Arabic about his findings under the pen-name "Abu Ibrahim" in Al-Yom newspaper issued in Israel. Herein is a summary:[21]

After the Second World War, the English who occupied Iraq decided to sell their military equipment in the country. The Iraqi Government examined the equipment and purchased anything that the army could use. The remnants of the equipment were sold as scrap-iron after an official Committee under the presidency of Major-General Ghazi Al-

19 As confirmed by Elkabir.
20 Golim I p.50.
21 Golim I p. 50/52.

Daghistani ascertained that there was nothing in them useful for military use.



Shafiq Adas

Two wealthy Iraqis, Shafiq Adas, a Jewish agent for Ford cars in Basra, and Naji Al-Khedhairi, a Moslem prominent business man in Baghdad, associated in the purchase of the remnants of the equipment. They sold part of them for local use, and shipped the remainders on a cargo-boat, and sold them to Italy as scrap-iron.

Many months elapsed after the deal. In May 1948, when the armies of the Arab countries waged war against Israel, the lives of the Jews in Iraq and their property were endangered. The local newspapers started to conduct hostile campaigns against the Jews. They were falsely charging the Jews with betrayal and treason, and called them the Fifth Column.

Shafiq Adas did not once surrender to the hostile newspapers especially those of the Istiqlal Party and did not give them any money. They therefore seized the opportunity to conspire against him, and charged him falsely: "A Zionist who sold arms to Israel".

Newspapers started to issue large head-lines in which they attacked Adas and demanded his trial. The Istiqlal Party with the support of the Minister of Defence Sadiq Al-Bassam demonstrated in Baghdad and Basra demanding Adas' execution.

The police then arrested Adas on false charges of having rendered assistance to Israel Defence Forces, which were at war with Iraq's army. Consequently Adas was tried by a military court under the presidency of Al-Na'sani. Many witnesses came to the court and falsely swore by the sacred Koran that Adas was guilty.

At first famous advocates were afraid to defend Adas. But they dared because they assumed that justice would be given. They were Ali Mahmud Sheikh Ali, Faiq Tawfiq and Mohammed Zaki Khattab. They went to Basra, but the President of the military court prevented them from carrying out cross-examination of the witnesses for the prosecution, and told them from the start that he would not accept witnesses for the defence. They protested to the Ministers of Justice and Defence.

Advocate Faiq Tawfiq daringly sent a copy of the protest to the British Embassy. The British Embassy transferred the protest to the Iraqi Government, and the Police arrested Tawfiq. By the intervention of Minister Ahmad Mukhtar Baban, Tawfiq was saved from calamitous fate.

Acting in response to the demand of the newspapers for Adas's execution, the court already decided to pass the death sentence on Adas and the confiscation of all his property in Iraq.

The sentence on Adas's execution was presented to the Regent Abd Al-Ilah for approval. It remained with him for two days. In the meantime, furious demonstrations were organized, and the councillors of the Royal Palace exerted pressure on the Regent to approve the sentence, and proposed to him to consult with ex-Prime Ministers and the Cabinet. Consequently, a meeting was held at the Royal Palace on the third day to give judgment.

At the opening of the meeting, Abd Al-Ilah mediated and did not speak. He then said: "I trust you are unwilling that unfair injustice should prevail in this country if we shed clean blood. The religion of Islam prohibits such injustice. We are waging war against the Israeli Jews. But this does not mean we should assassinate an innocent Iraqi Jew. What do you think of this?"

After consultation between them, they replied to him: "Either you hang this Jew and save your chair or you lose your chair for his sake." On hearing their replies, he signed the sentence on Adas's execution and said: "God you are witness that I myself and my chair are clean from shedding blood of this Jew."

On September 23, 1948 Shafiq Adas (1900), millionaire, was hanged in front of his new magnificent mansion in Basra. Jubilant huge crowds surrounded his suspended corpse. They chanted slogans wildly, hand clapped violently, and rejoiced and cheered enthusiastically.

During the black day of Adas's execution, advocate Mohammed Zaki Khattab said to Menashe Za'arur: "A day will come when the Iraqi people will exculpate the innocence of Adas, the same as the French people exculpated the innocence of Dreyfus".

The President of the military court had another version. He said to a circle of Jews with whom he had relations: "I have sentenced Adas to death because I was aware that the Iraqi people were seeking a sacrifice. If Adas were not hanged, they would have made pogroms against the Jews in Iraq, in revenge for the many Iraqi soldiers who died in the war. By hanging Adas, I have saved the Jews from massacres".

Shafiq Adas's execution distressed righteous Moslems deeply. They ascertained that an innocent man had been hanged. Religious Jews were sure that Adas was a highly righteous man and became an innocent sacrifice for Israel and the Iraqi Jews. To immortalize his name, Israel named a street in Ramla after him.

Naji Al-Khedhairi had another Jewish partner in this deal: Hayyawi Jedda'a. At the beginning of this dramatic tragedy, he immediately left Iraq and resettled abroad, where he died after some years. He was sentenced to death in absentia, and all his property in Iraq were confiscated. Naji Al-Khedhairi was not tried, because he was a Moslem. His partners were tried and sentenced to death, because they were Jews.

A week after Adas's execution, the Minister of Defence resigned and was replaced by a righteous Minister. A month after, the Ministry resigned and was replaced by a righteous Ministry. The military courts were minimized from four to one.

Under the new Ministry, the conditions of the Jews in Iraq were, somewhat, temporarily ameliorated. Senior judge Reuben Battat was released by the Regent.[22] Nevertheless, in the following year, there were anti-Jewish riots, and many Jews were injured.

The intensified persecutions of the Jews in Iraq after the creation of Israel caused dreadful and frightful repercussions upon all Jews. Almost all of them decided to leave Iraq at any cost, to save themselves from anti-Semitic aggressive activities.

As the grant of passports to Jews was at the time definitely forbidden, the Jews in Iraq had no alternative but to escape as refugees, and seek refuge in the new State of Israel. Consequently, many young Jews and Jewesses attempted to escape to Iran, which became a stepping-stone to Israel. If arrested by the new Government, the Jews were sentenced each to one month's imprisonment. Some young Jews arrested and jailed attempted to escape again, and actually escaped. Some of them died on the way. About 15,000[23] Iraqi

22 As confirmed by Shina that he was entrusted to hand over the amnesty ordinance to Battat's wife.
23 Ben-Porat's estimate.

young Jews and Jewesses escaped as refugees during the period from 1947 until 1950 and sought refuge in Israel.

In order to put an end to the dangers of illegal escape of Iraqi young Jews and Jewesses and allow them to leave Iraq legally, a young Jew, Mordechai Kazzaz(Ben-Porat) (1923), one of the leaders of the Tnoua in Baghdad whose function was to render facilities to those Jews deciding to leave Iraq as refugees and seek refuge in Israel, approached Yeheskel David Shemtov, the acting President of the Jewish Community and the President of the Lay Council[24] and the ex-Honorary Consul of Czechoslovakia, and requested him to see Tawfiq Al-Suwaidi, the Prime Minister, concerning a solution of the problem of such Jews.

On the night of the first of March 1950 Saleh Jabir, the Minister of Interior, submitted a bill to Parliament for the denationalization of any Jew wishing to renounce his Iraqi nationality and leave Iraq.[25] On that night the bill was ratified and made valid for one year.[26]

At that time the Jews in Iraq numbered 135,000.[27] Almost all of them submitted applications for denationalization. Many Jews having taken prior necessary precautions before submitting applications sold their houses, furniture, landed property, goods, and drew their money from banks. They sold a house usually worth 10,000 Iraqi Dinars for 500 Iraqi Dinars. Many Moslems having purchased Jewish houses at rock bottom prices became very wealthy, as the prices of Jewish houses returned to their normal level after the denationalized Jews had left Iraq. Many other Jews having taken no prior precautions before applications had all their movable and immovable property and bank accounts in Iraq sequestrated by the Government, in accordance with ad hoc law No. 12 of 1951.[28]

All Jews who escaped to the Iranian frontier as refugees were also denationalized, and their property in Iraq was also sequestrated.

A custodian was appointed for the control and administration of the property of the denationalized Jews. The custodian sold such property by auction.

* * *

24 Yeheskel David Shemtov elected President of the Jewish Lay Council and acting President of the Jewish Community in 1949 following the resignation of the Chief Rabbi Sassoon Khedhouri from the presidency, as confirmed by Basri.

25 As confirmed in a speech by Ben-Porat published in Golim I p. 82.

26 As confirmed by Ben-Porat.

27 Ben-Porat's estimate.

28 Juifs p. 9/10.



Mordechai Ben-Porat



Shlomo Hillel

A young Jew, Shlomo Hillel (1923), who acted in this case in the role of "Manager of Near East Air Transport", signed a contract with the Prime Minister for the transport of the denationalized Jews from Baghdad.

Meir Tweg Synagogue was used as a government center for renouncement of the Iraqi citizenship and registration for emigration. The Masouda Shemtov Synagogue was used as a departure station from which all the denationalized Jews were taken to the airport. The denationalized Jews were officially allowed to take with them only few Iraqi Dinars and very restricted articles of luggage.

The denationalized Jews were flown in the beginning to Cyprus, escorted by an Iraqi officer. From Cyprus they were flown by El Al Israel Airlines to Israel. The Iraqi Government allowed later the denationalized Jews to be flown directly from Iraq to Israel without an escort.[29] On Friday the 19th of May 1950 the first two airplanes carrying the first denationalized Jews including Shlomo Hillel took off.[30] The air transport of the denationalized Jews continued until 1951, and even carried Jews during 1952.[31] All the members of the Tnoua had submitted applications for denationalization and were flown to Israel.

29 As confirmed by Ben-Porat.
30 As confirmed in a speech by Ben-Porat published in Golim I page 83.
31 As confirmed by Ben-Porat.



Jews renouncing their Iraqi nationality and registering for emigration



Denationalized Jews inside the airplane

While the denationalization law was in force, five bombs were thrown on various buildings in Baghdad, four exploded and the fifth did not.

The first, on April 18, 1950 on a coffee-shop situated in Abu Nu'as riverside street just beyond the South Gate. This place was usually frequented by many Jews of different classes. 4 Jews were injured.

The second, on February 19, 1951 on the American Information Bureau situated in a main street with no casualties or damage to the building.

The third, in the evening on April 14, 1951 on Masouda Shemtov Synagogue's open courtyard beyond the South Gate. 4 Jews were killed, among them Yitzhak Sassoon, and 22 were injured.

The fourth, at night on June 5, 1951 on a Jewish firm, Stanley Sha'ashoua, in the main Rashid street with no casualties.

The fifth, on the flat roof of the two-floors Souq Al-Amana, Amana market, in Rashid Street, which did not explode. A Jewish dentist, Jackob Azachi, the only Jew who had a room on the second floor, discovered the bomb in the morning. Jackob informed his Moslem neighbour, and the neighbour gave the information to the police. The police arrested some members of the anti-Semitic Istiqlal Party.

Some young Jews were arrested on charges of having thrown the explosive bombs. In June 1951 Yusuf Basri (1923), an advocate, was arrested, and on June 9 Shalom Saleh (1934), a skilled worker, was also arrested. The trial of the whole arrested young Jews took a long time. Some of them were sentenced to various long periods of imprisonment.

But Yusuf Basri and Shalom Saleh received the death penalty, and were hanged on January 21, 1952.[32] As they were sacrifices and martyrs for Israel, Israel commemorated their names by a memorial statue in Or Yehuda, where there are a great number of Jews of Iraqi origin.

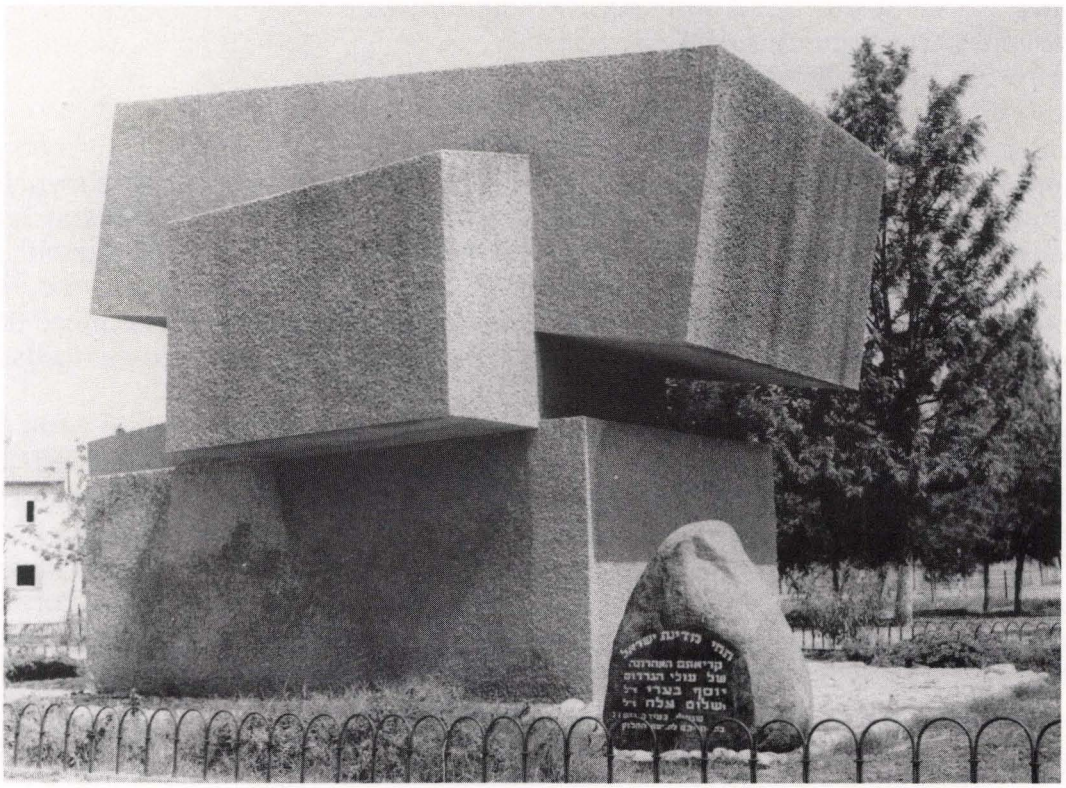


Yusuf Basri



Shalom Saleh

32 According to Babylonian list.


קריאתם האחרונה
של גיבורי הגיטאות
יוסף בערז ז"ל
ישעיהו גבלה ז"ל

The statue

About 14,600[33] Jews decided not to leave Iraq, and remained retaining their Iraqi citizenship. They lived mostly in Baghdad, some in Basra, the south port city, and very few in some towns. The Iraqi Government gave those Jews Yellow Identity Cards, the yellow colour after the Nazi fashion. On the Iraqi cards was inscribed: "The bearer of this card is a Jew". No Jew could make any transaction without producing his Identity Card.

* * *

Authentic sources affirmed that:

In 1951 all Jewish schools, hospitals, synagogues, social institutions and charity buildings, under the trusteeship of the Jewish Community outside Baghdad, were confiscated. An exception were the synagogues in Basra which remained in the hands of the Jews living there. All Jewish institutions inside Baghdad were unaffected, and are still being administered by the Jewish Community.

Elly Kadoorie's two schools in Basra, which were under the trusteeship of the Jewish Community, were confiscated. Kadoorie's two schools in each of Mosul and Kirkuk, which were private, were at the time unaffected.[34]

Meir Elias Hospital, comprising 49,000 square metres and including all furniture and medical equipment, was expropriated by the Government, and transformed into a Government Hospital. As the property of the hospital was under the trusteeship of the Jewish Community, a nominal sum of 220,000 Iraqi Dinars, at the rate of less than 4,50 Iraqi Dinars per square metre,[35] was paid to the Community.

The Government kept two Jewish schools in Baghdad open: The Menahem Saleh Daniel School, and the Frank Iny School.

Within one year after the denationalized Jewish refugees left Iraq, the Government reissued passports to the remaining Jews. Many Jews obtained passports, left Iraq and resettled in England, Switzerland, United States, Canada, Brazil, Australia, Hong Kong and other countries, where they found peace and freedom.

* * *

The denationalized Jews flown to Israel numbered 105,400[36] "I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself", Exodus XIX-4. The total number of the Jews who escaped and those who renounced their Iraqi nationality and were flown to Israel was 120,400.[37]

The air transport operation from Baghdad to Lod Airport in Israel was called "Ezra and Nehemia", symbolizing the return of the Jews from the Babylonian exile. It was the same as the Babylonian Ezra, the scribe, and Nehemia, a high official at the Persian Royal Court, went up successively to Jerusalem, the former to reconstruct the Temple, and the latter to rebuild the walls of the city.

33 Ben-Porat's estimate
34 As confirmed by Kadoorie's last agent.
35 As confirmed by El Kabir.
36 Ben-Porat's estimates
37 Ben-Porat's estimates.



Denationalized Iraqi Jews landing in Lod Airport, Israel



Denationalized Kurdish Jews landing in Lod Airport, Israel



Changing Iraqi paper money in Lod Airport

* * *

Although the Iraqi Jewish refugees suffered at the start great hardships and difficulties in Israel, they were, later, rehabilitated. Israel was not at the time prepared to accommodate within a very short space of time in adequate buildings such a large number of immigrants from Iraq.

After landing in Lod Airport, and after being served with food, the Iraqi Jewish refugees were transferred by train and by all sorts of vehicles to two immigrants absorption temporary places, "Sha'ar Ha-Aliya", the Gate of Immigration, and "Atlit", a town, both near Haifa.[38]

In these two places there were big bungalows having large halls lighted by electricity and furnished with beds and bedding. In each hall several families were accommodated together and served with free food.

After remaining in these bungalows a short time, the Iraqi Jewish refugees were transferred to "Ma'abarot", immigrants transit tented camps. Behind each camp several small toilet rooms for men and women, made of special aluminium, were erected. Such camps were established at Beit Lid, Pardes Hanna, Beersheba, Holon, Far'ana (Or Yehuda), at Sha'ar Ha-Aliya, and in many other scattered places in Israel. In these camps beds and bedding only were supplied. An exception was Pardes Hanna where the immigrants were also served with free food.

The tented camps were exposed to all the winds that blow. Some of them were flooded by torrential rains especially in winter, and were consequently surrounded by mud in that season.

While in the tented camps, the Iraqi Jewish refugees started to work, each one according to his ability and qualifications, in various services and occupations, for earning their families' livelihood. They purchased all necessary articles required. They lighted the tents by lanterns and oil lamps. They spent much time in buying and preparing their food, and performing the work needed for their families.

All kinds of waste and garbage of the whole camps were cleaned from time to time by the street sweepers of the local authorities.

After having lived in the tented camps between one to three years, the Iraqi Jewish refugees were accommodated in "Tzrifim", wooden cabins, mostly in places near to each family's locality. Although those refugees also lighted these cabins by lanterns and oil lamps, their conditions of life were somewhat ameliorated here.

During that time, adequate buildings were being constructed for immigrants in every place in Israel. After having lived in the wooden cabins between five to twelve years, the Iraqi Jewish refugees were accommodated in some of these buildings, generally each family in its locality, either at monthly rent or by purchasing the buildings.

In order to compensate the Iraqi Jewish refugees for the sufferings endured by them at the start in Israel, full facilities were assured to them. Those who rented houses paid very low rent, and some of them were rent-free. Those who bought houses were charged specially very low prices. They paid small deposits, and the remainder of the cost payable in maximum twenty-five years instalments.

Rich Iraqi Jewish refugees did not go to the immigrants transit tented camps. But they went away directly from the immigrants absorption temporary places and made arrangements for their dwellings, until they bought their own houses in settlements which they liked.

38 As confirmed by Iraqi Jewish refugees.



At "Sha'ar Ha-Aliya"
At the front the big bungalows
At the middle an immigrants tented camp
At the back rows of wooden cabins



Immigrants tented camp at Beit Lid



Mode of life of the camp at Beit Lid

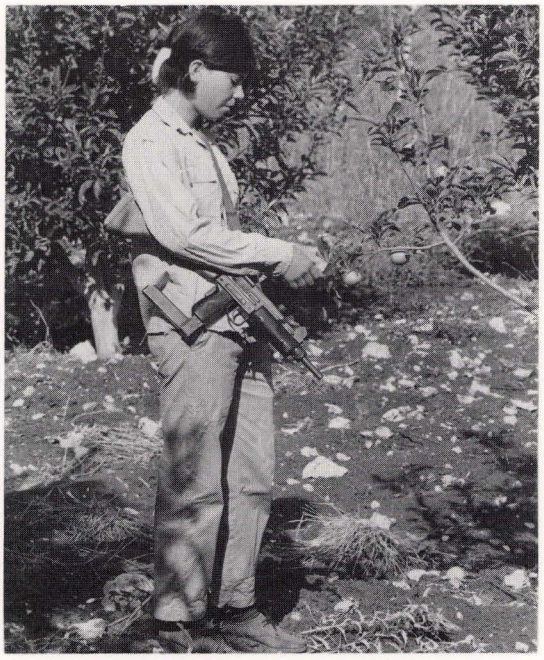


Immigrants tented camp with baby cages at Kfar Ana (Or Yehuda)

The Kurdish Jewish refugees were also rehabilitated in Israel, and also prospered greatly especially in agriculture and in various businesses.



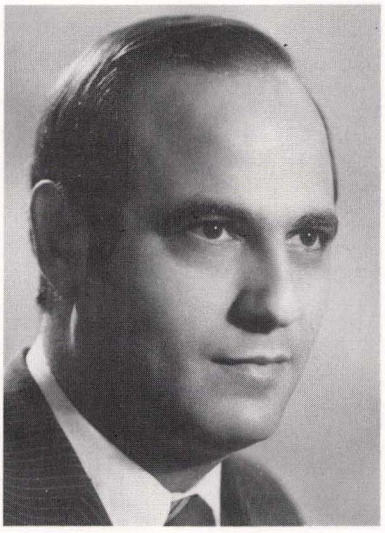
Kurdish men gorgeously dressed in Kurdish style joyfully dancing their traditional folk-dance in the farm of their settlement



Kurdish young beautiful girl well dressed in European style and armed with machine-gun picking fruits from the farm of the settlement

Success in Israel

Many Jews of Iraqi origin were successful greatly in all fields in Israel. Some of them prospered most stupendously. Among the important ones were the following:



Shlomo Eliahu

The most interesting and important example is the wonder-of-the-generation own success story of Shlomo Eliahu (1936). Shlomo accomplished wonderful achievements in education, business, society and politics. From modest beginnings he rose to a millionaire, a distinguished personality among the dignitaries of the community, a member of the Knesset, and member of its Finance Committee.

His interests and activities in public affairs are extensive. Being Chairman and member of the Board of Directors of several public institutions; Deputy Chairman, Deputy President, Treasurer, and member of many social, cultural and educational societies.

In 1950 Shlomo emigrated at the age of fourteen with his family to Israel. He is the second of nine children. Their first stop was in "Sha'ar Ha-Aliya" and then at one of the "Ma'abarot" near Beit Lid. The members of the family wanted to be near an aunt who had been living since the mid-thirties in Hatikva Quarter, a low class district east-south of Tel Aviv. For this reason, they found accommodation in an abandoned orange grove on the road to Holon. When their accommodation was flooded in 1952, they bought a small dwelling-place near their aunt.

Shlomo's father was a goldsmith in Baghdad. As he came in Israel without the means to pursue his profession, he worked as a worker at the Tel Aviv City Cleaning Department.

Shlomo worked at the start as an unskilled worker at a locksmith's workshop and later as a messenger boy at Migdal Insurance Company. By his extraordinary intelligence and fervent ambition for promotion and progress, he endeavoured to learn the art of insurance business. After strenuous struggle and continual perseverance, he established in 1958 his own "Insurance Agency" and in 1966 "Eliahu Insurance Company Ltd", providing jobs for some of his brothers and sisters. Despite bitter resistance from the Union of established insurance companies, he managed to persuade the Government to issue him a licence. When he, a new-comer of Iraqi origin, tried to break into the insurance business, the other insurance companies furiously resented his success.

Shlomo, the Chairman, holds 87 per cent of the company stock, three of his brothers hold 10 per cent, and ten of his Managers another 3 per cent. By his great tact and skill, his company has been highly successful, and he prospered extensively within a relatively short time. At present, his company is one of the most flourishing insurance companies in Israel. He has three main branches in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa, with a staff of 150 serving 100,000 customers. His balance sheet for 1984 had a turnover of 22 millions US Dollars, with a pre-tax profit of 2 millions Dollars.

In 1978 Shlomo built a giant building "Eliahu House", comprising fifteen floors at a cost of 2 millions Dollars (worth more than ten times today) at the junction of four main streets, Ibn Gvirol, Yehuda Halevi, Carlebach and Hama'asfim, one of Tel Aviv

busiest areas. The main entrance of the building is at the beginning of the fashionable Ibn Gvirol. The building is one of the most beautiful and modern in Israel. It is surrounded by three-sided marvellous large pavement bordered with a row of attractive coloured flowers. The building is a wonder of architecture. It is designed by an expert architect according to Shlomo's taste and plan. Shlomo deserves to be decorated with a high medal from the authorities concerned for beautifying that center.

In June 1981 Shlomo moved into his brand-new building. He occupied the upper four floors for his Insurance Company's offices. He fully carpeted them, and furnished them with the most modern furniture and latest office equipment, and ensured proper organization.

Shlomo's bureau is on the fifteenth floor. It is a most magnificent carpeted large salon as a wonderland. It is an Earthly Paradise. At the upper left side is Shlomo's large desk. At the right side is the Board meeting-place. At the upper center is a carpeted stair leading upwards to a relaxation rest-room. At the left side of which there are a hidden bar and kitchen opened with sliding doors. The front side of the room faces a sliding floor-to-ceiling glass door, and overlooks a flat terrace bordered with a row of delightful flowers and the sea.

Shlomo's spacious residence lies on the fashionable end of Jabotinsky street of Tel Aviv. His charming wife of Sephardi origin was born in France.

Shlomo is a strong man, genius, dynamic, tasteful and very charming which makes him highly esteemed and admired. He has vast knowledge and wide business experience rendering him extremely expert in monetary and economic administration. He is the architect of his own colossal fortune. Notwithstanding his numerous activities, he supervises himself his large staff constantly to ensure proper execution of work.

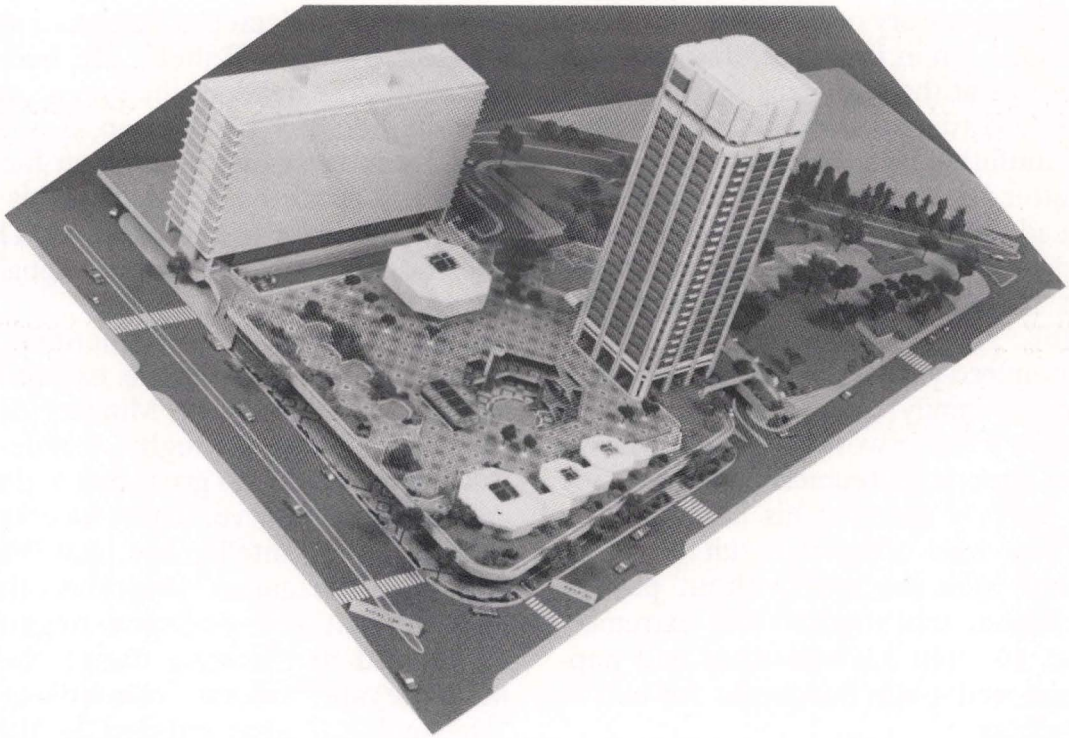
Shlomo's aspiration is to hold a high government position. By achieving so, he can be able to put his practical administrative talents to the service of the public and stabilize the economics of the country, as he has been able to build up his flourishing large business.

In 1984 Shlomo entered into partnership on a third percentage in the City Garden Project. The project comprises the building of a unique most magnificent twenty-three floors residential tower, surrounded by a beautiful garden. It is located in the most prestigious and luxurious area of the elegant "North" of Tel Aviv adjoining the City Municipality. The tower features 92 large apartments with all comforts and most modern conveniences, a swimming pool and a health club on the top floor, an underground parking place, and rigorous security measures ensuring tenants' safety. The project includes the construction of an outside luxurious commercial center at the corner of Ibn Gvirol and Hadassa streets. The center surrounds an inside magnificent decorative pool. The building of the project is now completed.

According to statistical data published in "Yedioth Ahronoth" in issue dated December 27, 1988, Shlomo Eliahu is considered as the 8th of the 10 richest men in Israel. His fortune is estimated at 60/70 millions Dollars.



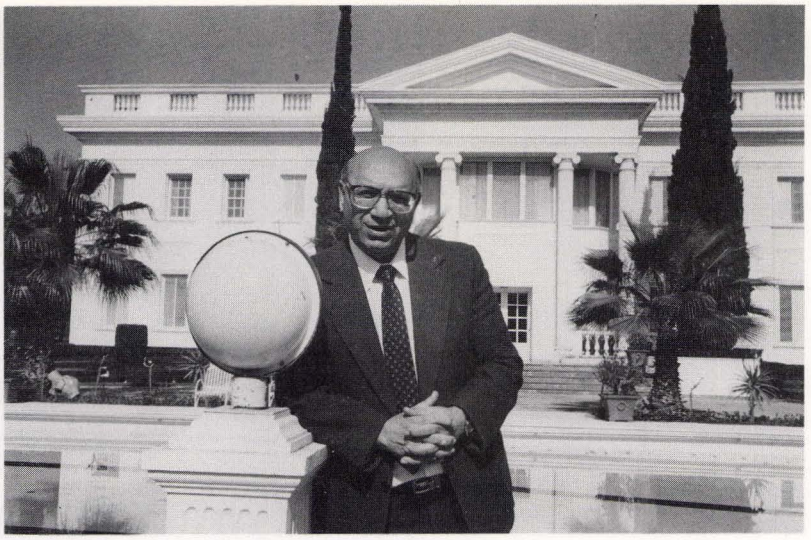
Eliahu House



City Garden Project



Jackob Nimrodi



The White House
Jackob Nimrodi standing at the entrance

Jackob Nimrodi's own success story is stranger than fiction. It is even stranger than the legends of the Thousand and One Nights. It is like an adventure film. Jackob rose from a modest background to a millionaire. He became a most distinguished army and intelligence officer, an expert arms dealer and skilful business man. He played a very important role in the history of Israel.

Jackob was born in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1926. His name was at the time Jackob Weizmann Namordi. According to a legend, his paternal grand grandfather was born in Yazd, Iran. Shortly after his birth, he fell sick and was found dead. But before he was buried, the baby cried out and the startled family shouted: "Namordi"! a Persian word meaning "not dead".

About hundred years ago, some members of the Namordi family emigrated to Baghdad, Iraq. Jackob's father worked as a tailor. Two days after Jackob's circumcision, a dramatic incident entirely changed his life. An Iraqi army officer who ordered a suit stuck his father and took the suit without paying. Jackob's father was shocked and extremely disturbed. He told his wife what had happened, and said it was dangerous for him to remain in Iraq.

The following day the entire family left Iraq via Damascus for Jerusalem. Jackob was then ten days old. They travelled in a covered wheeled carriage drawn by horses, and the journey from Baghdad to Jerusalem took one month.

In Jerusalem, too, Jackob's father worked as a tailor. As an ardent Zionist and very religious, he collected donations and built a synagogue "Ohel Rahel". He became the "Gabbay", the head, of the synagogue.

The father had 10 children, 5 boys and 5 girls. Jackob was the fifth. When Jackob was fourteen, his father died, and his mother (1894) took care of the children. The older ones worked and helped in the upbringing of the younger ones.

Jackob attended an elementary school, where Yitzhak Navon, the ex-President of Israel and presently the Minister of Education and Culture, taught Arabic. Navon discovered in Jackob great tact and skill and an ability to observe. These talents were a treasure to the Intelligence Unit (the Secret Service) of "Haganah" (which was the voluntary Jewish self-defence organization established in Palestine during the British Mandate) and "Palmah" (the striking force of "Haganah"). Navon enlisted Jackob in this service. This event was the second turning

point in Jackob's life, and opened the door for his success.

When Jackob was fifteen, he left school and worked as a storekeeper in Hamashbir Hamerkazi in Jerusalem to enable him to share in his big family's upkeep. But at night he studied for his matriculation. The director of Hamashbir found Jackob diligent, efficient and trustworthy. He entrusted him with the duty to buy cereals from the surrounding Arabs. This work enabled him to obtain the secret information required by the Intelligence Unit of Haganah.

In 1947 Jackob resigned from Hamashbir, and concentrated all his efforts on his secret service duties. After the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, he joined the regular Intelligence Service of Israel Defence Forces. Because of his efficiency and devotion, he was constantly promoted.

In 1960, at Ben Gurion's recommendation, Jackob was appointed Military Attaché in the Israeli Embassy in Teheran. By his extraordinary tact, charm and genius, Jackob established good relations with the Shah and with top Iranian government personalities and high rank army officers. He promoted the Israeli arms exports to Iran. He was the first man to obtain contracts for the supply of military equipment, Uzi sub-machine-guns and desalination units from Israel to Iran before and after the Six-Day War, amounting to hundreds of millions of US Dollars. The yearly average of Israeli exports to Iran amounted to 500 millions of Dollars, of which one fifth was for arms. Israel got oil in return. Both countries benefitted from such deals. Jackob also helped to completely build up and organize the Iranian Military Intelligence. In appreciation of his devotional services in Teheran, Israel promoted him to the rank of Colonel. He was the youngest officer of oriental communities, of Iraqi origin, to rise to such a high military rank at that time.

Jackob served as Military Attaché in Teheran for ten years. In 1970, the Chief of the General Staff proposed to appoint him as Military Commander of Shomron and Yehuda. Jackob was delighted. But later he was told that he will be only Assistant Commander. He refused and asked to be discharged from the army. This event was the third turning point in his life. It was a great blessing, since it gave him the chance to become a millionaire.

Jackob was now back in Teheran, and worked for his own business. He contacted the Iranian high rank army officers, who were his friends, and was able to obtain contracts for the supply of desalination units and arms from Israel to Iran. The Iranian Chief of Staff also gave him the first order for arms from Germany. Jackob charged low commissions on big transactions and distributed part of his profits as gifts. By this ingenious way, he was able to obtain orders for all kinds of arms and military equipment for Iran, amounting to billions of Dollars. Jackob also established friendly relations with Adnan Khashoggi, the Saudi multimillionaire who was an important figure in the arms business.

Within few years, Jackob became a millionaire. By sheer luck, he was outside of Iran during the Shah's downfall in 1979. The Shah administration still owes him one million Dollars for desalination plants installed by him in Kish Island.

After the revolution in Iran, Jackob opened his own office in London. The name of his office was and still is "I.D.E. Ltd.", meaning I do everything.

In the meantime, Jackob purchased a vast and magnificent palace in Savyon, Israel. The palace is located at the end of five-dunams gardens filled with exotic plants. It has a large swimming-pool and a tennis-court. At the entrance of the palace there are white pillars similar to those of the White House in Washington, U.S.A. For this reason, the palace is called "The White House". He also bought several large and magnificent villas in Savyon, a large apartment in Jerusalem, a large apartment in London, and a large apartment in New York.

After his return to Israel, Jackob planned several gigantic projects in the Middle East,

in partnership with his friend Adnan Khashoggi and other famous rich enterprisers. But all these schemes were never materialized.

In 1954, Jackob married Rivka Mizrahi (1931) who was born in Hebron of Sephardi origin. She is semi-religious. Jackob has four children, one boy and three girls, three of them are married. His youngest daughter is now serving in the army.

Jackob held an extraordinary luxurious reception for the wedding of his son, Ofer. The huge reception was estimated to cost about 200,000 Dollars. The splendid banquet included delicious food and rich bar. The swimming-pool was decorated with beautiful flowers. An orchestra played cheerful music. Numerous fire-works and balloons were shot to the sky. Many Security Officers protected the 2,500 guests. The most distinguished among them were the Prime Minister of Israel Shimon Peres, the Ministers Yitzhak Navon and Ariel Sharon, high rank army officers, top public personalities, and newspapermen.

In 1985 Jackob played the central role in the Irangate affair of the secret arms deals between Washington and Teheran. It all began with Adnan Khashoggi who proposed to Jackob to open the door to Israel to sell American arms to Iran together. Khashoggi's proposal sounded fantastic. But Jackob liked the idea at once.

As a consequence, Jackob called his friends Al Schwimmer, an American-born Israeli founder of Israel Aircraft Industries, and David Kimche, the former Deputy Head of Mossad, Israel's Intelligence Service, and former Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, to participate in such scheme. They together got into touch with the then Prime Minister Shimon Peres on this affair. Peres after having obtained Washington's permission approved the scheme.

After hard work, Jackob with his colleagues succeeded in dispatching some American arms shipments to Iran. Jackob thus played the role of establishing conneciton between Washington and Teheran.

In 1986 the Israeli Government took over the scheme, and Jackob who initiated it left this affair.

At the beginning of 1987, the arms deals with Iran leaked out. They caused indignant reactions by the American Senate, Congress, press and broadcasts, by Iraq, by the Israeli press and broadcasts, and by other countries. The Irangate affair ended up in unfavourable consequences.

By the end of 1987 Jackob bought the controlling share of the Israel Land Development Company Ltd., "Hachsharat Hayishuv". This Israeli company is about 80 years old. The company has interests in land, hotels, factories, etc.

Jackob is charming and lovable. He works hard until late at night. He loves life and mankind. He loves to enjoy himself and enjoy others. He loves his family and takes great care for the education of his children and their well-being. Although Jackob is a millionaire, he is still humble, semi-religious and conscientious.

* * *

Many other Jews of Iraqi descent were also successful extensively in the sphere of various activities in Israel. Among the important ones were the following:

Politicians

Shlomo Hillel, Moshe Nissim, Mordechai Ben-Porat, Moshe Shahal, and Shoshana Arbeli Almozlino became Ministers.

Shlomo Binyamin Sassoon, David Petel, Mordechai Bibi, Nuzhat Katsab, Shalom Cohen, Eli Ovadia — members of the Knesset.

Military Officers

Moshe Levi — Chief of the General Staff; His brothers Yehuda Levi, Baruch Levi — high rank army officers.

Judges

Abraham Halima — Justice of the Supreme Court in Jerusalem.

Senior Government Officials

Zvi Bar, Uri Amit — Mayors of Ramat-Gan; Israel Shahrabani — Deputy Director Education Division, city of Ramat-Gan; Reuven Paz — acting Mayor Or Yehuda.

Religious Leaders

Rabbi Yitzhak Nissim, Rabbi Yosef Ovadia, Rabbi Mordechai Ben-Eliahu — Rishon Le Zion — the Chief Rabbis of the Sephardi Communities in Israel.

Bankers

Oved Ben-Ozair under the name of C.F.C. Comprehensive Financial Corporation Ltd.; Shaul Shahrabani — prominent bankers.

Nissim Shahrabani — founded Credit Bank in 1962, changed Bank into "Shalom" Trading and Investment Co. Ltd. in 1967, elected member of the Ramat-Gan City Council in 1983.

Financiers

David Balass and his brothers Joseph and Sami under the name of Balass Bros. Co. Ltd.; David Aboody, his brother Haim Aboody — distinguished financiers.

Business Men

Abraham Matzliah (1892-1966) — Successful business man, founder, chairman and member of several philanthropic societies for the welfare and education of the Jews of Iraq, donated and collected charities for the needy Jews.

Doctors

Dr. Noury Murad — Chairman of Israel Medical Association Ramat-Gan and Surroundings Branch, Dr. of Kupat Holim of the National Labour Federation in Israel, Dr. of the Egyptian Embassy in Israel, member of the Ramat-Gan City Council.

Lawyers

Dr. Albert Eliahou, Kamal Shina — prominent advocates.

Artists

Faraj Peri — Owner of a most modern photo studio six-floor-house with a splendid gallery. Awarded first class medal for his artistic photo exhibition by the Fine Arts of Photography in West Germany.

6. The Second Israeli-Arab War

In 1949 the Arab countries signed an armistice of non-aggression against Israel. But despite their signatures, they started to menace and attack again Israel's right to existence and sovereignty. Their hostile deeds were endless: Economic boycott, the blockade of navigation in the international maritime routes of the Suez Canal and the Strait of Tiran, the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba, and numerous acts of terrorism and sabotages which caused thousands of deaths and wounded.

A massive rearmament of the Egyptian army by Russia considerably reinforced the operation bases of the Egyptian army and the saboteurs in the Peninsula of Sinai and in the Gaza Strip, which provoked multiple threats of assassinations and sabotages in the interior of the Israeli territory. A united Arab command was officially constituted.[1]

In order to eliminate this menace, the Israel Defence Forces penetrated in the Sinai Peninsula in October 1956, destroyed the operation bases of the saboteurs, and caused the Egyptian forces to retreat to the east of the Suez Canal. The blockade of the Strait of Tiran was removed, and a period of relative tranquility was restored.[2]

The Israel Defence Forces evacuated the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip under an assurance by the United Nations that no armed incursions into the Israeli territory would be renewed, and that the Egyptians should not attempt to hinder the free Israeli navigation in the international maritime routes of the Suez Canal and the Strait of Tiran.[3]

After this military campaign, the Iraqi Government took the following discriminatory measures against the Jews in Iraq:

1. Passports were not issued to Jews again.

2. The remaining Jewish officials were discharged from the Government.

The Jews in Baghdad remained freely working in commerce, finance and banking similar to the other Iraqi citizens without any discrimination.

As passports were not issued to Jews again, many Jewish families escaped from time to time via Basra across the Shatt Al Arab river to Iran. From there they sought refuge in England, United States, Canada and other countries.

The Kingdom ended after the proclamation of the Republic.

1 Faits p. 21.
2 Faits p. 21.
3 Faits p. 21.

7. President Abd Al-Karim Qassem

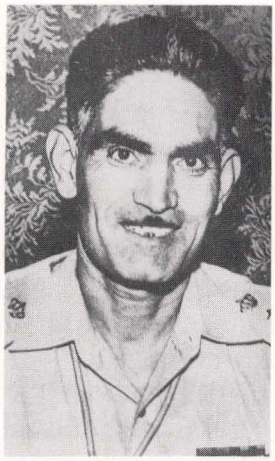
In the morning on July 14, 1958 the citizens of Baghdad were frightfully awakened by unprecedented roar of guns shaking the city. Shortly before seven o'clock a.m.[1] an army officer was excitedly heralding over the radio that a revolution by the army had been successfully carried out overthrowing the corrupted regime of the Kingdom and proclaiming a Republic.

The announcer was then calling the public to go out to see the assassinated body of the Crown Prince, the ex-Regent Abd Al-Ilah. Within a short time, the streets were crowded with huge demonstrators. Abd Al-Ilah's body was heavily mutilated and dragged by ropes by the rejoicing populace through the main streets of Baghdad.

All high rank army officers and top Government personalities of the annihilated monarchy were arrested one by one from their homes.

From eight o'clock a.m. Baghdad radio started to broadcast from time to time proclamations and decrees announcing the nomination of a council of Sovereignty, the appointments of Brigadier Abd Al-Karim Qassem (1914-63) as Commander-In-Chief of the armed forces, Prime Minister and acting Minister of Defence, Colonel Abd Al-Salam Aref as Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Deputy Prime Minister and acting Minister of Interior, and Brigadier Ahmad Saleh Al-Abdi as Chief of the General Staff, and other top appointments.[2]

The Council of Sovereignty was composed of the three main Iraqi Arab communities, the Sunnis, the Shi'is, and the Kurds. They were successively: President Lieutenant-General Najib Al-Rubay'i, and the members Mohammed Mahdi Kubba, Chairman of the Istiqlal Party, and Khalid Al-Nakshbandi, a former provincial Governor.[3]



Qassem in 1958

Qassem, by now the declared leader of the revolution, was stationed outside the capital. Later in the morning, he entered Baghdad and took up his head-quarters at the Ministry of Defence.[4] In the afternoon, he proclaimed martial law throughout Iraq, and nominated Brigadier Ahmad Saleh Al-Abdi as Military Governor General in addition to his appointment.[5]

* * *

1 Iraqi time.
2 Qassem p. 40.
3 Qassem p. 40 and 43.
4 Qassem p. 32.
5 Qassem p. 38.

During the earliest hours of the morning on July 14 when almost everybody was asleep, Colonel Abd Al-Salam Aref personally commanded the military operation for the annihilation of the monarchic regime in Baghdad. After occupying the key positions in the Russafa, he crossed Faysal Bridge, the former Maude Bridge, afterwards renamed Jisr Al-Ahrar (Bridge of the Free), in the center of the city, and advanced to the Karkh. First of all, he occupied the Broadcasting Station, at a short distance south of the bridge, and remained there waiting for the time to announce the revolution. He entrusted his forces to occupy the key positions in the Karkh.

As the father of King Faysal II, King Ghazi I, died from car accident, and as his mother, Alya, the sister of his maternal uncle Abd Al-Ilah, died from cancer in Qasr Al-Zuhur, the residential palace inherited from his grandfather King Faysal I situated in the western outskirts of the Karkh, the royal family, afraid lest a misfortune would befall the orphaned young King in that ill-omened Qasr, decided that Faysal II should be brought up in Qasr Al-Rihab, the residential palace of Abd Al-Ilah beyond Qasr Al-Zuhur.[6]

Abd Al-Salam's forces besieged and attacked Qasr Al-Rihab. The palace guards returned the fire. Abd Al-Ilah viewed that resistance would mean certain death and their only hope was to surrender and win the goodwill of the rebels. He despatched the commander of the Royal Guards outside to order the palace guards cease fire. The insurgents entered the palace grounds and sent an emissary upstairs to call the Royal party down. They all descended: the King, the Crown Prince, the Princesses, and several servants.[7]

Abd Al-Ilah's wife, Princess Hiyam (the daughter of Sheikh Mohammed Amir Rabi'a chief of Al Kut and Hay towns) returned upstairs at the last moment.[8]

When the Royal party arrived in the courtyard they were told to turn towards the palace wall, and were mowed down by an officer with a submachine gun.[9]

At the same time, Abd Al-Salam's forces assaulted Prime Minister Nuri Al-Sa'id's residence on the river-bank in the southern outskirts of the Karkh. Nuri, whose wife was in London, was alone. Awakened by heavy shooting, he escaped by back-door, crossed the river by boat and disappeared. He concealed himself in the house of Astrabadi, an upper class Moslem family in Kadhimain town about 50 kilometres of the center of the Karkh.

The Governor General issued a warning that anyone who concealed Nuri Al-Sa'id in his house was to be severely punished. After having kept himself in that hiding-place for few days, Nuri was compelled to change the house. He wore woman's clothes and veiled his body in "Woman's Abba" and his face with "Poushi" and took two revolvers with him. When having arrived in Battaween, he was accidentally discovered by some people who informed the revolutionary soldiers about him. The soldiers immediately ran after him and opened fire. Nuri returned the fire, but later, he was succumbed and was fatally shot. His body was then dragged by ropes by the rejoicing populace in the streets.

Nuri's only son, Sabah, the Director General of Railways, had already been murdered in the southern outskirts of the Karkh.

In order to put obstacles in the way of the revolution, about ten days after the coup,

6 As confirmed by Elkabir.
7 Qassem p. 30.
8 Qassem p. 30.
9 Qassem p. 31.

reactionaries committed arson in Baghdad. They burned the petrol tanks in the southern outskirts of the Russafa beyond the South Gate and created chaos and confusion in the capital.

The Jews were as customary falsely charged by anti-Semitic elements with having committed the arson. In the next day, the Military Governor General issued a notification that the fire was accidental, and that no one of the general public had been responsible for its cause.

After few days, those elements thirsting for revenge on the Iraqi Jews destroyed a magnificent Jewish property in the city. Laura Kadoorie School for Girls under the trusteeship of the Jewish Community, occupied by Palestinian refugees, was set on fire.

The Military Governor General then called the Chairmen of all federations and associations of each group of the public. He instructed them that their members must hold demonstrations in Baghdad for several weeks in support of the new leader.

For about three months, huge demonstrators bearing placards written in Arabic slogans marched on the main streets the whole day shouting: "Long live Abd Al-Karim Qassem" and repeating the same words the whole day.

The Jews in Baghdad frightened by the revolution remained in their homes. They were afraid to go to their work lest they would be harmed by the mobs, and waited for Qassem's policy.

After one month, they started to go to work for about one hour a day without doing any business, as there was none. After further two months, the situation began to return to normal, and the Jews went as usual to their work and commenced doing businesses.

In the meantime, the Chief Rabbi, Sassoon Khedhouri, went to the Ministry of Defence and congratulated Qassem as the President of the Republic.



Right to left: Chief Rabbi congratulating Qassem

In order to efface all traces of the annihilated era of the Kingdom and the British Occupation, the revolutionaries destroyed: The magnificent statue of King Faysal I, the founder of the Kingdom, just near the former King Faysal Bridge. The statue of the British General Maude, who occupied Baghdad during the First World War, in front of the former British Embassy building in the north of the Karkh. All photographs, busts and statues of the monarchy in the capital and in every city, town and village.

Qassem abolished the monarchic constitution and replaced it by an Interim Constitution of the Republic. He abolished both Houses of Parliament and the Senate, and transformed the Republic into dictatorship.

The first step taken by Qassem was the creation of a Special Supreme Military Court named the "People's Court" to try high rank army officers and top Government personalities of the annihilated Kingdom and other elements suspected of being hostile to or plotting against the Revolutionary Republic.

Qassem entrusted the presidency of the court to his cousin Colonel Fadil Abbas Al-Mahdawi with Lieutenant-Colonel Majid Mohammed Amin as Military Prosecutor. The court was established in the former Chamber of Deputies near the Ministry of Defence at a short distance below the North Gate. It was officially opened on August 16, 1958, and most of the trials were publicly shown over the televsion.

The court was usually full of spectators. During the proceedings of the trials, the spectators continuously applauded fervently, chanted slogans vehemently, discoursed enthusiastic colloquial rhymed proses, and recited inspiring poems in praise of the new revolution and its heroic leader.

In order to commemorate the Republic, Qassem spent many millions of Iraqi Dinars on commemorative schemes in the Russafa.

He erected a huge arch of the unknown soldier in Alwiya Square, where wreaths were ceremoniously being laid inside the arch on special occasions, ceremonies and feasts.

He built two colossal pillars in front of the garden near the South Gate, bearing a huge bronze signboard, made in Italy, about 25 metres in length by 10 metres in width, depicting the revolutionary reforms.

He fixed huge signboards, the size of each about 25 metres by 25 metres, in many public squares, depicting the freedom reforms.

He constructed two large highly elevated daises with overhead covers, one in Tahrir, Liberation, Square near the South Gate, and another one just inside the left side of the gate of the vast grounds of the Ministry of Defence.

He demolished hundreds of houses and transformed them into a vast square in front of the dais at the gate of the Ministry of Defence. The square accommodated a million citizens who came to hear Qassem's addresses, and from whom he received fervent applause.

He built a small mosque just inside the right side of the gate of the Ministry of Defence, where he said his prayers especially on Fridays.

He held on the fourteenth of July, the anniversary of the Republic, a picturesque ceremony in Tahrir Square, to which he invited delegates from all Arab and friendly countries. The ceremony included the marching past of decorated caravans. They exhibited various fantastic shows and spectacular displays by each federation of the public including the Christian, Jewish and other minorities, to whom he took the salute from the dais in the square.

He also changed the names of all streets and squares in every city, town and village in Iraq. The new ones commemorated the freedom and liberation conferred on the public by the Revolution.

He put photographs, busts and statues of himself in many places.

After the revolution, the business in Baghdad generally remained at very low ebb for six months. Then, Qassem started many constructional projects in the city, and brought prosperity to all.

He had a canal dug along the eastern suburb of the Russafa, extending from the north up to the south of the Tigris river, with many small connecting bridges. He had many towns on both sides of the canal built. He also built many towns in the Karkh.

He distributed free lands to the poor Arab people, who were living in slums in the eastern outskirts of the Russafa, who built Al-Thawra, Revolutionary, town near the canal.

He completed the construction of a most modern suspension-bridge, started by the Kingdom, situated westwards of Masbah in Karrada town, linking the Russafa with the Karkh.

He completed the new building of the sumptuous Parliament, started by the Kingdom, the backside on the river-bank, and the front side on the main street southwards of the Karkh, but remained unoccupied.

He transformed the new building of the magnificent residential and office palace of King Faysal II, completed by the Kingdom, situated southwards of the Karkh on the same street of Parliament, into a Republican Palace.

Qassem gave complete freedom and liberty to the Jews, so that they enjoyed the same equal rights as the other Iraqi citizens without any discrimination. He allowed passports to be issued to Jews again, and Jewish students to be admitted to Government colleges especially the faculties of medicine, pharmacy and engineering. He declared that the former measures were anti-constitutional.

During Qassem's regime, many Jews in Baghdad prospered greatly. Many lived in beautiful villas with beautifully illuminated vast gardens. Some prominent Jewish commission agents and business men were invited in some diplomatic receptions, which Qassem also attended and shook hands with them.

The Jews in Baghdad neither dabbled in politics nor joined political parties. They had their own societies and parties and their own forms of amusement and entertainment.

As the governments of the Kingdom closed down their private social clubs, many wealthy Jewish families subscribed in mixed clubs. Their members were upper class Moslem and Christian families. First, in the newly built most modern Al Mansur Club in Al-Mansur town about 25 kilometres west of the Karkh. Second, in Alwiya Club the former British Club which was taken over by the Iraqi Government in Alwiya. Third, in the newly built Acropolis Club near Masbah.

Some Jewish merchants participated in the foundation of the Merchants Club, and many Jewish merchants were members of the club.

Many wealthy Jewish families in Baghdad held from time to time reciprocal private parties in their villas. They invited some 70 persons of other Jewish families for special banquets. Some thirty varieties of delicious food specially prepared by professional cooks were served. The guests fashionably and gorgeously dressed came in their own cars.

Other Jews held private parties in privately hired motor-boats for special banquets on river trips along the south stream of the Tigris. The boat passed through Zawiya bend. Their river banks were carpeted with greens and flowers and surrounded by dense rows of trees. The sunset cast on them a brilliant enchanting glow, enhancing the beautiful natural scenery all around most fascinatingly.

The guests played music, danced, and ate the delicious "Muzgouf" with great appetite. Their faces were beaming with joy.

In the Tigris live delicious fishes "Shabbout", the average size of each is 60/70 cms. long by 12/15 cms. wide. They are grilled in a special way by a Moslem specialist. Such a man was brought along on the boat specially for the purpose. When the boat was moored alongside a selected beautiful bank, the

specialist slaughtered the fishes, which were still alive. He cut them lengthwise from the spinal cord sides, so that the abdominal fronts of the fishes became flat. He washed them thoroughly, and slightly salted them. He then fixed wooden poles into the ground, on which he suspended the backs of the flat fishes horizontally in a circle. The specialist then made wood fire in the center of the circle. The flat abdominal fronts of the fishes were facing the blazing fire. They remained in this manner, until the fishes were completely grilled. When the grilling operation is completed, the "Shabbout" fishes are called "Muzgouf".

The scene of grilling the fishes amidst the surrounding greens, flowers and trees, shining by the glare of the blazing fire, was very picturesque to the guests watching from the boat with a craving appetite.

During Qassem's regime, many rich Jews in Baghdad lived a life of luxury. They imagined that Iraq was the Earthly Paradise forever.

They remained fully engaged in reciprocal luxurious invitations and parties, and despite their cleverness, they never thought of their destiny, and what frightful happenings the future held in store for them. They reaped a bitter harvest of misery.

* * *

Mode of Jewish Life in Baghdad During Qassem



Jewish Entertainment
Naji Sa'ati, hanged on October 7, 1969, enjoying with his brother's niece an evening gourmet delicacies at the luxurious Baghdad Hotel on the Russafa river-bank

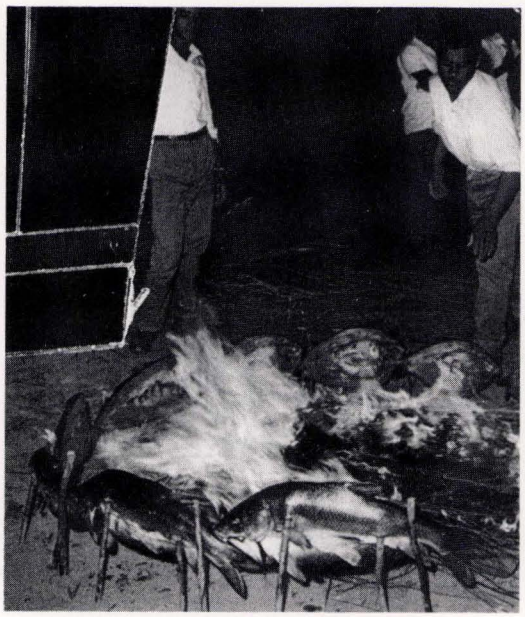


Jewish Party
Extreme right: Albert Noonou, hanged on January 22, 1970, enjoying a delightful party with some high class families

River Trips



A view of the Karkh river-bank of Baghdad with boats moored beside it in the south stream of the Tigris



The fantastic grilling operation of the "Shabbout" fishes, the "Muzgouf"

Scenes of Iraq During Qassem



The 14th July most modern rest-house and restaurant west of the Karkh of Baghdad



The fascinating terrace, with visitors, of the rest-house and restaurant at the north end of the canal built by Qassem along the east suburb of the Russafa of Baghdad, surrounded by palm-trees and overlooking the Tigris

Qassem was adverse to the policy of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the President of the United Arab Republic, who dreamt of the unity of Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. While Abd Al-Salam Aref was supporter of Nasser's policy. Thus a conflict ensued between them.

On September 12, 1958 Abd Al-Salam was relieved of his post as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.[10] On the evening of September 30 Baghdad radio announced that Abd Al-Salam was relieved of his Cabinet functions and was appointed Ambassador in Bonn, the capital of the Federal Republic of West Germany. Abd Al-Salam refused the new appointment.

On October 11 while Qassem, Abd Al-Salam and a senior army officer were alone in Qassem's office, Abd Al-Salam suddenly reached for his revolver. Qassem succeeded in wrestling the revolver from him with the officer's assistance.[11]

As a consequence, Qassem insisted that Abd Al-Salam had to go abroad. The following morning, Abd Al-Salam departed by air to Europe. He made a tour in some European countries and did not go to Bonn.

On the night of November 4 Baghdad radio broadcast that Abd Al-Salam had returned to Baghdad without permission and was arrested. He was tried by the People's Court and sentenced to death.

Qassem having taken pity on his former collaborator did not execute him, but imprisoned him at Al-Rashid military camp in the southern outskirts of the Russafa.

On November 25, 1961 Qassem released Abd Al-Salam, embraced him, and reinstated him in the army, although not in active service.[12]

* * *

While Abd Al-Salam was in prison, several plots were attempted against Qassem. The most dangerous one was at 6.30 pm. on Wednesday the 7th of October 1959.[13] When Qassem on his way from the Ministry of Defence passed Ras Al-Qarya in the center of the main Rashid street of the Russafa, his car was showered with hand-grenades and automatic fire from submachine-guns. His chauffeur was fatally shot. His Aide-de-camp was seriously wounded. One of the assailants, Abd Al-Wahab Al-Ghariri, was killed, and the other ones escaped through the near by zigzag narrow lanes.

Qassem was hit in the left shoulder and sustained serious injury. He was rushed by a taxi driver to Dar Al-Salam Hospital, where he remained about two months under treatment.

In order to commemorate the incident of the attempt on his life, Qassem demolished hundreds of houses in Ras Al-Qarya where the incident occurred. The bullet-holed car, in which he had been motoring during the attempt on his life, was to be placed in the center of a vast square. He was assassinated before completion of his planned project.

In order that Qassem could safeguard his life, he built a special reinforced concrete shelter inside the Ministry of Defence, where he worked and slept most of the nights. He brought his best devoted brigade with complete armament and garrisoned them in the grounds inside the gate of the Ministry of Defence to guard him. When motoring, he was escorted by military cars full of armed forces.

Despite the strictest precautionary measures taken by Qassem (1914) for his safety, he remained alive only four and a half

10 Qassem p. 80.
11 Qassem p. 83.
12 Qassem p. 331.
13 Qassem p. 255.

years and twenty-seven days from the date of his coup. He was assassinated in the afternoon of the 9th of February 1963[14] by Abd Al-Salam Aref who made a successful coup. Qassem's murder saddened the citizens of Baghdad, as they lost the man who gave them full freedom and prosperity.

14 Qassem p. 371/372.

8. President Abd Al-Salam Aref



Abd Al-Salam Aref



Colonel Tahir Yahya

After Abd Al-Salam Aref's release, he started to work out plans to overthrow Qassem and set himself in his place. In the morning of Friday the 8th of February 1963, equivalent to the 14th of the Arabic month of Ramadan, Abd Al-Salam with Colonel Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr who co-operated with him in the plot staged a coup d'état in Baghdad. They occupied the Broadcasting Station, where they took up their temporary head-quarters.[1]

Baghdad radio then triumphantly heralded the carrying out of a successful coup under the leadership of a Revolutionary Command Council, and the collapse of Qassem's black regime.

At night the radio announced the promotions and appointments of Abd Al-Salam Aref (1921-66) as Field-marshal and President of the Republic, retired Colonel Tahir Yahya as Major-General and Chief of the General Staff, and Brigadier Rashid Muslih as Military Governor General.[2]

Qassem was barricaded in his shelter inside the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry buildings were attacked by war-planes under the command of pilot Captain Mundhir Al-Windawi and by tanks and armoured cars. The buildings suffered heavy damages. At night the troops inside surrendered.[3]

In the morning of Saturday the 9th of February, Qassem and his companions including Fadil Abbas Al-Mahdawi the President of the People's Court were arrested inside the buiding, and were conducted in two armoured cars to the Broadcasting Station.[4]

Qassem appealed to Abd AL-Salam to exile him abroad. But Abd Al-Salam did not take pity on his former collaborator and abused him violently.[5] Qassem and his companions

1 Qassem p. 366.
2 Qassem p. 371.
3 Qassem p. 366 and 371.
4 Qassem p. 371.
5 Qassem p. 371/372.

were then led away to be court-martialled. After questioning them, they were sentenced to death. At 1.30 p.m. they were lined up against a wall and killed by submachine guns.[6] Their massacred bodies were shown on television at night. Although Abd Al-Salam claimed that he did not attend at the court, evidence shows that he had already given order for Qassem's execution.

Abd Al-Salam promoted Colonel Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr to Brigadier and appointed him as his Prime Minister. He occupied the new building of Parliament as offices for some important Government departments. he then captured the other members of the People's Court who condemned him to death and assassinated them one by one and showed their massacred bodies on television at night. The situation in Baghdad returned to normal within few days time.

In order that Abd Al-Salam could safeguard his life, he occupied the Republican Palace as his Presidential Palace. He surrounded it with devoted brigade with complete armament. He transformed his home into a fortress. Before motoring, he scattered some hundred military cars, full of his best devoted troops equipped with machine-guns and wireless apparatuses, all over the streets he was passing through.

With a view to efface all traces of the former regime, Abd Al-Salam destroyed all photographs, busts and statues of Qassem everywhere.

In order to show his supremacy, he contradicted completely what Qassem had done. He tried any elements charged with activities against his regime secretly. In which mosque he would say his prayers, nobody knew beforehand. He cancelled or amended all laws and regulations passed by Qassem.

* * *

Prime Minister Al-Bakr created the national guards, in their ordinary clothes. They were composed of messengers, young unskilled workers and low employees. He supplied them with machine-guns and empowered them to arrest and imprison any citizen suspected of working against his government.

The national guards confiscated many houses in each street in Baghdad, and occupied them as their offices, courts, prisons, and savage torture places. They made their own leaders in different ranks. They were found with their machine-guns in every factory, office, market and place.

Within a short time, the national guards had in each street in Baghdad their own houses which became full of victims. In each room some hundred victims were imprisoned like packed dates. The victims were compelled to sit on their thighs on the ground and sleep in a sitting position. They remained in this manner many months. In summer in Iraq it is terribly hot and suffocating. As the victims had no electric ceiling fans, their clothes were heavily moistened by the strong heat. Their bodies were lousy, and the filthy odour of their dirt filled their own rooms. The victims were unshaven, and all of them became weak, sick, and were reduced to half their original weights.

The courts of the national guards in Baghdad were usually trying their victims at night. The leaders of each court in each house called their victims one by one, and tortured them savagely according to the gravity of the charges against them. After being tortured, the victims were sent back covered with blood to their cells.

Victims gravely charged were sent to "Qasr Al-Nahaya", a secret major torture prison established by the national guards in Baghdad for savage tortures in many cases to death.

6 Qassem p. 371/372.

The leaders of the national guards became so powerful in the country, that they attempted to overthrow President Abd Al-Salam Aref and assume power. On November 13, 1963 their commander pilot Captain Mundhir Al-Windawi attacked Al-Rashid military camp, and attempted to bombard the Presidential Palace. Abd Al-Salam frustrated the coup, and Al-Windawi fled to Syria.[7]

On November 18 Abd Al-Salam formed a new government[8]under the premiership of Tahir Yahya. He also relieved Al-Bakr, the founder of the national guards of his post as Prime Minister, and later, relieved him of the Government service.[9]

Abd Al-Salam's Government confiscated the remainder of the Jewish old cemetery in Baghdad, and transformed it into thousands of shops for the small industries, and the heavy rentals were taken by the Government.[10]

The new Prime Minister Tahir Yahya made the following discriminatory measures against the Jews in Iraq:

1. Passports were not to be issued to Jews again.

2. The Jews were prevented from discounting their promissory notes and from granting them credits in the then nationalized banks.

3. Jewish students were not to be admitted again to government colleges especially the faculties of medicine, pharmacy and engineering.

4. A warning was issued to all Jews of Iraq abroad to return to Iraq within three months' time from date of notification. Otherwise, they were to be denationalized, and all their movable and immovable property in Iraq were to be sequestrated. The warning was in force from a retroactive indefinite period.[11]

5. Jews were not allowed to sell their landed property.

As passports were not issued to Jews again, some Jewish families especially from Baghdad, who had liquidated their businesses, escaped via Basra across the Shatt Al Arab river through the Iranian frontier to Teheran. From there they sought refuge in free foreign countries.

As the Jews were prevented from discounting their promissory notes in the then nationalized banks, they had them discounted by some private rich Jewish money-lenders, on payment of some extra rate of discount.

As Jewish students were not admitted to government colleges, they enrolled themselves in Al-Hikma University mostly in the faculty of engineering. This University was built by an American Mission in the southern suburb of the Russafa, and was directed by American Father Professors.

Some Jews from Iraq abroad who owned considerable landed property in Iraq were compelled to return to save their property. Many other Jews including some members of the wealthy Daniel family did not return, and their landed property and bank accounts

7 Army p. 200.

8 Army p. 200.

9 Army p. 201.

10 As confirmed by Elkabir.

11 As confirmed by Elkabir.

were sequestrated. Khedouri Daniel had a bank account of 180,000 Iraqi Dinars in Baghdad. They were sequestrated.[12]

On July 14,[13] 1964 Prime Minister Yahya nationalized all banks and most of the corporations. The money of the share holders of which were frozen for fifteen years from date of nationalization. By his action, the prices of stocks and shares dropped to half. Many Jews especially from Baghdad owned a large number of stocks and shares.

In the summer of 1964 two more plots were attempted to overthrow Abd Al-Salam. Abd Al-Salam also frustrated the two plots.

In view of the unstable internal and external political conditions, Abd Al-Salam changed his idea of unity with Arab countries in general and with Egypt in particular. He had to concern himself with the interests of his country.[14]

On September 5, 1965 Tahir Yahya resigned, and the next day a new Government under the premiership of Major-General Arif Abd Al-Razzaq was formed.[15]

On September 16 [16] Abd Al-Razzak made a military coup to depose Abd Al-Salam while he was on a visit to Morocco. The coup failed, and Abd Al-Razzaq with his family escaped to Egypt on the same day.[17]

On his return to Baghdad, Abd Al-Salam appointed on September 21 Dr. Abd Al-Rahman Al-Bazzaz, ex-Dean of the Law College, ex-Justice of the Court of Cassation and former Ambassador in London, a righteous man, as his Prime Minister, and Major-General Abd Al-Aziz Al-Uqayli as Minister of Defence. Al-Bazzaz restored stability, tranquility and prosperity in the country.

During Abd Al-Salam's regime, the conditions of the Jews remained, with the exception of the discriminatory measures taken by Yahya, exactly the same as in Qassem's rule. The Jews still enjoyed commercial, social and religious freedom. They still lived especially in Baghdad the same kind of life as during Qassem's time.

Abd Al-Salam Aref (1921) took the most intensive steps for the safety of his life, but he was not able to escape a violent catastrophic death. He remained alive only three years and two months and three days from the date of his coup.

On April 13, 1966[18] during a flight over southern Iraq, Abd Al-Salam's helicopter exploded, and he was burnt to ashes. It was officially reported that his death was accidental, but it was generally believed that his opponents plotted to hide a bomb in his helicopter. He was officially buried in the northern outskirts of the Karkh, where a small mausoleum was built for his mortal remains.

12 As confirmed by Elkabir.
13 As confirmed by Horesh.
14 Army p. 204.
15 Army p. 204.
16 Army p. 205.
17 Army p. 206.
18 Army p. 207.

9. President Abd Al-Rahman Aref

After the death of President Abd Al-Salam Aref, his elder brother the Chief of Staff Major-General Abd Al-Rahman (1916), and Major-General Abd Al-Aziz Al-Uqayli the Minister of Defence in Al-Bazzaz's Cabinet, nominated themselves as candidates for the presidency. On April 16, 1966[1] Abd Al-Rahman Aref was elected as President of the Republic. On April 18[2] he re-appointed Al-Bazzaz as his Prime Minister.

After Abd Al-Rahman's election, the Chief Rabbi the acting President of the Jewish Community Sassoon Khedouri, with the Secretary Naji Chachak, the Vice-President of the Lay Council Meer S. Basri, the Legal Advisor Anwar Shaul, and the Chairman of the Administrative Committee of Iraqi Jews Naim Masri, visited Abd Al-Rahman in the Presidential Palace. They congratulated him on his election as President of the Republic (1966-68), and submitted to him a list of the Jewish demands.[3]



The Chief Rabbi with his *entourage* congratulating President Abd Al-Rahman Aref on his election as President of the Republic.
Right to left: President Abd Al-Rahman Aref, Sassoon Khedhouri, Naji Chachak, and Meer S. Basri

1 Army p. 207.
2 Army p. 207.
3 As confirmed by Elkabir.

Prime Minister Al-Bazzaz, having considered the Jewish demands favourably, allowed the Jews to sell their landed property again.[4] He was about to reissue passports to Jews, but he suddenly became preoccupied with a military coup which had been carried out.

Arif Abd Al-Razzaq, who was afforded asylum in Egypt after his escape following his abortive coup in September 1955, came back to Mosul secretly, and on June 30, 1966[5] he made a second coup. The coup failed again, and he was arrested with his supporters.

On August 6, 1966[6] Al-Bazzaz resigned, and Brigadier Naji Talib was appointed Prime Minister. After the resignation of Talib's Cabinet, Tahir Yahya was re-appointed again Prime Minister a short time before the Six-Day war.

* * *

Abd Al-Rahman Aref followed the same policy as his brother in all respects from the date of his accession until the Six-Day War.

During that period, the conditions of the Jews in Iraq remained exactly the same as in his brother's regime. The Jews still enjoyed commercial, social and religious freedom. They still maintained especially in Baghdad the same kind of life as during Qassem's rule.

During that time, some rich Jews who had liquidated their businesses escaped via Basra across the Shatt Al Arab river to Iran. From there they sought refuge in Canada and other countries.

The first period of Abd Al-Rahman's regime was the calm that preceded the storm.

4 As confirmed by Yamen.
5 Army p. 208.
6 Army p. 209.

10. The Six-Day Third Israeli-Arab War



Gamal Abdel Nasser

After Egypt's defeat by Israel in the Second War, the policy of the Arab countries remained unchanged. They continued heralding war until the destruction of Israel has been completed. The Arab countries were encouraged in their aggressive vision by the total and unconditional support of the Soviet Union and by massive expeditions of war materials to Cairo and Damascus. They forgot their military defeats in their previous wars against Israel. They were pushed by Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-70), President of Egypt (1956-70), into the disastrous Six-Day War on June 5, 1967.[1]

Gamal Abdel Nasser, the champion of the new plan of aggression, declared that the determined aim of a new concentrated attack of Arab countries against Israel: "Our aim is the destruction of the State of Israel". "Egypt, with all its human, economic and scientific resources, is prepared to launch an offensive total war which will destroy Israel".

He demanded from U. Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, that the UN Emergency Forces stationed since the beginning of 1957 in the Gaza strip and at Sharm el Sheikh be withdrawn. Its withdrawal would give massive help in the concentrated attack of the Arab countries. He declared that: "We should have to demand the withdrawal of the UN Emergency Forces as soon as we have made our last preparations. As same have now been completed, the war will be general, and our aim always remains the destruction of Israel".[2]

On May 23, 1967 the Egyptian Government committed a flagrant act of war, the closure of the Strait of Tiran to all Israeli navigation. Gamal Abdel Nasser proclaimed on this occasion his belief in the "imminent destruction of Israel".[3]

One month before the war, all Egyptian magazines displayed illustrations of the massive air, sea and land armaments, and the gigantic rockets of Egypt, in order to convince the Arab countries of the supremacy of the Egyptian war preparations for the destruction of Israel. All official organs of Arab propaganda supported and encouraged the necessity of immediate destruction of Israel.

1 Faits p. 22.
2 Faits p. 22.
3 Faits p. 22.



Nur Al-Din Atasi

Gamal Abdel Nasser concentrated his fully armed forces in the peninsula of Sinai adjoining the Israeli frontiers. At the same time, Syria also made full war preparations for the new attack, and also concentrated its armed forces along its frontiers with Israel. Nur Al-Din Atasi, president of Syria (1966-70), said to his armed forces: "Within some three days' time, we shall throw the Jews into the sea".

Jordan also made full war preparations for the same purpose, and also concentrated its armed forces along its frontiers with Israel. Iraq also sent its armed forces to join in the latest attack against Israel. Abd Al-Rahman Aref, the President of the Republic, addressed his forces going to the front: "We shall meet you in Tel-Aviv within a few days' time".

Um Kalthum (1898-1975), Kawkab Al-Sharq, the Star of the East, the best Egyptian singer, sang in her admirable voice: Slaughter! Slaughter! She said she would sing within a few days' time in Tel Aviv.

In the afternoon, five days before the war broke out, some Jews held in Baghdad one of their usual biweekly private parties in a privately hired motor-boat, for a special banquet on a river trip along the south stream of the Tigris. The sunshine as always cast a brilliant gorgeous glow upon the greens, flowers and trees on both banks enchantingly enhancing the beauty of the natural scenery all around.

The guests amused themselves, played music, and ate the "Muzgouf", the delicious grilled "Shabbout" fishes more whole-heartedly than ever.

When they turned on the Baghdad radio, they were horrified by the news they heard. The radio heralded that the flames of war were about to burst. The concentrated forces of the Arab countries were about to invade and destroy Israel, their enemy. The guests foresaw that they were definitely at the threshold of an unavoidable, imminent disastrous war.

The boat returned at midnight amidst the fascinating charming scenery all around. The surface of the water of the Tigris was gleaming by the moonshine and the luminous stars like a brilliant undulating silver shield. The shadows of trees on both banks were enchantingly reflected in the water. The leaves of trees were harmonically rustling by the fine breeze, and the stalks of the sweet-scented violet were charmingly rocking to and fro. The fragrance of the flowers was a sheer delight heavily moving the deepest sentiments.

The panorama was so fantastic and thrilling that it made the guests forget the dreadful and disastrous calamities and miseries of war. That river trip was the last private party held by the Jews in Baghdad.

* * *



Levi Eshkol



Moshe Dayan



Menachem Begin



General Yitzhak Rabin

Few days before the war broke out, the Jews in Baghdad heard over the Israeli broadcast that Levi Eshkol (1895-1969), the Prime Minister of Israel, had reshuffled his Cabinet, and introduced two important elements. Moshe Dayan (1915-81), the Chief of Staff in the Second War, became Minister of Defence, and Menachem Begin (1913), the Last Commander of the Irgun Zvai Leumi (1943-48) during the British mandate,[4] and later opposition leader in the Knesset and Prime Minister, Minister without portfolio. General Yitzhak Rabin (1922), later Prime Minister and minister of Defence, became Chief of Staff.

On hearing the Israeli radio report, the Jews were definitely convinced that an unavoidable war was about to break out between the Arab countries and Israel.

In the morning on June 5, 1967 the Jews in Baghdad went as usual to work. At about nine o'clock a.m., they saw that the radios in the shops of the main Rashid street were turned up very loudly, and that the shops were surrounded by large crowds of the populace, who were listening to the news attentively with fervent interest.

The radios were triumphantly announcing that the war between the Arab countries and Israel, their enemy, broke out. They heralded the massive victories already achieved by the Arab countries.

On hearing the news, the Jews became very sad, and returned to their homes quietly in silent grief, as they were afraid lest they would be persecuted.

* * *



General Yariv

Israel, the small new State encircled and threatened by the massive fully armed forces of the Arab countries from all its frontiers ready for a concentrated attack, acting within the principles of the cadre of right of legitimate defence expressly recognized by the Charter of the United Nations signed on June 26, 1945, confronted the Arab aggressors. Its armed forces by fierce battles achieved decisive results.

Israel had, on the first day of the war, destroyed the forces and about four hundreds war-planes of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Iraq.[5] Within less than one week, all land and air military power of the Arab countries remained as a souvenir, and one of the most remarkable victories of the military history of all times had been achieved.[6] The invaders were 70,000,000 Arabs against 2,200,000 Jews.[7]

4 Jabotinsky Institute, Tel Aviv.
5 Faits p. 23.
6 Faits p. 23.
7 Murailles 86.

The Israel Defence Forces won such a striking remarkable victory of the war by their most efficient strategies. It was the Israeli Intelligence Services under General Yariv which decided the time of the surprise attack on the Egyptian bases by the Israeli air-force. The attack was on the morning of Monday the 5th of June 1967 at 7.45 a.m. equivalent to 8.45 a.m. Egyptian time.[8]

The question of which side was the aggressor was submitted to the Security Council for decision. All evidence proved that Egypt committed flagrant acts of war. The Arab countries by encircling and threatening to attack Israel with their concentrated massive fully armed forces were the actual aggressors.

Some countries of the Security Council showed signs of supporting Israel. Prime Minister Tahir Yahya threatened over the radio and in the press to boycott any country in the Security Council voting in favour of Israel. Consequently, the Security Council voted against Israel, and adopted resolution No. 242 on November 22, 1967 recommending that Israel withdraw from areas occupied after the war.

The plight of the Jews in Iraq after the war was very perilous. The Jews were persecuted on religious discriminatory grounds.

8 Murailles 82.

11. Persecutions

After the defeat of the Arab countries in the Six-Day War, Prime Minister Tahir Yahya suddenly changed his policy against the Jewish minority. He started to take venomous revenge on the Iraqi Jews. He now considered them enemies, traitors and spies.

He enacted law No. 64 of 1967[1] imposing severest restrictions on the Jews. This law was an auxiliary to law No. 12 of 1951 for the control and administration of the sequestrated property of the denationalized Jews.[2] Consequently, the Security Police Department started to persecute the Jews severely.

These measures were in contradiction to the provisions of article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that all are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.

The Jews in Iraq were completely isolated and had absolutely no relations whatsoever with Zionism, Israel, western or eastern camps, or any doctrine or political party.

In the present civilization, all human beings enjoy freedom of creed and religion. Human beings differ from one another only by their nationality. Almost all the peoples of Europe are Christians, but each country has its own nationality irrespective of the common creed and religious beliefs between them. The Germans are of a different nationality than the English, and so on. The Iraqi Jews and the Israelians are Judaists, but each have their own nationality irrespective of the common creed and religion between them.

In order to prove the authenticity of these facts, almost all wealthy Jews who suffered persecutions following the war and who left Iraq either by escape or with passports sought refuge in England, Holland, Switzerland, Canada, USA, and in other countries where they found security and peace.

Only those Iraqi Jews, who also left Iraq by similar means, who lost their money as a result of the war sought refuge in Israel. They were supported by Jews who had emigrated from Iraq at an earlier date.

During the first period of the Kingdom, the Jews having enjoyed full lawful rights have proved themselves loyal citizens. Many Jews held high posts in the government and done honest valuable services to their homeland in Iraq.

In the United States, England, France and in other countries, the Jews who enjoy full constitutional rights have proved themselves loyal citizens. Many of them hold high functions in the government and in all other fields of life, and have rendered sincere valuable services to their homeland countries.

In the USA American Jews are Senators. In England there are English Jewish Lords in the House of Lords, and in France French Jewish Barons in the Senate.

The Rothschild family in England and France who rendered sincere valuable services to their homeland countries is an example of the devotional and loyal citizenship of the Jews.

In Israel non-Jewish Israelis who enjoy civil and religious freedom have proved themselves loyal citizens. Many of them hold high

1 Conference p. 18.
2 Juifs p. 9/10.

posts in the government, to which they have done devotional valuable services.

The above facts prove that Yahya was absolutely unjustified in revenging for Iraq's defeat in the war on innocent Iraqi Jews, simply because they were Jews.

The Government radio and television, the newspapers under the control of the Government and the religious preachers in Mosques started to conduct malicious and hostile campaigns against the Jews in Iraq. They described them as cancer and harmful microbes which must be destroyed. They called on the public to watch the Jews and give secret information to the Security Police Department on any Jews suspected of being spies working for the interests of Israel.

Television showed from time to time specially prepared fantastic comedies. The actors had traditionally Jewish names, Heskel, Shaul, Moshe, Ezra, Zion, Shalom, who behaved in a disgracefully humiliating manner, and proved to be horrible betrayers. The public was strongly warned to be careful of their betrayal. Little by little, this exerted an effect on public opinion.

This condition was in contradiction to the provisions of article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

The Iraqi Jews numbered 3,000.[3] A tight clamp was imposed on them. They were under strict surveillance. As the Jews were mainly concentrated in the capital, the Security Police Department recruited in Baghdad some 3,000 secret police in civilian clothes. They ordered them to keep watch day and night on the Jews, in their homes, offices, shops, stores, clinics, pharmacies, markets and everywhere, to terrorize them and arrest some of them for detention.

Near each Jewish house, some 4 secret Security police were kept from morning till late at night watching. Jewish cars were also carefully watched. When a baker brought a basket of bread to a house of a Jew, the police searched the whole basket lest anything was hidden inside. When a laundryman brought a batch of clothes to a house of a Jew, the police searched the whole batch piece by piece lest anything forbidden had been hidden in it. In short, nothing could be brought to or taken out of a house of a Jew without being minutely searched by the police.

In Baghdad Moslem private chauffeurs and gardeners and non-Jewish maidservants were ordered by the police not to work for the Jews. Many Moslem chauffeurs and gardeners who were previously faithful to their Jewish masters demanded by threats payment of compensations and leave their jobs. The Jews gave them generous compensations and discharged them, and kept their cars in their garages. The Jews also discharged their non-Jewish maidservants and compensated them abundantly. Some Jews who could not walk engaged Moslem taxi drivers for going to the near by market for buying food. The police warned the taxi drivers not to come any more to take Jews to the market, under the risk of penalty and imprisonment.

The public was unofficially warned not to speak to Jews, who were under taboo, not to co-operate with them, not to allow them enter their houses, offices and shops. All Moslems who had Jewish friends were afraid to speak to them in the streets, lest they would be seen by the secret police and imprisoned.

The Jews became most hateful and detestable like harmful microbes, whom everybody must discard lest he would be contaminated.

Herein is a picture of the frightful terroristic activities of the secret Security police against

3 Elkabir's estimate.

the innocent Jews in Baghdad. Usually at midnight, they rang at the doors of some unfortunate Jews, and frightened them outrageously. They insulted them grossly and beat them terribly. They searched their houses harshly, including cupboards, clothes, bedding, scattered things roughly, and tore the pillows lest anything was hidden inside. They took their money, liquor, musical records, and arrested the unfortunate husbands or sons.

The destinees of Jewish victims arrested without charges exclusively on religious discrimination were detention with humiliation, gross insults, cruel beating, scanty food, and only the ground to sleep on. But the destinees of the Jews arrested on false charges of spying or supplying arms or money to Israel were tortures in many cases to death.

The Jews were in extreme fear lest their houses would be entered at midnight. In case somebody rang in error the bell of their houses' doors, the whole family trembled with fear. The mere sight of the secret Security police watching their houses was enough to frighten the Jews. The head-quarters of the Security Police was the most frightful place to the Iraqi Jews.

The Jews in Baghdad lived in a dreadful and outrageous reign of terror. They remained in their homes with closed doors. Their gardens which had been picturesquely illuminated at night became dark. Their houses which had previously been full of joy and amusement at night became silent and gloomy, like places of the dead, intensifying their fear and horror. At night the members of each family went to a weakly illuminated back room, ate their meals silently, and went to sleep full of fear.

The Jews in Baghdad were further terrorized by cutting off all telephone communications from their houses, offices, shops, stores, clinics, pharmacies, at one time.

A terrifying rumour was circulated that water and electricity were also to be cut off from Jewish houses. Yahya afraid lest an indignant uproar was to be raised by the world conscience against this inhuman terrorism did not proceed with this plan.

In Baghdad the Jews were unofficially terrorized by having their movements restricted to areas of their residential quarter and the near by markets. No Jew was allowed to move to farther areas or go to another city, town or village.

Jews who were compelled to go to farther areas especially to visit their prisoners in distant jails, must go to the Security Police Department to obtain permit valid for one visit only, and bring with them two photos for each person, one to be affixed on the permit and the other one to be kept in the Department. This procedure was followed for each visit. The Jews were thus deprived of freedom of movement.

The Jews were also unofficially terrorized that they were not allowed to change their dwelling-places.

Jews were not issued passports. The escape route via Basra across the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian frontier was definitely inaccessible. The stiffest measures were taken by the Iraqi authorities to strictly prevent any attempt by Jews to escape under the risk of death. The Jews were thus living in complete isolation, in other words, in a prison in Iraq.

The Jews were falsely charged with possessing wireless sets, by which they were immediately transmitting secret information on Iraq to Israel.

Once, a Jew in Baghdad was typing in his room in his house. He closed the windows of his room lest the sound of the typewriter be heard by his Moslem neighbours. He also closed the door of his room inside lest his small children disturb him in his work.

His Moslem neighbours hearing the weak rhythmic sound of the typewriter assumed that it was a wireless set. They immediately

informed the Security Police Department that their Jewish neighbour had a wireless set in his room.

Within a very short time, cars full of Security police with machine-guns immediately encircled the Jewish house. Some of them broke into the house brusquely, and went directly to the room from which the weak rhythmic sound of the typewriter was heard. They tapped at the door of the room. The Jew assuming it was one of his small children was tapping did not open the door.

The Security police broke into the room harshly. They were in the belief to catching the long-sought for dangerous Jewish spy immediately transmitting with his wireless set secret information on Iraq to Israel. When they entered, the Jew was frightfully surprised to see his room filled with armed Security police who beat him cruelly because he did not open the door. The police took the typewriter, the typed papers, and the beaten and frightened Jew to the Security Police Department for investigation.

Many other Jews falsely charged with possessing wireless sets were terrorized in their homes. They were cruelly beaten by the Security police, and taken to the Security Police Department for investigation.

The Jews in Baghdad were terrorized on seeing their houses from Battaween up to Masbah marked. A disquieting rumour was circulated that all Jews were to be massacred in their homes, as Jews had been massacred in the pogrom in June 1941, when Jewish homes had been marked.

Prime Minister Yahya afraid of world protests discontinued the marking of Jewish homes, and the plan to annihilate all the Jews in Iraq was dropped. He decided instead to make the Jews die from isolation and starvation, by freezing their landed property, stocks and shares, dividends, bank accounts, drafts and cheques to their order, rentals due to them, by forbidding them to sell their furniture, and by depriving them to work.

The Security Police Department holds records containing up-to-date personal information about every Jewish family, sex, age, profession, and other particulars.

Many Jews and Jewesses in Baghdad were constantly terrorized for interrogation on various charges. Jews who sold landed property before the outbreak of the war were interrogated about the whereabouts of the proceeds of the sale, lest they had illegally transferred abroad.

A Jew by family name Peress was asked what relationship he had with the Polish-born Shimon Peres (1923) the Deputy Minister of Defence in Levi Eshkol's Government and Minister of Transport and Communication in Golda Meir's Government.[4] Peress who was excessively frightened and trembling with fear replied that he had no relationship at all.

Some Jewish girls students of Al-Hikma University were ordered to present themselves every few days at the Security Police Department to sign papers as evidence of their existence in Baghdad.

Once at eleven o'clock before noon, the Police Department sent a truck with police to the river-bank beyond the South Gate of the Russafa, to terrorize all young Jews who were walking on the bank. They were handled and pushed into the truck without being told the reason for their arrest.

They were taken to the Police Station at Alwiya, where some of them were beaten for their elongated side-whiskers, which were considered in the style of the Jewish fashion. The police brought garden clippers and told them: "Now we shall show you!" The young Jews became highly shocked and excessively frightened lest they were to be hanged. The

4 He was then minister of Defence in Yitzhak Rabin's Government, opposition leader in the Knesset, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

police roughly cut some irregular spots of hair on the victims' heads, leaving some scattered uncut patches of hair to make them look funny and ridiculous.

All young Moslems were warned not to wear long their side-burns similar to the Jews, under the risk of having their heads clean shaven.

In Baghdad secret instructions were issued by the Ministry of Interior to Al-Mansur, Al-wiya, Acropolis and Merchants Clubs to expel all Jewish members and founders because of misconduct. An excuse for the purpose of humiliating the Jews. The administrations of the clubs affixed notifications to this effect at the entrance of their clubs.

The Jewish sports-ground, endowed by Ezra Menahem Daniel to the Jewish Community on trusteeship, was immediately after the Six-Day War confiscated by the Ministry of Defence, on alleged accusation that it was used as a conspiracy meeting-place for Jews. It was transformed into a sports-ground for the Iraqi army.[5]

The Jewish students in Al-Hikma University were beaten by the Moslem students. The Moslem students threatened to shoot them with revolvers which they specially brought for this purpose. The Jewish students were saved by the strong intervention of their American Father Professors. Jewish students in Government colleges were also beaten.

Instructions were issued to all Government colleges and Al-Hikma University not to admit any new Jewish students. All Jewish students who completed their secondary education at Frank Iny School were deprived of admission to Al-Hikma University. Al-Hikma University was then nationalized, and its American Father Professors were discharged and repatriated.

The Jews were thus deprived of their social status, in contradiction to the provisions of article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that everyone is entitled without any discrimination to social and educational freedom.

In Baghdad the Jewish importers thought that one month after the war, conditions would return to normal, as they had been after the First and Second Israeli Arab Wars.

On the contrary, the Import Directorate was instructed to cancel all import licences already granted to Jews for which no letters of credits had been opened, and not to grant new ones to Jews. As most of the Jewish importers were importing goods cash against documents, they had not opened letters of credits for their import licences. So, the Jewish importers submitted applications to the Import Directorate for renewal of their respective licences.

The Import Directorate told the Jewish importers that their applications for renewal could not be considered unless they brought certificates from the Income-tax Directorate certifying settlement of their income-taxes. The Jewish importers went to the Income-tax Directorate to obtain these certificates.

The Income-tax Directorate was instructed to impose very heavy extra income-taxes on the Jews retroactive in some cases for the previous five years. The Jewish importers, believing that their import licences were to be actually renewed by the Import Directorate, felt compelled to pay in cash these very heavy supplementary income-taxes, since no objections were accepted. The Jewish importers after paying enormous amounts of cash to the Income-tax Directorate obtained the certificates and submitted them to the Import Directorate.

The Import Directorate told the Jewish importers to repurchase new application forms, stamp them, and submit them with all their import licences for which no letters of credits

5 As confirmed by Elkabir.

had been opened for renewal. The Jewish importers did so, and waited for one month. But their import licences were not renewed.

The Import Directorate told the Jewish importers that their applications for renewal were refused, no new import licences were to be granted to them, and they should not come to the Import Directorate any more.

The steps taken by Yahya against the Jewish importers were the following:

1. The Jews were compelled to pay enormous amounts of money in cash as very heavy extra income-taxes at the highest scale of taxation retroactive in some cases for the previous five years.

2. Import licences for which orders had already been booked cash against documents were cancelled.

3. Enormous quantities of goods shipped to Jews cash against documents were confiscated, because of the cancellation of the respective import licences.

4. Jewish importers were deprived of new import licences.

5. Jewish commission agents were deprived of considerable amounts of commissions for orders booked by them for Jewish customers cash against documents, because of the cancellation of the respective import licences.

The radio and television, the newspapers under the control of the Government and the preachers in Mosques, by calling on the public to watch the Jews and give secret information to the Security Police Department on any Jews suspected of being spies, the local public were provided with suitable weapons against the Jews.

Many rich Jews in Baghdad lost their money proportionately to the capacity of their wealth, as the Moslem dealers, with whom they had previously pleasant trade relations, refused to pay the money due to them on business deals. The Jews could not dare to speak about their money, lest the Moslem dealers endangered their lives.

Many innocent Jews were victims of Moslem dealers who gave secret false information against them to escape paying their debts due to them.

Non-Jewish clerks and secretaries of commission agents, who had previously been very faithful, threatened to give secret false information against their Jewish masters, if their demands for payment of heavy ransom were not complied with. The helpless Jews had no alternative but to pay the ransom to save their lives.

There was a young lieutenant in the Central Post Office in Baghdad. He was a thin, a monster of the lowest class. His room was small about 3 by 3 metres in width and length and dirty. His table was small and dirty. He was extremely anti-Semitic. He dreamt to be a second Hitler to persecute the Jews monstruously.

As soon as he received letters or parcels addressed to Jews, he instructed his post-boy to call the Jewish addressees to his room. The Jews who were called trembled with fear as they were afraid lest false charges were secretly given against them endangering their lives.

When a Jew came into his room, the officer insulted him grossly, beat him brutally, and ordered him to close down his office or shop at once. Each of the frightened, helpless, innocent Jewish victims replied that he would do as he was ordered. If any Jew objected to his monstruous persecutions, he was immediately sent to prison. When a Jew was saved from his room, he thanked God as though he was born anew.

On the first day he called about 25 Jews, on the second day about 50. On the third day he sent a truck to the market with some of his men. He instructed them to pick up Jews walking on the streets, and throw them into the truck like sheep even if their legs were

broken. When the truck was fully packed with frightened, helpless, innocent Jewish victims, it went to the Post Office. There the Jews were harshly pulled out of the truck and led into the office. The Jewish victims waited inside. Each one was called separately into the officer's room. The officer, as usual, insulted each one grossly, beat him cruelly, and ordered him to close down his office or shop.

After such frightful incidents, a great terror spread throughout the Jews. But, by mere accident, this officer was transferred from his post. The Jews in Baghdad breathed a sigh of relief.

Tahir Yahya took the following discriminatory measures to ensure that the Jews in Iraq would die of starvation:

1. The Tapu Directorate, the official office authorized to attest formal contracts of sale, purchase, and all transactions of landed property, and the Wakf Directorate, the official public trustee of testamentary estates authorized to attest formal contracts of lease of inalienable landed property, and the Public Notaries, were instructed not to execute transactions of Jews.

2. Corporations were instructed not to execute any transaction of Jews. Jews were consequently neither allowed to sell their stocks and shares nor receive their dividends.

3. All nationalized banks were instructed to freeze Jewish money and not cash drafts and cheques to their order. Jews were consequently not allowed to draw even one single Dinar from their bank accounts.

4. A retroactive ad hoc law No. 10 of 1968 was enacted by Yahya and promulgated in the official Gazette on March 3, 1968 officially enforcing his discriminatory measures.

This law was an amendment to the auxiliary law No 64 of 1967. The auxiliary law was enacted by Yahya after the Six-Day War as a supplement to law No 12 of 1951 for the control and administration of the sequestrated property of the denationalized Jews.[6] In the following page is a facsimile of a part of the official Arabic text of the amendment:

6 Juifs p. 9/10.

العـــدد ١٥٤٢ السنة العاشرة

الوقائع العراقية

الجريدة الرسمية للجمهورية العراقية تصدرها وزارة الثقافة والارشاد فى العـراق
مسجلةٌ فى دائرة البريد المركزي ببغـداد تحت رقم (١)

الاحد ٤ ذو الحجة سنة ١٣٨٧ و ٣ آذار سنة ١٩٦٨

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

رقم (١٠) لسنة ١٩٦٨

قانون

تعـديل قـانون ذيـل قـانون مراقبـة وادارة
اموال اليهـود المستقطة بنهم الجنسية العراقية
رقـم ١٢ لسـنة ١٩٥١

باسم الشعب

رئاسة الجمهورية

استنادا الى احكام المادة (٤٤) من الدستور الموقت وبناء على ما عرضـه وزير الداخلية وبموافقة مجلس السـوزراء .

صدق القانون الآتي :ـ

المادة الاولى ـ تلغى الفقرة (٦) من المادة السابعة من القانون رقـم (١٢) لسـنة ٩٥١ المعـدل ويحـل محلها ما يلي :ـ

٦ ـ تمتنع بعد نفاذ هـذا القانون دوائر الطـابو والاوقاف والـكتاب العدول عن اجراء اية معاملة ببيع العقارات العائدة لليهودي او فراغها او هبتها او رهنها او ازالة شيوعها او بيعها تنفيذا أو وضعها توثيقا للدين او الايصـاء بها او ايجارها لمدة تزيد على سنة او ترتيب اي حق عيني عليها او اي تصرف او اجراء يؤدى الى خروجها من ذمة اليهودي ولو كانت المعاملة تستند الى وكالـة دورية ثابتـة التاريخ صادرة قبـل نفـاذ هـذا القانون او اي مستند قانوني آخر . ولوزير الداخليـة ان يأذن باجـراء المعاملـة اذا اقتنـع انهـا ليست صورية .

A part of the text

Herein is a summary: In the name of the people. The Presidency of the Republic. Pursuant to the provisions of article 44 of the Interim Constitution, and in view of the proposal of the Minister of Interior, and with the approval of the Council of Ministers, the following law has been ratified:

After the enforcement of this law, the Tapu and Wakf Directorates and Public Notaries shall abstain from executing any transaction of sale, transfer, donation, mortgage loans, clauses of a will, rentals exceeding one year, engagements or debts relating to landed property belonging to a Jew, even if the transaction was based on a power of attorney issued before the enforcement of this law or any other legal document.

The Minister of Interior can authorize the execution of a transaction of a Jew, provided that the amounts of money due to the respective Jew shall be deposited in one of the banks. These amounts shall not be drawn without the Minister of Interior's approval.

Official and semi-official administrations, companies and societies shall not pay amounts of money to a Jew, except salaries not exceeding 100 Iraqi Dinars per month, and shall inform the Minister of Interior of such amounts.

This law shall be enforced from the date of its publication in the official Gazette, and shall apply to all transactions executed before this date for which the amounts of money were not already paid.

(The Minister of Interior did not actually authorize the execution of any transaciton of a Jew).

5. Jews were unofficially forbidden to sell their cars.

6. Jews were unofficially forbidden to sell their furniture. Auctioneers were secretly instructed not to sell Jewish furniture.

7. The Jews in Baghdad were unofficially forbidden to work under their names or under the names of Moslems.

8. Licences of Jewish pharmacists were officially cancelled. During September 1967 Jewish pharmacists in Baghdad received circulars from the Minister of Health. He informed them that their licences were cancelled, and ordered them to close down their pharmacies within fifteen days' time, and that those premises shall not be used as pharmacies any more.[7]

9. Licences of Jewish commission agents were officially cancelled. Jewish commission agents in Baghdad received circulars from the Registrar of Companies Department. He informed them that their licences were cancelled, and ordered them to close down their offices.

10. Non-Jewish private commercial offices in Baghdad were instructed to dismiss all Jewish employees.

(By this instruction, Jewish employees were deprived of salaries not exceeding 100 Iraqi Dinars per month under the provisions of the above law).

11. Moslem offices and shops in Baghdad were warned neither to co-operate with Jews nor allow them enter their offices and shops, and not to speak to Jews.

12. The Daniel market in Baghdad and other Daniel property, worth millions of Iraqi Dinars, endowed by Ezra Menahem Daniel before his death to the Jewish Community on trusteeship, were sequestrated by Yahya. The writ of sequestration was issued despite that the Court of Cassation gave judgment that the Daniel property belonged to the Jewish Community.[8]

* * *

7 As confirmed by Haim.
8 As confirmed by Elkabir.

Yahya's measures to ensure that the Jews in Iraq would die of starvation by freezing all their immovable and movable property and by depriving them to work were in contradiction to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; of article 3 which stipulates that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person; of article 17 which stipulates that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property; and of article 23 which stipulates that everyone without any discrimination has the right to equal pay for equal work and to just and favourable remuneration.

* * *

Before the transfer of the mortal remains of the Jewish corpses from the old cemetery in Baghdad to the new one in the east outskirts of the New Baghdad town, the Jewish Community spent thousands of Iraqi Dinars on building a massive four metre high cemented wall around the new cemetery for protection.

After the war, the Arab citizens who were given free lands by Qassem each day demolished a small part of the wall, and took the bricks. In this way, the whole wall was destroyed and the whole bricks were taken.

12. Detentions

After the war, the secret Security police arrested the first group of Jews from Baghdad and detained them in a special section, reserved for them alone, consisting of five rooms in the Security Police Department situated beyond the South Gate. After a short time, the Jewish detainees numbered about fifty persons.

The Jewish detainees constituted of various classes. They were mainly bankers, landed proprietors, factory owners and shopkeepers, prominent merchants and brokers, commission and forwarding agents, doctors, pharmacists, former high Government officials and senior employees.

The arrest and detention were in contradiction to the provisions of article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

The Jewish detainees were kept under strong police guards. Nobody was allowed to contact them even their families or relatives. The food given to them was disgusting. As most of them brought no bedding with them, they slept with their clothes on the ground and used their shoes wrapped with their shirts as pillows.

After having been detained three weeks in this manner, the Security Police Department allowed the families or relatives of the Jewish detainees to bring their prisoners bedding, clothes, food, pocket-money, medicines, and other articles and put them in bags on which the names of the respective detainees were written. The bags were handed over to the police guards at the gate of the Security Police Department.

In that section there was a small shower-bath where the detainees washed themselves and their clothes.

Released Jewish detainees affirmed that the prison authorities had frightened them with revolvers, insulted them grossly, humiliated them violently, and beat some of them cruelly.

The Jewish detainees were not allowed to appoint lawyers to defend them nor were lawyers allowed to defend anyone of them because they were Jews.

After having been detained about two and a half months in the Security Police Department, the Jewish detainees were released 3 or 4 each two days on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars each.

By misfortune, the Minister of Interior was changed. 16 Jews only remained in custody. Dr. Shamil Al-Samarra'i, an anti-Semitic extremist, was appointed Minister of Interior. Upon his appointment, he declared that as long as he was Minister of Interior, no Jew was to be released from detention or from any other prisons.

On August 17, 1967 the 16 detainees were called. They thought that they were to be released together. Instead, they were shut into a closed prison car. Police with machine-guns took them to the Baghdad Jail beyond the North Gate, and detained them in section No. 5 with Moslem criminals, thieves and assassinators. Here they found 2 other Jews, merchants from Basra, who had already been detained since a long time.

The food given to them was disgusting. In this section there was a small shower-bath where all prisoners washed themselves and their clothes.

A second group of Jews from Baghdad and Basra were gradually arrested and detained in the same section with the other Jews.

The Jewish detainees suffered very much from the criminals, thieves and assassinators. When the Jewish detainees were asleep, the thieves stole their food and personal articles.

If the Jewish detainees awoke, they did not say anything lest they were to be harmed.

In the Baghdad Jail, on the first day of each month, the Moslem and Christian prisoners were allowed to meet their families and relatives for four hours. On meeting days, each prisoner was allowed to go to a courtyard and take a blanket with him to place on the ground for himself and his family to sit on while talking.

Families and relatives were allowed to bring their prisoners bedding, clothes, food, pocket-money and other articles. After the prison guards thoroughly searched for knives or other arms, narcotics or liquor, they handed the articles over to the respective prisoners. Upon termination of the time fixed for the meetings, the bell rung, and each prisoner went to his section. After the prison guards checked the names and numbers of the prisoners and found them correct, they allowed their families or relatives to leave the Jail.

The Jewish detainees thought that they would also be allowed to meet their families or relatives on the meeting days. Their families or relatives came, but were not allowed to meet them.

Before the eve of Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, a solemn fast day, the Chief Rabbi appealed to the prison authorities for mercy for allowing the families or relatives of the Jewish detainees to bring them food, usually cooked chickens, to be eaten on the eve of Yom Kippur and for breaking their fast the following night.

By special order from the prison authorities, the prison guards were allowed to receive the food, on which the name of each detainee was written, and hand it over to each respective detainee.

The Jewish detainees, after having eaten part of their food on the eve of Yom Kippur, kept the remainder for breaking their fast on the following night. At midnight, the thieves stole their food, and no food remained for breaking their fast. In the morning, the thieves told the Jewish detainees: "Where are your chickens? Have they flown at midnight?"

The Jewish detainees remained in the Baghdad Jail detention section about two and a half months. On November 4, 1967 the prison authorities secured their hands with handcuffs and took them on foot to the adjoining Detention Barrack, and detained them in one of its large political sections, reserved for them alone.

Here there were a large shower-bath and a kitchen. A daily ration of bread, meat and rice was given to each detainee for preparing his food himself. Families or relatives were allowed to meet their detainees twice a week, on Monday and Thursday, in a meeting hall a long way from their section.

A Jew Heskel E. Menashy, prominent merchant and large estate proprietor in Baghdad who is a relative of Sir Sassoon Eskell, was imprisoned alone in this section for about one and a half months before the Jewish detainees were transferred there. As he was accustomed to luxurious living, he could not adjust himself to life in the Detention Barrack and fell dreadfully sick and was about to die. He was saved by a miracle.

Here there were two crimes against 2 Jewish detainees from Baghdad.

The first concerned Anwar Terzi, haberdashery merchant. On the day the secret Security police came to his house again to arrest him for the second time, he had just returned from hospital. He had an eye operation, and his eyes were still bandaged. His wife and all the members of his family implored the police weepingly for mercy to arrest him after a few days' time, when the bandage on his eyes could be removed. But the police insistently refused.

The second concerned Dr. Albert Raby, internal medicine. After Gourji Raby's wife had successfully escaped across the Iranian frontier, Dr. Albert Raby, who is the brother of

Dr.Gourji Raby, was arrested again. (His own story continued in "Escape").

From time to time, more Jews were arrested and brought in this section with the other Jews in custody. The Jewish detainees numbered forty persons. After the world conscience had been aroused, they were all released. In this section they remained one year and three months.

13. President Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr



Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr
in 1968

In the morning on July 17, 1968 guns were heard booming in Baghdad. The radio announced that a military coup d'état under the leadership of a Revolutionary Command Council had been successfully carried out. Abd Al-Rahman Aref, his Prime Minister Tahir Yahya and his Minister of Interior Dr. Shamil Al-Samarra'i were arrested.

The radio further announced that the Revolutionary Command Council had promoted Brigadier Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr (1912-82) to Major-General, and unanimously elected him President of the Republic. He was the first Prime Minister of Abd Al-Salam Aref, who relieved him of his post following the revolt of the national guards.

President Al-Bakr appointed Abd Al-Razzaq Al-Na'if, the Assistant Director of the Military Intelligence who co-operated with him in the coup, as his Prime Minister, and Saddam Hussein as Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council and Secretary General of the Baath Party. Hussein occupied the new building of Parliament as an office to run the affairs of the Party.

Abd Al-Rahman, who was moderate, was exiled abroad and allotted a monthly allowance. Yahya and Al-Samarra'i were imprisoned in the Annex of Qasr Al-Nahaya. They were grossly humiliated and brutally tortured. Yahya was tortured to death.[1]

President Al-Bakr also arrested many former high rank army officers and top Government personalities, and imprisoned them in the Annex of Qasr Al-Nahaya, where they were tortured.

In order to efface all traces of the former regimes, President Al-Bakr destroyed all photographs, busts and statues of Abd Al-Salam Aref and his brother Abd Al-Rahman in Baghdad and in every city and town.

President Al-Bakr cancelled or amended all laws and regulations enacted by Abd Al-Salam and Abd Al-Rahman. He also acted completely in contradiction to what Qassem had done.

He occupied the Republican Palace as his Presidential Palace, and surrounded it by devoted brigade with complete armament.

President Al-Bakr re-created the national guards, but this time in secret form. He did not supply them with machine-guns or allow them occupy private houses. They were charged to give secret information to the Security Police Department on any citizens suspected of being hostile to or plotting against the regime.

1 As confirmed by Yamen.

14. Imprisonments

Colonel Nazim Kazzar, the Director General of the Security Police Department, planned the imprisonments, tortures and massacres of the Jews for creating chaos and confusion, before carrying out his unsuccessful coup. Consequently, the Security Police Department established many major torture prisons in various places in Baghdad. The important one was Qasr Al-Nahaya "The Palace of the End".

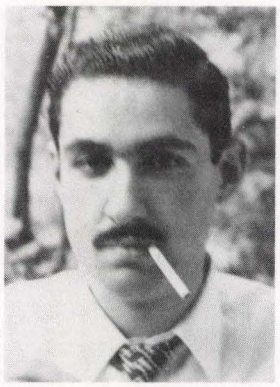
Jewish prisoners were neither allowed to appoint lawyers to defend them nor were lawyers allowed to defend anyone of them.

The families or relatives of those victims did not know their prisoners' whereabouts. However, each family was allowed once per week to bring a package of clothes, food, medicines, pocket-money and other items on which the name of the respective prisoner was written and hand the package over to the military guards at the gate of the Ministry of Defence.

After the world conscience had been aroused, Jewish survivors of Qasr Al-Nahaya were gradually released. Before their release, the prison authorities warned them that if they would divulge the kind of tortures in Qasr Al-Nahaya, they risked being arrested again.

* * *

Many Jewish victims died of tortures. Some of the martyred ones were:



Nissim Ya'ir Hakham Nissim

1. Nissim Ya'ir Hakham Nissim (1931), accountant in a contractor's office in Alwiya, Baghdad. His sister Rachel (1934-79) before her death testified that Nissim had been arrested in the third quarter of 1968 at his office and imprisoned in one of the major torture prisons.

At the beginning of 1969 the Post-mortem phoned the Chief Rabbi to send some men to take Nissim's corpse for burial. The Chief Rabbi sent Hay, the undertaker.

Hay testified that the Post-mortem had handed Nissim's corpse over to him, with a medical report certifying that Nissim died from unspecified disease, and that he was kept in the mortuary refrigerator four months and twenty two days. Hay found the corpse naked, black and blue, heavily disfigured, with spots of injuries in many parts of the body.

One car full of armed secret Security police escorted Hay from afar to the Jewish cemetery to ensure secret burial. Nissim's family and relatives were not allowed to attend.

According to the Babylonian list, Nissim died on August 3, 1968.



Fuad Yaakov Shasha

2. Fuad Yaakov Shasha (1935), steel merchant in Baghdad. His father and partner Yaakov (Kabi) Hayyou Shasha (1906-80) before his death testified that he had been arrested together with his son Fuad at his newly built villa in Sara Khatun quarter east of Alwiya, Baghdad, in the afternoon of Saturday the 21st of December 1968.

When the Security police came, the electric bells of the doors of the garden and the villa were damaged. The police jumped over the fence into the garden. When the members of the family inside the villa saw some men breaking the villa's window glass, they opened the door. The police rushed inside the villa, insulted all the family grossly, and beat the father and his son Fuad. They also searched everything, tore the bedding, the sofas, and unscrewed all the electric light bulbs. They broke the cupboards, toilet-table, television, radiogram, radio, electric recorder, and battery recorder. They took the two recorders and amplifier, 530 Iraqi Dinars which were in the father's pocket, his gold ring and Fuad's car.

The father was then taken together with Fuad to the Police Station in Al-Thawra town near the canal eastwards of the Russafa. In this station they were beaten and kicked and told: "You are spies for Israel"! Their hands were then secured with handcuffs, and they were taken in a closed police car to the underground cellar of Qasr Al-Nahaya. They were imprisoned each one in a dark solitary cell, with his hands tightly secured with handcuffs behind his back.

An official announcement in a Baghdad newspaper, as per facsimile of the original Arabic text in the following page, reported that Fuad had escaped from prison on January 17, 1969, i.e. twenty-eight days after his arrest.

(Yaakov Shasha's own story continued in this chapter).


هروب متهم

بتاريخ ١٧-١-١٩٦٩ هرب المتهم فواد يعقوب شاشه ٠٠
اوصافه متوسط القامة اسمر اللون شعر راسه أسود يرتدى بدلة سوداء مع بلوز أسود منقط بنقط بيضاء ٠

يرجى ممن يعرف عن محل اختفائه اخبار أقرب سلطه حكومية وله مكافأه نقدية ٠

وسيحاسب حسابا عسيرا كل من يخفيه أو يعلم عن محل اختفائه ولا يقوم باخبار السلطات المسئولة ٠

The official announcement

3. Da'ud Sassoon Zubaida, wealthy road-making contractor in Baghdad. His widow Salima (-75) before her death affirmed that her husband who was in exuberant health had been arrested at their own villa in Masbah, Baghdad, at midnight on July 23, 1968. He was imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya, as testified by released Jewish survivors.

Three days after his arrest, the Post-mortem phoned the Chief Rabbi to send some men to take Da'ud's corpse to his family. The Chief Rabbi sent Hay.

Hay testified that the Post-mortem had handed Da'ud's corpse over to him, with a medical report certifying that Da'ud died from unspecified disease. Hay found the corpse's head lacerated and covered with blood.



Choua Soffer

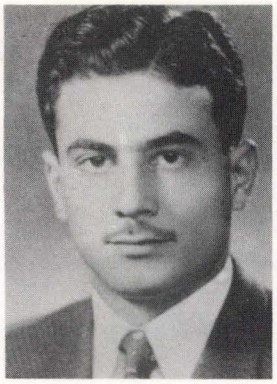
4. Choua Soffer, trade mark registrar in Baghdad. His relative testified that Choua had been arrested at his office, registered in the name of a Moslem advocate, in the forenoon on December 4, 1969. He was brought back to his house. The Security police searched everything, but found nothing. He was taken back with them.

His courageous wife, Marcelle (— 75), with the assistance of the Chief Rabbi, tried to obtain information about her husband's whereabouts, but all her endeavours failed. She then took clothes, food, pocket-money and went to the Ministry of Defence.

At the start, the military guards at the gate of the Ministry took these items from her, but did not give her a receipt, and refused to disclose her husband's whereabouts. Later, they refused to take other items from her, and told her that her husband had escaped from prison.

As Marcelle still continued to go to the Ministry inquiring about her husband, she was taken inside, and flogged with a filled hose. They demanded her to confess to where her husband had escaped. (Her own story continued in "The Unbearable Shock").

Choua was actually imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya, as testified by released Jewish survivors. He was tortured to death and heavily disfigured. His corpse was disposed of in some unknown way.



Akram Ezra Bahir

5. Akram Ezra Bahir, an employee in Baghdad. His maternal uncle, Yusuf Bahir, asserted that Akram had been arrested at his home in Baghdad, while clad in his pyjamas, in the afternoon on September 27, 1969.

He was imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya, as testified by released Jewish survivors. He was tortured to death and heavily disfigured. His corpse was disposed of. His family was told that Akram had escaped from prison.



Azzouri Yaakov Jouri

6. Azzouri Yaakov Jouri (1935), wealthy bachelor merchant in Baghdad. He was arrested two years before his murder.

Released Jewish survivors affirmed that Azzouri had been imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya and tortured. He was constantly suspended on a hook of an electric ceiling fan. As he was still young and very strong, he survived. After the world conscience had been aroused, he was released on a bail of 10,000 Iraqi Dinars.

In November 1970,[1] Azzouri was retaken from his house in the morning by some secret Security police. In the evening, his neighbours were informed by the police that Azzouri's body had been found in a lonely place near the new airport about 30 kilometres west of the Karkh.

At the same time, the Post-mortem phoned the Chief Rabbi to send some men to take Azzouri's corpse to his family. The Chief Rabbi sent Hay as usual.

Hay took Azzouri's body to his family. His mother on seeing her son's body lost consciousness. Hay took the body to a synagogue. He found traces of ropes on the body's legs and hands, burning spots on his back and shoulders, and bullets in his liver and hands.

7. Shamoun Mislawi, newspaper seller in Baghdad. Hay testified that Shamoun had been imprisoned in Al Azamiyah Police Station about 30 kilometres north of the Russafa, on false charges of spying for the interests of Israel. He was tortured to death, and was buried by the prison authorities in a Moslem cemetery in Al Azamiyah town in December 1968.

* * *

The survivors of Qasr Al-Nahaya and other prisons mentioned in the following pages gave a description of their tragedies:

1 According to the Babylonian list.



Sassoon Abda



Meir Abda

1. Sassoon Abda (1908), estate broker.
2. His brother and partner Meir Abda (1919).

The tortures inflicted on the 2 brothers are filled with horror beyond belief. Their survival was a miracle.

Sassoon testified that, in the evening of Friday the 5th of January 1968, 4 secret Security police came to their newly built houses in Masbah, Baghdad, and told them: "We want to ask you some questions for five minutes and will bring you back". Sassoon and Meir asked whether they should take bedding with them. "No need", the police replied.

They were then taken to the Ministry of Defence and imprisoned each one in a separate cell, and were cruelly beaten. After few days, their families sent them through the proper channel bedding, clothes, food, pocket-money and other articles.

On January 9, 1968, after blindfolding them and confiscating their luggage, Sassoon and Meir were both taken to a secret major torture prison and imprisoned each one in a dark solitary cell, 1 1/2 metres in width, length and height. Here the blindfolds were removed. Each one was given one blanket for sitting and sleeping, and both used their shoes as pillows. They were kept seventy-two hours without food and water and were not allowed to use a toilet.

Scanty food thrice a day, breakfast was a cup of soup, at noon the victims received a cup of rice with broth and brown bread, in the evening tea was distributed to the cells. The victims were allowed three minutes in a toilet under guard's escort three times a day. If they did not finish within the time allowed, they were returned to their cells anyway. Each one was taken alone. They were not allowed to see any other victim. Strict secrecy was observed. While going to and returning from the toilet, they were insulted and beaten. Every two months, each one was taken one after the other to the corridor, shaved, and taken back to his cell. In winter, Meir's coat was taken off to make him suffer terribly from bitter cold.

At midnight of the first day of their imprisonment here, after blindfolding Sassoon, he was taken to an interrogation room and then to the torture chamber, where he was made to lie down on his back on the ground. His legs were tied and his shoes were removed. Some torturers, each with a hose in his hand, flogged his shoulders and legs about three quarters of an hour. He was then taken back to his cell where the blindfold was removed. Meir was also tortured in the same manner. They were flogged every night fortnightly.

Every ten or fifteen days, they were cruelly beaten by a torturer in their cells. They remained in this secret torture prison four months and six days.

On May 15, 1968, after blindfolding them, sassoon and Meir were both taken to Muasker Al-Rashid, military camp, and were imprisoned each one in a separate cell. The blindfolds were then removed. Their families

sent them through the proper channel bedding and other articles.

Both brothers were given scanty food twice a day. Every fortnight, they were beaten and kicked in their cells. They were kept in the military camp for seven months.

On December 15, 1968, after blindfolding them and confiscating their luggage, Sassoon and Meir were both taken to Qasr Al Nahaya, where the blindfolds were removed. After capturing their neckties and belts, they were both imprisoned in the underground cellar each one in a dark solitary cell, 1 1/4 metre in width, length and height. Their hands were tightly secured behind their backs. They had to sit down on the feces and urine of former victims as well as their own. They suffered from the severe cold, and slept little in their semi-sitting position.

They received only scanty food twice per day with few drops of water per meal. Once per day, they were permitted to use a toilet for five minutes only. They remained unshaven and full-bearded.

Every six hours, day and night, they were brutally flogged in their cells with hoses by 1 or 2 torturers on their shoulders, backs and legs about five to ten minutes each time. As a result of continual handcuffing, their wrists became inflamed and lacerated. They remained in those cells for thirty-five days.

On January 19, 1969, after removing their handcuffs, both brothers were imprisoned each one in one of the upper cells, 1 1/4 metres in width, length and height, with another Moslem victim.

The conditions in these cells were a little better than the underground ones, but here there were more cruel tortures. Every month, at midnight, after blindfolding them, they were taken to the torture chamber, and were suspended successively on a hook of an electric ceiling fan. They suffered all the unbearable injuries. They were then taken back to their cells where the blindfolds were removed.

Meir's legs became heavily sore, injured, swollen, lacerated and excessively painful. The prison authorities wanted to amputate it. After blindfolding him, Meir was taken in the prison car to Yarmuk Hospital for treatment. On the way, the guards were striking his head with an iron bar.

While the car was running swiftly, Meir opened the car's door and threw himself on the ground attempting to commit suicide, as he could not bear the pains and the cruel tortures.

In May 1969 the officer of Qasr Al-Nahaya called Sassoon and Meir for interrogation, and told the torturers to beat them. Both brothers were taken to the torture chamber. While Sassoon was standing, a torturer, with a hose in his hand, violently flogged his shoulders, back and legs. Sassoon lost consciousness and fell to the ground. Meir cried out: "Sassoon is dead!"

At another time, after blindfolding them, they were both taken to the underground cellar, where each one's hands were tied crosswise to the iron strips at the top of an iron door of a cell. They remained in this manner four days and four nights. Once per day, they were taken to the toilet for five minutes only, and were then returned to their tortuous position. When they became unconscious, they were taken back to their cells where the blindfolds were removed.

While in these cells, they were taken out on many days to sweep and scrub the corridors and the W.C.s. They remained in these cells about nine months.

As Sassoon and Meir could not stand the cruel tortures, they attempted to commit suicide on several occasions.

Sassoon tried to hang himself with his belt before it was taken away, but he failed because the belt was too broad to fit around his neck.

Meir attempted to commit suicide six times. First, he swallowed his office's key. The second time, he broke his spectacle-glass into pieces and swallowed them. The third time,

he stole half a razor blade from the barber, broke it into pieces and swallowed them. The fourth time, he threw himself from the prison car which was running rapidly. The fifth time, he put his fingers in the electric socket in the corridor while shaving, and the sixth time, he attempted to throw himself from the flat roof of Qasr Al-Nahaya while he was taken there to the lavatory without a blindfold. Despite all these attempts, he survived by miracle. He still shakes to and fro and stammers as a consequence of the savage tortures inflicted on him.

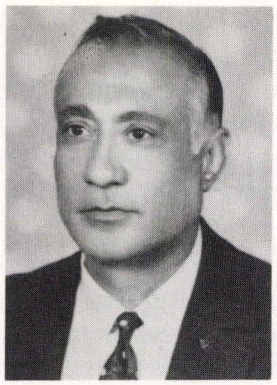
At the end of August 1969, both brothers were taken to the Revolutionary Court. The Military Prosecutor demanded their executions. After the world conscience had been aroused following further hanging on August 25, the Court decided not to hang them, and as a formality, allowed their families to appoint 2 lawyers to defend them. This case was an exception to the usual custom.

On September 28, the Court sentenced them to three years' hard labour from the date of their arrest. They were imprisoned in Baqubah town Jail. In this jail they were ordered to sweep and mop the floor and clean the W.C.s.

As both brothers were condemned by the Revolutionary Court, their movable and immovable property in Iraq, registered in their names, was confiscated according to Government regulations in force.

During the whole period of their imprisonment, they changed their heavily lousy and loathsomely dirty clothes only in Muasker Al-Rashid camp and in the upper cells of Qasr Al-Nahaya, when they were allowed to receive packages sent by their families.

On January 11, 1971 they were released. As Sassoon and Meir were deprived of the grant of passports, they were compelled to escape with their families on July 23, 1973.



Yeheskel David Samuel

3. Yeheskel David Shummail (Samuel), an employee. He testified that he had been arrested on the street in Baghdad in the evening of October 7, 1968, and taken to the Ministry of Defence.

He was then taken to his house, where the Security police remained four hours searching everything even the water tank on the flat roof of the house, looking for spy documents. After finding nothing, he was taken back to the Ministry of Defence and imprisoned in one of the detention rooms, 3x5 metres, containing 36 victims. Without a blanket, he sat and slept on the ground using his shoes as a pillow. He suffered from the scanty food and was unshaven. He remained in this room three weeks.

After an interrogation, Yeheskel was blindfolded and taken to Qasr Al-Nahaya, and imprisoned in a solitary demolished bathroom with demolished floor where the blindfold was removed. He was compelled to sit on his thighs and feet on the dust on the ground with his back against the wall. He could not sleep. He received scanty food only once per day in the evening, one putrefied meat sandwich. As he could not eat the food, he suffered from hunger. He remained in this bath-room three days.

Yeheskel was then taken to the underground cellar and imprisoned in a dark solitary cell, 1 1/2 metres wide, 2 metres long,

and 3 metres high. He was given scanty food once a day at no definite hour, a putrefied meat sandwich and few drops of water. He could not eat the food, so he was beaten. He was not allowed to be taken to the lavatory. He remained in this cell in this manner about a fortnight.

After removing his handcuffs, Yeheskel was taken to a big room containing about 60 victims, including a part of the alleged ring of spies. At night, in winter, when the weather was very cold, the guards opened the windows for making the room colder, so to intensify the victims' sufferings. He remained in this room about two months.

Yeheskel was then imprisoned in one of the upper cells, 2 metres wide and long, and 2 1/2 metres high. Although, there were 2 other Moslem prisoners in this cell, they were not allowed to speak between them. While in this cell, he was from time to time cruelly tortured mostly at night.

Once, he was taken to an interrogation room and then to the torture chamber. Before being entered, he was blindfolded. He was suspended on a hook of an electric ceiling fan, and he suffered tortures and injuries. After being taken out, the blindfold was removed before being taken to his cell.

After twenty days, he was taken to a torture W.C. His hands were tied to the iron strips at the top of the iron door, his abdomen pressed against the door. His sexual organ was tightly clipped to prevent him from urinating. He remained in this manner about six hours.

After few days, he was taken to the torture chamber and seated on the ground on his thighs and feet. His hands were tied to his feet. He became as a football. Some torturers, each with a hose in his hand, flogged his back, shoulders and hands until he became unconscious and blood flowed out from his injuries. While they were flogging him, they insulted him grossly, and demanded him to tell them how was he spying for Israel?

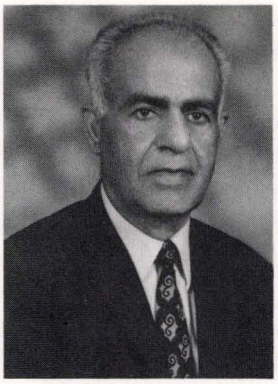
After some further days, he was taken to the torture chamber again. His hands were placed over the holes on top of a burning gasolene stove, then his face, and then his thighs. While being burned, he was insulted and ordered to give information about Israel.

At another time, he was taken to the torture chamber in which some torturers, each with a hose in his hand, brutally flogged his back and legs, while another torturer pressed lighted cigarettes to his body. Another torturer hit his eyes with a double leather shoe sole. As a consequence of his unbearable pains, he fell to the ground unconscious. At the time, he could not see. He was given two tablets of medicine, and afterwards he could see a little. He was then walked back to his cell. His eyes continued to shed tears for a fortnight. To this day, the vision of his right eye is still affected.

While in this cell, he was taken out on many days to sweep and mop the corridors and clean the W.C.s. While doing so, he heard everything that happened in the Qasr and saw other victims who were imprisoned. He remained in this cell about one year.

During the whole period of his imprisonment, Yeheskel changed his heavily lousy and dirty clothes only in the upper cell of Qasr Al-Nahaya, after four months detention, when he was allowed to receive articles of clothes sent by his relatives. But as the clothes were new, they were not given to him. Instead, he was given old ones of former victims who died of tortures.

On December 26, 1969, after the world conscience had been aroused, Yeheskel was released. As he was deprived of the grant of passport, he was compelled to escape on August 17, 1972.



Yaakov Hayyou Shasha

4. Yaakov (Kabi) Hayyou Shasha.(His own story continued from his son Fuad Shasha's own story in this chapter). Before his death testified that he had been arrested together with his son Fuad at his home in Baghdad in the afternoon of Saturday the 21st of December, 1968.

He was then taken with his son to Qasr Al-Nahaya and were both imprisoned in the underground cellar, each one in a dark solitary cell. His cell was 1 1/2 metres wide, 2 1/2 metres in length and height. His condition was exactly the same as Abda brothers.

While in this cell, he was cruelly beaten, and two of his teeth were broken. He then suffered from a severe stomach-ache and began to vomit blood. After removing his handcuffs and blindfolding him, he was taken to Yarmuk Hospital for treatment. The doctor said he had ulcer and his intestines were inflamed. After the examination, he was taken back to his cell. He was kept in that cell about three months.

The next day, after removing his handcuffs, he was taken to a big room, in which there was a part of the alleged ring of spies. He was kept in this room about three months.

He was then imprisoned with another Moslem victim in one of the upper cells which was 1 1/2 metres wide, 2 metres in length and height. As the espionage charges were against his son Fuad, he was not tortured. While in this cell, he was taken out on many days to wash the dishes and clean the bath-rooms and the W.Cs. He was kept in that cell about four months.

During the whole period of his imprisonment, he had to wear the same clothes he was wearing while he was arrested. As the packages sent by his family were not given to him, he could not even change his heavily lousy clothes.

In November 1969, after the world conscience had been aroused, he was released. He did not know the fate of his son Fuad. After his release, he read an announcement in a Baghdad newspaper that Fuad had escaped from prison on January 17, 1969. He was a partner with his son Fuad. Their large fortune in landed property and steel stores were wholly confiscated including his share.

When passports were issued to Jews again, he obtained passports and left Iraq with his family on January 1, 1972.

5. Sassoon Nisan (—74), wealthy road-making contractor. His sister, Salima, before her death affirmed that Sassoon had been arrested at his own villa in Masbah, Baghdad, at midnight on July 23, 1969, together with her husband, Da'ud Sassoon Zubaida. (His own story in this chapter).

Sassoon was imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya. He lost half his original weight. He was so cruelly tortured that he was on the verge of death.

After the world conscience had been aroused, Sassoon was released. In November 1971 he obtained passports through an influential acquaintance, and left Iraq with his family.



Joseph Jangana

6. Joseph Jangana (1917), textile commission agent.
7. His partner Joseph Zilkha (1922).
8. Their clerk Moshe Hakham Binyamin (1927).
9. Their clerk Saeed Herdoon (1932).
10. Their clerk Yeheskel Kamal Abraham (1935).

In the afternoon on April 4, 1969, the secret Security police came to their office in Baghdad, searched everything and took them all, together with the books, documents and files, for working under the name of a Moslem partner. While the victims were in the car, the police took all personal articles from their pockets, with the exception of money.

They were blindfolded and taken to a secret torture prison and imprisoned in a room 4x5 metres which had 11 other victims, 5 Moslems, 1 Christian, and 5 Jews. Five hours after their imprisonment, another Jewish victim, Khedouri Al-Iny, was brought into that room. The total number of victims now was 17, 11 of whom were Jews.

All the 17 victims were tortured by peculiar sorts of tortures. They were kept blindfolded all through the whole period of their imprisonment in that room, day and night, without interruption even when eating or being taken to and returned from the lavatory. As a consequence of which, they suffered wildly from continual fearful obscurity. Without blankets, they slept with their clothes on the ground and used their shoes as pillows. As the room was small and hardly sufficient to accommodate 17 victims, they were tightly packed.

They paid money to the guards for purchasing food for them. They were taken to the toilet twice a day, once in the morning and once in the evening under escort. In case any victim needed to go to the toilet during other times, he was compelled to suffer terribly and wait until the time allowed by the prison authorities. They remained unshaven. Their families were not informed of their whereabouts nor were allowed to send anything to them. All the 17 victims remained in that room in this manner twenty days, after which the blindfolds were removed.

On April 23, 1969, all the 17 victims were blindfolded again and were taken to Qasr Al-Nahaya. On the way, they were mercilessly beaten by the police. In Qasr Al-Nahaya each one was imprisoned in one of the upper small cells together with another Moslem victim. In these cells every victim was given two blankets for sitting and sleeping, and their families were allowed to send them through the proper channel clothes, food, pocket-money and other articles. While in these cells, some of them were severely tortured, and some mercilessly beaten. They remained in these cells about three months.

They were then imprisoned in big rooms, 5 victims in a room. In these rooms they remained two and a half months.

Most of the 17 victims were then blindfolded and taken to one of the buildings attached to the Security Police Department, and were imprisoned in a large room with other Moslem prisoners. In this building their families were allowed to visit them once at the beginning of every month. They remained in this room twenty days.

On November 14, 1969, after the world conscience had been aroused following further hanging, Joseph Jangana was released. During November and December the other

victims were released. The order of release was effective on a bail of 5000 Iraqi Dinars for each victim, on the strict condition that the man who grants the bail was a Moslem landed proprietor.

On December 7, 1970, as Joseph Jangana was deprived of passport, he felt compelled to escape together with his family.

11. Khedouri Al-Iny (—-73), prominent merchant. Reliable sources testified that Khedouri had been arrested at his home in Baghdad, while clad in his pyjamas, at night on April 4, 1969, because of working under the name of a Moslem who had been his partner for many years.

He was imprisoned in the secret torture prison, in Qasr Al-Nahaya, and in one of the buildings attached to the Security Police Department, with Joseph Jangana and the other victims. He was severely maltreated and mercilessly beaten. (His own story continued in "The Unbearable Shock").



Anwar Sabha

12. Anwar Sabha (1908), textile commission agent in Baghdad. He testified that he had been arrested at his office, registered in the name of a Moslem, in the forenoon of December 17, 1968, on false charges of supplying arms to Israel, and taken to the Ministry of Defence. His family did not know his whereabouts.

He was severely beaten and constantly flogged by filled hose on his feet and legs day and night half an hour each time.

Once, after midnight he was blindfolded and taken to a Moslem cemetery where the blindfold was removed. He was threatened by a revolver to death, and was told: "We shall kill you and bury you!"

Luckily, the Security police officers were at the time preoccupied with the alleged espionage ring, and in order to show that they were fair and just, did not send him to Qasr Al-Nahaya for further tortures to death.

At night on December 25 he was released. As a consequence of the unbearable shock and the severe tortures, he became affected with vertigo and diabetes mellitus.

* * *

From September 12, 1972 till April 12, 1973, a new wave of intermittent murderous terror against the Jews unexpectedly spread throughout Baghdad. Mass arrests were launched in the most brutal way.

Some innocent Jews were either arrested in their houses, at work and on the streets by day and at night by the secret Security police. According to the usual procedural system, those victims were then taken to the Security Police Department, where they were blindfolded and sent to one of the secret torture prisons. There they were severely tortured to death. Some other innocent Jews were slaughtered in their homes during the day and at night.

Immediately after the arrest or slaughter of those victims, their houses, furniture, cars, shops, goods, debts due to them, landed property and other assets were confiscated, on the accusation that those Jews had escaped out of Iraq, and were considered denationalized.

The Chief Rabbi, Sassoon Khedhouri, exerted hard endeavours to obtain information

from the Security Police Department about the whereabouts of the arrested Jewish victims, but all his efforts failed. He was told that the Jews in question had escaped out of Iraq.

A world-wide uproar was also raised on humanitarian grounds against such murderous persecutions of innocent citizens, but all their efforts also failed.

The following Jews from Baghdad were arrested:

1. Yaakov Abd Al-Aziz, advocate. He worked in Jewish affairs. On September 12, 1972 he left his house and never returned. The Jews presumed he had escaped.

2. Yaakov Rejwan, merchant. He had already obtained a passport. He was arrested after having got back home at night. He left a note secretly inside the door of his house that he was arrested.

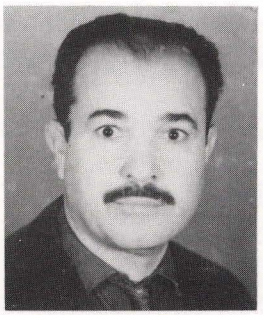
3. Shaul Rejwan, owner of liquor store. He had also already obtained a passport. He lived in the same house as his brother Yaakov. When he got back home late at night, he found his brother's note. Afraid to sleep in his house lest he would also be arrested, he went to sleep in the house of a friend. The next day, he went with his friend's children to his house to change his clothes. In the meantime, the secret Security police came in and arrested him. The children reported that Shaul's face had become ghastly pale.

4. Naji Qashqoush, auto spare parts dealer.
5. His wife Suad, the sister of Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel and Khedouri Saleh Yeheskel and the daughter of Saleh Yeheskel Abraham, who were falsely charged with the alleged ring of espionage. The former one was hanged, and the latter two were tortured and acquitted. On February 7, 1973 Naji Qashqoush and his wife were arrested at home at night.

6. Yehuda Al-Saigh, goldsmith.
7. His sister Rahma.
8. His sister Aliza.
   They were captured from their homes.
9. Azzouri Shammash, sugar merchant.
10. Ezra Qahtan, a fashionable tailor.
11. His brother and partner Salim Qahtan.
12. Naim Fattal, haberdashery broker.
13. Naji Chitayat, ironer.
14. Yeheskel (Victor) Abu Da'ud, textile broker.
15. Choua Uzair, itinerant carpenter.
16. Salim Sadqa, accountant.
17. Dr. Ezra Khazzam.
18. Shaul Shammash, landed proprietor.

* * *

The following Jews from Baghdad were arrested and released:



Aziz Arabuk

1. Aziz Arabuk, slaughterman in the Jewish Community.
2. Salim Dellal, landed proprietor.
3. Tawfiq Soffer, merchant.

After evening prayers, while leaving the synagogue, they were arrested on the street. After a fortnight's imprisonment, these three Jews were released exceptionally.

Arabuk testified that after their arrest, they had been taken to the Security Police Department, where they were blindfolded and sent to a secret torture prison. There they were severely tortured. Before releasing them, they

were blindfolded again and brought back to the place from where they had been arrested. Arabuk added that Tawfiq Soffer had lost his senses as a consequence of cruel tortures inflicted on him.

Arabuk's testimony is a clear evidence that all the other arrested Jewish victims were tortured to death in the same way.

* * *

The following Jews from Baghdad were slaughtered in their homes:

1. Abraham Nissim Al-Saigh, wealthy old bachelor. He was slaughtered while living at home alone. A few days after his slaughter, his non-Jewish neighbours smelt the putrefying odour from his house, and called the police who came in and took away his body. The Chief Rabbi was then asked by the Post-mortem to send some men to remove Abraham's corpse for burial. Abraham left a fortune and a costly large house.

2. Reuben Qashqoush, auto spare parts dealer.
3. His wife, Clementine.
4. His son, Fuad.
5. His son, Samir.
6. His daughter, Joice.

On the morning of Thursday the 12th of April 1973 they were slaughtered in their house. Joice was about to go to school. They had already obtained passports and booked their flights for Saturday the 14th of April via M.E.A. They had their air tickets and travellers' cheques. Most of their luggage was already packed.

The employees of the Petrol Station in front of their house heard cries and shrieks emanating from it. They saw a car standing near by, and some men taking valises and pulling bags from the house to the car. This proves that the murderers cut the Qashqoush bodies into pieces, put them into bags, took their passports, air tickets and travellers' cheques. The employees gave the information to the police who came in to investigate.

The second daughter, Dora, came back from the University of Baghdad, and saw the police in her house. She was not allowed to enter, and was told that her family had escaped. She rushed into the house furiously, and saw one of her brother's shoe spotted with blood, other blood-stains in the house, and clothes scattered all over. The police pulled her back, and took her to the Police Station, where she was asked whether she had relatives in Baghdad. When she said she had, she was taken to them. They were told to look after her. Within few weeks' time, her relatives left Iraq with passports. The Jewish Community accommodated her in the house of a midwife, Rahma.

The Qashqoush house remained under police guards, and nobody was allowed to enter. About a month after the criminal incident, the Chief Rabbi obtained special approval for Dora to enter her home to get some of her clothes. She went with the midwife.

In the meantime, Dora applied for a passport, but was refused. The Chief Rabbi exerted great efforts to get her a passport, but all his endeavours failed.

The Qashqoush's atrocious crime moved and shocked the conscience of the world. Some international eminent personalities, organizations, and embassies on behalf of their countries, among them Mr. Alain Poher President of the French Senate, Mrs. Andira Ghandi (1918-84) Prime Minister of India, and the world students organizations intervened on Dora's behalf. The Security Police Department was thus forced to grant a passport to Dora, and the Ministry of Interior instructed the Passport Department to comply accordingly.

Reliable sources testified that Dora had been given the same passport, air ticket and travellers' cheques which had been stolen by the murderers, showing that the Security Police Department had knowledge of the

criminals who committed that atrocious crime.

About two months after the slaughter of her family, Dora left Iraq and settled in another country in the world.

* * *

After the barbarous slaughter of the Qashqoush family, a series of demonstrations were held in Israel, culminating in a mass demonstration on June 12, 1973 in Dizengoff street, Tel-Aviv. It was organized by the Organization of Immigrants from Iraq in Israel, the Israel Council for Jews in Arab countries, and the Students Association, in protest against the cruel persecutions of innocent Jewish citizens in Iraq and Syria.



Demonstration in Dizengoff street, Tel-Aviv

* * *

On Saturday the 30th of June 1973, Colonel Nazim Kazzar, Director General of the Security Police Department, made an attempted coup as President Al-Bakr returned to Baghdad from a visit to Bulgaria and Poland. The coup was the most serious attempt to overthrow the five-year-old regime of Al-Bakr. Al-Bakr's regime was in the throes of another internal power struggle since Al-Bakr seized power on July 17, 1968.[2]

General Hammad Shehab, the Minister of Defence, was slain during a shootout between loyal army troops and rebel soldiers.[3] Lieutenant-General Sa'dun Ghaidan, the Minister of Interior,who was abducted with Shehab was wounded during the clash. Both Shehab and Ghaidan were members of the 15-member ruling Command Council. The Iraqi army remained on alert with tanks and armoured cars stationed in key positions in Baghdad. At last, Kazzar and his men while heading for Iran were arrested and executed.

After Kazzar's and his henchmen's executions, President Al-Bakr delivered an address in which he assured that Nazim Kazzar was fully responsible for the new wave of murderous terror in Baghdad, in order to create chaos and confusion before carrying out his unsuccessful coup.

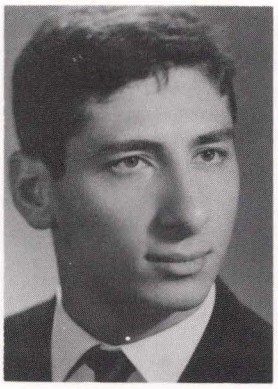
Authentic circles affirmed that during that time President Al-Bakr had demolished Qasr Al-Nahaya to support the assurance of his address.

* * *

The Security Police Department established many minor torture prisons in Baghdad. They occupied many buildings near its headquarters and transformed them into prisons. Here they imprisoned many Jews on various minor charges. Jewish victims were either imprisoned with Moslem prisoners or in buildings and rooms reserved for them.

The prison authorities gave every victim one blanket for sitting and sleeping. Families or relatives were allowed to bring their prisoners bedding, clothes, food, pocket-money, medicines and other articles, and visit them once a month.

Some of the imprisoned Jews from Baghdad were the following:



Sassoon Frank Yamen

1. Twin Sassoon Frank Yamen (1945), civil engineer.
2. Twin David Frank Yamen (1945), civil engineer.
3. Jamil Frank Yamen (1951), student.
4. Their friend Joseph Lawee (1951), student.

In the afternoon on December 8, 1968, the three brothers, together with their friend who was visiting them that day, were arrested for changing their place of residence. They were taken to the Security Police Department where they were imprisoned in a room 4x6 metres containing 10 Moslem prisoners.

As the room was small and inadequate to accommodate 14 men, the prisoners were compelled to sleep alternatively. They had their faces and heads clean-shaven. Their mother and sister were imprisoned on the

2 Jerusalem Post No 13831 d. 3.7.73
3 Jerusalem Post No 13831 d. 3.7.73

same charge in the Women's Section of the Baghdad Jail.

Sassoon was suspended on a hook of an electric ceiling fan, flogged with a filled hose, and burned with cigarettes. He was then transferred to solitary confinement. David was severely beaten and frightened to death by revolvers.

After one month, all of them were transferred to the Karkh Prison, where they suffered from hunger. Each victim was given scanty food once a day. A cup of putrefied soup and a slice of brown bread were served to each one of them.

On March 8, 1969, after the world conscience had been aroused, they were released on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars each.

As they were not allowed to apply for passports, they escaped one by one.

* * *

Some Jewish women and girls were imprisoned on minor charges in a large room in the Women's Section of the Baghdad Jail, with Moslem women prisoners and prostitutes, where they suffered all sorts of humiliations and insults.

The prison authorities gave every victim one blanket for sitting and sleeping. Families or relatives were allowed to bring their prisoners bedding and other articles and visit them once a month.

Among the imprisoned Jewesses from Baghdad were the following:

1. Mrs. Frank Yamen (1912).
2. Her daughter Dora (1943), an employee.

In the forenoon on December 9, 1968, Mrs. Yamen together with her daughter were arrested for changing their residence. Her three sons were imprisoned on the same charge.

On March 8, 1969 they were released on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars each. As they were not allowed to apply for passports, they escaped one by one.

15. Proof of Tortures to Death

1. Three days after Da'ud Sassoon Zubaida's arrest, the Post-mortem handed his corpse over to Hay the undertaker, with a medical report certifying that Da'ud died from unspecified disease.

o. Hay testified that he had found Da'ud's head lacerated and covered with blood, clear evidence that Da'ud had been so cruelly tortured that he died as a result of the tortures, in contradiction to the contents of the medical report.

2. After Nissim Ya'ir Hakham Nissim's arrest, the Post-mortem handed his corpse over to Hay, with a medical report certifying that Nissim died from unspecified disease, and that his corpse was kept in the mortuary refrigerator four months and twenty-two days.

o. Hay affirmed that he had found Nissim's corpse disfigured, proving that Nissim died from the tortures, in contradiction to the contents of the medical report.

3. Twenty-eight days after Fuad Yaakov Shasha and his father's arrest, an official announcement in a Baghdad newspaper reported that Fuad had escaped from prison.

o. His father before his death confirmed that he had been at that time imprisoned with his son Fuad, each one in a separate cell in the underground cellar of Qasr Al-Nahaya. Despite the fact that the accusation was not against him, he was cruelly beaten and two of his teeth were broken. As the accusation was against his son, proving that Fuad had been so severely tortured that he died from the tortures.

How could a Jewish victim, whose hands were tightly secured with handcuffs behind his back, imprisoned in one of the dark cells with locked iron door in the underground cellar, where many armed guards in the corridor watching continuously day and night, of the strongly guarded Qasr Al-Nahaya, surrounded by military guards with machine-guns and fixed bayonets, who was dizzy from the foul air, weak from hunger and thirst, sick from sleeplessness and crippled from cruel tortures, have escaped? If he miraculously escaped, where is he? I leave the answer to the reader!

* * *

God created all the wonders, beauty and pleasures of the world for the happiness and enjoyment of man. But, helas, man neglected all these blessings. Instead, he indulged in hatred, racial discrimination, persecution and assassination towards another man. Such unpleasant behaviour undoubtedly brought devastation and destruction to mankind.

Can humanity expect a day when man will respect the rights of another man, both descendants of the same Adam and Eve, and live with him in love and brotherhood, in peace, freedom and security, in conformity with the Declaration of Human Rights. By such delightful happening, man would have the free opportunity to fully enjoy all the blessings God bestowed upon him.

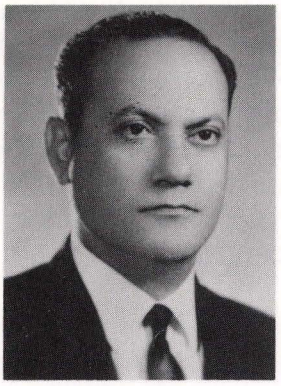
16. The Trials

Colonel Nazim Kazzar, the Director General of the Security Police Department, also planned the premeditated executions for the purpose of defaming the reputation of the ruling regime, before carrying out his unsuccessful coup.

At three o'clock in the afternoon on November 5, 1968, a Jew Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha a prominent porcelain merchant in Basra, the alleged ringleader of an espionage network, was arrested on the street. He was imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya at first in a large room with other Jewish victims and later was transferred to a solitary small cell, as testified by his brother Yeheskel and released Jewish survivors.

All the other alleged members of the ring were arrested one by one and imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya at first in a large room with other victims and later each one was transferred to a small cell.

After a time, Yeheskel, the elder brother and partner of Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha, was arrested in their stores. He testified that he was imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya at first in another large room with Moslem victims, and later was transferred to a small cell. He was cruelly beaten on his face and body, and his left ear was damaged so that he cannot hear with it any more. His hands were injured by having them placed over the holes on top of a burning gazoline stove. (His own story continued in "Executions").



Jack Atrakchi

On November 8, 1968, another Jew, Jack Atrakchi (1924), a prominent textile merchant and large estate proprietor in Basra, was arrested and imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya, as testified by Ezra Naji's brother Yeheskel. On the same day, he was cruelly tortured to death and heavily disfigured. His corpse was shown to other Jewish victims of the ring. Atrakchi's torture to death was testified by released Jewish survivors. His corpse was later disposed of.

At another time, a Christian, Sami Habib Thomas who was working in the port of Basra and was the brother of Albert Habib Thomas, was arrested and imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya and was also tortured to death, as testified by released Jewish survivors. His corpse was shown to other non-Jewish victims of the ring. His corpse was also later disposed of.

During this time, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Bazzaz, the ex-Prime Minister, and Major-General Abd Al-Aziz Al-Uqayli, the ex-Minister of Defence, both during Abd Al-Salam Aref's regime, were arrested and imprisoned in the Annex of Qasr Al-Nahaya for a long time, where they were severely tortured. Al-Bazzaz was rendered blind, deaf and mute, and paralysed. When he became half-dead, he was released. His wife sent him to London for treatment, but he died shortly after. Al-Uqayli's legs became swollen, injured and lacerated.

While the defendants of the ring were in large rooms of Qasr Al-Nahaya, they were called for interrogation by the army officers of one Investigating Committee. The officers tortured the prisoners cruelly to force them make false confessions and give false evidence for the prosecution one against the other as dictated to them. As a consequence of cruel tortures and threats inflicted on the victims, many of them did comply.

At the same time, the defendants of the ring were ordered to sweep Qasr Al-Nahaya, clean the W.Cs., and wash the dishes.

On the evening of Saturday the 14th of December, Baghdad television showed a meeting in which 2 men, Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi and Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari, alleged that they were recruited as spies by a ring under the Jewish ringleader Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha working for the interests of Israel. (Their confessions were broadcast in Arabic and recorded by Israel).

Al-Hawi spoke naturally and fearlessly when he gave the names of some members of the ring. If the member was a Jew, he emphatically mentioned "Jew". He alleged that he had joined the ring in June 1967. He was at the time a soldier in the infantry training center in Basra.

He claimed that the activities of the ring were to get military information about the position of the armed forces, their weapons and their kinds.

He said that the ring had worked with full confidence before July 17, as some Government personalities protected its activities, but after the ruling regime had taken power the ring worked with caution. He alleged that Zilkha had once said that the ruling regime was strongly supported by the public, and that the members of the ring should work with great caution in order not to fall into the hands of the authorities.

He claimed that Zilkha had asked him to submit reports about the military units in Basra. At the time, there were movements of military units towards the Kurds in the north and to the Jordanian front.

He submitted reports containing information he received from some army officers who had given him false information. Zilkha doubted the information, and asked him to strengthen his relations with the army officers concerned for the sake of getting correct information. Zilkha gave him large amounts of money for purchasing "Ivory" beads and other gifts through which he could make wide connection with army officers.

He also submitted reports to Zilkha about the naval and air bases and the infantry training center in Basra and other information. However, it was discovered later, that "our brave army officers" had given him incorrect information, he said. He claimed that Zilkha had given him 200 Iraqi Dinars for each report he submitted to him.

He alleged that Zilkha had asked him to convey nine messages, four from Zilkha, the Jew in Basra, to defendant Charles Raphael Horesh, also a Jew in Baghdad, and five from defendant Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal, a Pakistanian in Basra, to Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari in Baghdad.

He claimed that Zilkha had once asked him to convey a message to Abadan. He went via Ciba district, where the guide, Haj Yasin, helped him in the escape across the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore. From there he went to Abadan, where he stayed in Al-

Fardos hotel, in which he registered for a room under the name of "Haj Saleh", a symbolic name. In the hotel he was contacted by a man named "Salawat", also a symbolic name, to whom he handed over the message. He returned to Basra by the same way. He alleged that Zilkha had given him 200 Iraqi Dinars for each message.

He claimed that Zilkha had once told him he had a wireless transmitter. It was decided to transfer it to the Sabbatarian church in Basra. Later, afraid of the authorities, it was decided to transfer it to defendant Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim's house.

He alleged that Zilkha had once informed him that arrangements were made to send young Jews to Abadan for training in special courses in sabotage, how to poison the drinking water, in making fires, and in the use of hand grenades, to carry out extensive sabotage activities in Iraq.

After that, Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari, advocate and former member of Parliament during the Kingdom and former proprietor of "Al-Naba'a" pro-Imperialistic newspaper, explained his relationship in the ring.

He admitted that he had delivered, at four different intervals, four spy messages from defendant Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal to Abd Al-Hamid Al-Damurji.(Moslem wealthy merchant and proprietor of large landed property in Iraq).

He claimed that Al-Damurji had informed him that he was contemplating to form with his colleagues in Beirut a political organization. Its purpose would be to obtain political and military information about the Russian arms supplied to the Iraqi army, to rouse the Kurds to revolt in the north, and engage the Iraqi army in the north and prevent them from carrying out their duties properly on the Jordanian front.

The prison authorities in Qasr Al-Nahaya took the strictest precautions not to let any defendant prejudged to be hanged be tortured to death. When any defendant was in a critical condition, he was immediately sent to a hospital for treatment.

Zilkha who was affected with diabetes mellitus was given special food, and was sent three times to a hospital for treatment, as testified by his brother Yeheskel and other released victims of the ring. Other defendants of the ring were also sent for medical treatment.

After the defendants of the ring had been imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya about one and a half months where they were cruelly tortured, they were taken successively, in five series, in a closed prison car with 2 armed guards one at each side of the car for trials, as a formality, by a four-man Revolutionary Court. The Court was situated in the People's Hall, the former People's Court during Qassem's regime.

Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha sat near his elder brother Yeheskel in the prison car in the opening session of the first trial of the Court. He disclosed to Yeheskel everything which had happened to him in Qasr Al-Nahaya, and the torture to death of Jack Atrakchi whose corpse had been shown to him to frighten him.

Yeheskel found his brother Ezra Naji half his original weight, disfigured from burns, and his teeth were broken, proving that he was cruelly tortured.

Released Jewish survivors of Qasr Al-Nahaya testified that, before the opening of the first session of the Revolutionary Court, the prison authorities made the defendants wash themselves, and arranged a barber to shave the full-bearded faces of part of them, and gave a safety razor with half shaving blade to the other part to shave themselves. They also purchased new shirts, neck-ties, trousers and shoes, for those defendants whose clothes had been torn by the torturers.

While the defendants of the first series of the ring were taken to and returned from the opening session of the Court, they were imprisoned in large rooms in Qasr Al-Nahaya with other victims, to whom they disclosed

everything that happened to them in the Court.

In the opening session of the Court, huge crowds of tens of thousands were gathered at the entrance of the People's Hall. When the defendants of the first series descended from and reascended to the prison car, the populace believing that the victims were real spies inundated them with spitting, and insulted them: "Criminal Spies!" On entering the Hall, the defendants were kept in a room under strong prison guards.

On Saturday the 4th of January 1969, the Revolutionary Court held the opening session of the trial of the first series of the ring. The Court was crowded with spectators. The first part of the session was shown on television and broadcast in Arabic, and recorded by Israel. The broadcaster announced: "In this session the Court will try to-day defendant Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari and his gang of 17 defendants".

The President of the Court opened the first session with this extract: "By the name of God and the name of the people, we open the first session of our Court, the Revolutionary Court, to try the spies, agents and sabotage gangs, for the interests of Imperialism and Israel. (Applause by the audience). "I request, brothers, not to applaud! We do not want to repeat the tragedy of the past!"

After that, the President of the Court called each defendant through the prison guards to enter the court-room. Each defendant entered and stood in the dock in front of the Court.

The President, after asking each one, name, age, work, residence, told each defendant: "Have you appointed a lawyer or not?" Each one replied: "No".

The President then asked each one: "Do you want to appoint a lawyer?" 8 defendants each replied: "Yes", and 2 defendants replies were not clear. The President told each one of them: "Submit an application to the Court, and the Court will call your private Lawyer".

1 defendant replied: "I want to meet my family to ask it to appoint a private lawyer", and 2 defendants each replied: "Please contact my family and ask it to appoint a private Lawyer". The President told each one of the 3 defendants: "Submit an application to the Court, and the Court will call your private lawyer".

1 defendant replied: "I do not know any lawyer", and the President told him: "You can submit an application to the Court, and the Court will contact the corporation of barristers".

2 defendants had no reply, and the President told each one of them: "The Court will appoint a lawyer for you".

1 defendant Yeheskel Zion Zilkha, Ezra Naji's elder brother, a wise old man who was sure that their sentences were already decided, said: "I do not see the necessity for me to appoint a lawyer". His reply was heard on Baghdad television but not broadcast, and the President told him: "The Court will appoint a lawyer for you".

The Military Prosecutor read the bill of indictment against the 17 defendants of the first series of the ring. Herein under is a summary of the confessions of the important ones of them before the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya and the indictment against them:

1. Defendant Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi (1943), Moslem ex-soldier and son of a merchant in Basra, admitted the evidence against him that he had joined the ring of espionage, whose duty was to get military and civil information about Iraq.

He actually attended many meetings in Albert Habib Thomas's home, and submitted several reports about the heroic Iraqi army, its movements and the weapons it used. He contacted some army officers, and received 200 Iraqi Dinars for each report from Zilkha the ringleader.

He was ordered by Zilkha to convey messages through Sami, the brother of Albert Habib Thomas, outside Iraq. He conveyed several messages received from abroad and delivered them to Zilkha while he was in Baghdad.

He participated in the transfer of the wireless transmitter from the Sabbatarian church in Basra to Jack Atrakchi's house.

2. Defendant Albert Habib Thomas (1938), Christian employee in Basra, admitted the evidence against him that he had accepted to join the ring of espionage. He conveyed several messages from Basra to Baghdad for which he received money. He presented Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi to Zilkha. He participated in the transfer of the wireless transmitter from the Sabbatarian church in Basra to Atrakchi's house.

3. Defendant Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha (1918), Jewish porcelain merchant in Basra, admitted the evidence against him that he had contacted Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi and others and asked them to join the ring of espionage, to which they agreed.

He ordered them to submit reports about the Iraqi weapons and military secrets especially the kinds of Russian weapons supplied to the Iraqi army, as required by Israel, and convey messages to and from outside Iraq, which they did. He gave them lots of money for carrying out these duties.

He supervised the transmission of information to a Consul of a foreign country by a wireless transmitter concealed in a Sabbatarian church in Basra. A foreign ship had intercepted its signal and informed the Iraqi Government. When Zilkha knew the matter, he transferred the wireless transmitter, with the assistance of the members of the ring, from the church to Atrakchi's house.

He engaged some young Iraqi Jews and sent them outside Iraq for training in sabotage by Israeli agents. The young Jews returned to Iraq to carry out sabotage activities, for which he paid them large amounts of money.

4. Defendant Fuad Gabbay (1939), Jewish forwarding agent in Basra, admitted the evidence against him that he had joined the ring of espionage network. He attended the meetings in Albert Habib Thomas's house. He was aware when Zilkha travelled between Basra and Baghdad. He asked Al-Hawi to convey a message to Zilkha while he was in Baghdad. He received some amounts of money for his work.

5. Defendant Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim (1950), Moslem student in Basra, admitted the evidence against him that he had been ordered by Zilkha to get information about the Iraqi army, its officers, and the movements of military units.

He contacted some army officers in Basra and some soldiers who had just returned from the front, and spoke indirectly with those naive heroic soldiers about the front, the Iraqi army, the number of military units and the weapons being used, and submitted the information to Zilkha.

Zilkha spoke to him about the young Jews to be sent outside Iraq for training in sabotage for sabotaging fuel pumping stations, bridges and railway stations.

He conveyed messages from Zilkha to Sami, the brother of Albert Habib Thomas, to be sent by ships to Israel. He received money for his work.

He participated in the transfer of the wireless transmitter.

6. Defendant Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari (1910), Moslem advocate in Baghdad, admitted the evidence against him by Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi that he had received from Al-Hawi several messages which Al-Hawi received from defendant Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal in Basra for delivery to Abd Al-Hamid Al-Damurji in Baghdad, to whom the messages were addressed.

The defendant agreed to join the espionage ring working for the interests of Imperialism and Israel. The aims of the ring were to

sabotage fuel pumping stations, bridges, important public utilities, to poison the drinking water, and to use microbic war. The object of such aims was to create chaos for the purpose of changing the socialistic regime in the country, to terminate the friendship of the Soviet Union with Iraq, and to settle the question of Palestine.

The members of the organization of the ring in Beirut were: Abd Al-Hamid Al-Damurji and his colleagues. (They were the wealthiest class and most prominent Iraqi Moslem personalities during the Kingdom).

Their plan was smuggling weapons from abroad and distributing them to their supporters in the south of Iraq, to rouse them to revolt, for the purpose of creating civil war in the south and north of Iraq. By this plan, the country would be inundated with blood, and the organization would be able to seize power.

The defendant was asked by Al-Damurji and his colleagues to move to Basra to facilitate the smuggling of weapons to Ad Diwaniyah and An Nasiriyah towns in the south of Iraq.

The plan was supported by Abd Al-Rahman Al-Bazzaz and Abd Al-Aziz Al-Uqayli. Their functions were to contact some ex-army officers of the former regimes, with a view to organize some military units for the purpose of forming a new government, under the premiership of Al-Bazzaz with Al-Uqayli as Deputy Premier and Minister of Defence.

The Military Prosecutor considers this defendant the most dangerous in the ring, in view of his treason for the interests of Imperialism and Israel.

7. Defendant Yaakov Gurji Namurdi (1931), Jewish clerk in Bahjat Hasan Transport Co. in Basra, admitted the evidence against him by Albert Habib Thomas that he had received from Thomas about two years before the trials an important message, which Thomas received from Zilkha. On the envelope of the message was written in English the name of the addressee and London, and the defendant conveyed the message to its destination, showing that the defendant facilitated the conveyance of spying messages through his work.

8. Defendant Sabah Haim Dayan (1939), Jewish college graduate, admitted the evidence against him that he had travelled outside Iraq on orders from Zilkha. Outside Iraq he took a two weeks' training course in the use of explosives for carrying out sabotage activities in Iraq.

After having completed the training he returned to Basra. He met Zilkha who instigated him to sabotage the bridge in front of the square of the Lion of Babylonia in Basra. The bridge was exploded on Thursday by the young Jewish defendant Naim Khedouri Helali, who will be tried by your honourable Court with the other sabotage gang in another series of the ring.

* * *

"Revolutionary judges! I have submitted to you a brief statement of the important facts of the case, and the evidence against most of the defendants before you".

"Gentlemen! The great leader Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr, the President of the Republic and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, and his loyal revolutionary colleagues have promised from the start of July 17 revolution to stand up against the face of the conspiracy of Imperialism, reactionaries, agents and traitors. They consider the liberation of Palestine as one of the basic aims of the struggle of the socialistic progressive revolution. They have determined to fight Imperialism, Zionism and their agents outside and inside Iraq without mercy. They have considered this condition for the continua-

tion of the progressive national revolution, and as one of the necessities of the battle".

"The progressive revolutionary forces believe that the national regime in Iraq, in order to realize its aims and programs, must exterminate all treacherous elements, agents and spies. The trial to-day is the fulfilment of the promise given by the revolution and the revolutionists to discover the agents and spies and bring them to justice to receive their punishment".

"Revolutionary Judges! Spying for the interests of Imperialism and especially Israel is the most dangerous legal crime, as all are aware that Israel has expansion ambitions aiming to dominate the Arab countries. Participating in the ring of espionage network and giving Israel military information will enable it to know the Iraqi aerodromes and war-planes, the military ability of the army, and the number of recruitments. By this, it can prepare to destroy the aerodromes and war-planes, crush the Iraqi army, and then occupy the country of Iraq".

"You that you have been entrusted by the people and by all loyal revolutionary progressive forces with the Revolutionary Court, we demand you sentence to death by hanging defendants Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha and his gang, in accordance with the provisions of the Baghdad Penal Code. These defendants are the important ones in this treacherous ring. They work for the interests of Israel. They convey to Israel military information about the Iraqi troop movements at the front."

"Their death sentences are a public demand by all progressive and national forces who have faith in the revolution of July 17 and its aims. Their executions will be the frustration of the dreams of agents and spies of Zionist-Imperialistic Alliance". (Applause).

After that, the President of the Court asked each defendant: "Guilty or innocent?" Each one replied: "Innocent!"

The Military Prosecutor said: "In view of the importance of the secrecy of the proceedings of the trials, necessitating to find out the facts accurately and uncover the agents and spies, and in view of the public interest and the safety of the country, and the possibility that the enemy might benefit from the information which would be given in the trials about our heroic army at the front, its aims, and movements, I request that the trials be conducted secretly".

The President of the Court said: "In view of the request of the Military Prosecutor to conduct the trials secretly, and in view of its legality, and the fact that the trials have relation to the safety and security of the country and its military units, the Court has decided to agree to his request to conduct the trials secretly".

No spectators were allowed to witness the proceedings of the trials. After that, the first part of the opening session shown on television ended.

The second part of the first session was held behind closed doors. Yeheskel Zion Zilkha and other released victims of the first trial testified that, in this part the President of the Court said: "The Court has appointed lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan for all of you". After that, the second part of that session ended.

From the next day, the prison authorities in Qasr Al-Nahaya started to send some defendants of other series of the ring to the Court, to give false evidence against Zilkha and other defendants.

From time to time, a few superficial parts of the sessions were shown on television, in which the relative defendants acting under duress were compelled to admit guilty of espionage and sabotage activities, which they had not done. The other essential parts and full sessions were held behind closed doors.

The sudden change in the attitude of the defendants shows that the Court, with the assistance of the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya, used coercive measures and threats to force the defendants make false

confessions and give false evidence of witnesses for the prosecution one against the other.

Released Jewish victims of the alleged espionage network testified that the Court passed its verdicts on the defendants of the five trials on the 12th, 14th, and 15th of January 1969, but the verdicts were not broadcast at the time.

12TH OF JANUARY 1969

5 defendants were condemned to death by hanging

2 Jews: Naim Khedouri Helali (3rd trial), and Charles Raphael Horesh (4th trial).
1 Moslem: Abd Al-Muhsin Jar-Allah (4th trial).
1 Christian: Zaki Zetou (4th trial).
1 Pakistanian: Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal (5th trial).

2 defendants were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment

2 Jews: Aharon Salman (3rd trial), and Sa'id Zaki (3rd trial).

1 defendant was acquitted on bail

1 Jew: Khedouri Saleh Yeheskel (3rd trial).

14TH OF JANUARY 1969

4 defendants were condemned to death by hanging

4 Jews: Da'ud Yeheskel Barukh Dellal (2nd trial), Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel (2nd trial), Da'ud Ghali (2nd trial), and Sabah Haim Dayan (2nd trial).

15TH OF JANUARY 1969

17 defendants of the (1st trial) were sentenced as follows:

6 defendants were condemned to death by hanging

3 Jews: Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha, Fuad Gabbay, and Yaakov Gurji Namurdi.
2 Moslems: Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim, and Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari.
1 Christian: Albert Habib Thomas.

2 defendants were each sentenced to three years' imprisonment

2 Moslems: Abd Al-Razzaq Abd Al-Hussein Al-Jarra, and Nazar Baqir Al-Sarih.

5 defendants were acquitted on bail

3 Jews: Yeheskel Zion Zilkha, Saleh Yeheskel Abraham, and Eliahou Elias Saleh Gurji Dannoos.
2 Moslems: Jamil Haj Musa, and Muhsin Madhi.

2 defendants were set free on the spot without bail

2 Moslems: Mahdi Mohammed Ubayid, and Sadiq Hasan Fahad, shepherd.

1 defendant was sentenced in the 2nd trial on the 14th of January 1969

1 Jew: Sabah Haim Dayan.

1 defendant was sentenced to imprisonment for life

1 Moslem: Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi.
The Court condemned him to death, but after Al-Hawi's strong protest against the judgment, the Court duly commuted the sentence.

The Court also claimed that Jack Atrakchi had escaped from prison and condemned him to death in absentia, in spite of the presence of Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha to whom Atrakchi's corpse had been shown by the Investigating Committee to frighten him, and his brother Yeheskel who knew the fact.

The Court made no mention at all of Sami, the brother of Albert Habib Thomas, who was also tortured to death for similar purpose.

During each of the three days in which the Court passed its verdicts, those victims convicted to death, those sentenced to imprisonment, and those acquitted on bail were taken directly to the Baghdad Jail. They were imprisoned without chains or handcuffs in a condemned section reserved for them alone. Those victims convicted to death were imprisoned in three cells. Those sentenced to imprisonment and those acquitted were imprisoned in one cell. Sadiq Ja'afar Al-Hawi was imprisoned in a separate cell. The prison authorities took the convicts' outer garments and gave each convict a white pyjamas. All convicts sat down and slept on the ground using their shoes as pillows. They were served scanty food three times a day.

The prison guards opened the convicts' cells three times a day, in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, and allowed the convicts to use the toilet. During those intervals, all of them could meet and speak to each other when going to and returning from the lavatory. By this way, those sentenced to imprisonment and those acquitted were well acquainted with everything which had happened to those victims convicted to death in Qasr Al-Nahaya and in the Revolutionary Court.

* * *

At night after one o'clock on Monday the 27th of January 1969 the Court broadcast the verdicts of the five trials of the ring, which had been approved by President Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr. 15 convicts among them 9 Jews were charged with spying and sabotaging for the interests of Israel and were condemned to death by hanging. 1 Moslem was sentenced to imprisonment for life. 2 Moslems were each sentenced to three years' imprisonment, and 2 Jews each to six months' imprisonment. 2 Moslems and 4 Jews were acquitted on bail.

The Court charged the ring with having communicated reports to Israel about the Soviet weapons especially the tanks supplied to Iraq by way of messages. The Court alleged that the ring reports to Israel dealt primarily with data on the naval base, the Iraqi air force, and the Soviet-made rockets used by the Iraqi army.

It also alleged that the Israeli Intelligence in turn used secret agents in Holland to pass on instructions to the Basra ring.

The Court also charged the ring with having communicated similar reports to Israel through the American Consulate in Abadan by way of a wireless transmitter concealed in a church in Basra. The Court alleged that a Russian ship docked in Basra had intercepted a signal from the church transmiter, and informed the Iraqi Government about it.

The Court also charged the ring with having trained a branch of young Jews in Abadan in the use of explosives, and that late last year, this branch dynamited the bridge in front of the square of the Lion of Babylonia in Basra.

The verdicts were broadcast after the hanging.

* * *

BROADCASTS OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE TRIALS

From Friday the 17th of January 1969, the armed forces started to broadcast in Arabic every night a part of the proceedings of the five trials of the ring conducted by the Revolutionary Court. The broadcast was recorded by Israel.

Some statements of the President of the Court were told to the defendants, but not broadcast, and some of his statements were broadcast, but not told to the defendants, as proved in chapter "Proof of Premeditated Executions".

FIRST TRIAL

From Friday the 17th till Saturday the 25th of January 1969 Baghdad broadcast the proceedings of the first trial.

At the start, witness Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi and defendants Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha and others were called. Al-Hawi gave an evidence against Zilkha and the other defendants, according to his confession broadcast by Baghdad and the bill of indictment of the Military Prosecutor.

Al-Hawi claimed that he had been charged by Zilkha to convey a message to "Salawat" in Al-Fardos Hotel in Abadan, Iran. Zilkha told him to go from Basra to Ciba district by Thomas's car, and in Ciba to inquire about an illegal guide named "Haj Yasin". He acted as instructed. He claimed that the guide had crossed him the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore. He alleged that after having arrived at the Iranian shore, he took a taxi to Al-Fardos Hotel, in Abadan. In the hotel he registered for a room under the name of "Haj Saleh". With regard to passport he claimed: "I know them all".

He alleged that after having remained in his room about one hour, he was contacted by someone called "Salawat", and after having closed his room's door, he delivered the message to him. He claimed that "Salawat" had told him: "You have come at four o'clock in the afternoon". He alleged that "Salawat" had taken him for a two-hour pleasure trip. At six o'clock in the evening, they went to the Iranian shore, where he found a boat and returned to Iraq. He claimed that after having arrived at the Iraqi shore, he found a taxi, in which he returned to Basra, for which he paid the fixed fare of 5 Iraqi Dinars.

Al-Hawi further alleged that he had received several messages from defendant Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal in Basra, after having told him in the first message the secret word "Mukhlis", according to Zilkha's instruction, and delivered the messages to defendant Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari in Baghdad.

Zilkha said: "By God, I have never seen Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi before the day of my arrest on November 5, 1968 and my imprisonment in Qasr Al-Nahaya, and his evidence is absolutely a pack of lies". The other defendants said: "Al-Hawi's evidence is false".

On Saturday the 18th of January 1969, news broadcast from Baghdad claimed that witness Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi had explained to the Revolutionary Court that he joined the ring of espionage in June 1967. He claimed that the ring had held its meetings in Albert Habib Thomas's house, where Zilkha and he attended the meetings.

Al-Hawi claimed that Zilkha had asked him to get military information about the Iraqi tanks, airplanes, and the Russian weapons supplied to Iraq. He submitted several reports about such military equipment to Zilkha, for which he received from him 200 Iraqi Dinars for each report.

His first report contained information about the infantry training center in Basra, with details of the weapons available at the center. His second report contained information about the tanks, but Zilkha doubted the report, and asked Al-Hawi to submit accurate reports in the future. His last report was about the air base, the method of training, and number of air-force officers. He also submitted another report about the new naval base containing the number of torpedoes.

The news claimed that Zilkha had ordered Al-Hawi to convey messages to Abadan. Al-Hawi went in the morning, and after having delivered a message, he returned to Basra in the evening, and received 200 Iraqi Dinars from Zilkha.

Al-Hawi claimed that Zilkha had a wireless transmitter by which he was contacting "Salawat" in Abadan.

Witness Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim was called. He also gave an evidence against Zilkha. He claimed that he had received 10 or 15 Iraqi Dinars for each military report he submitted

verbally to him, and 10 Iraqi Dinars for each message he conveyed from Zilkha to Sami, the brother of Albert Habib Thomas. Zilkha said: "His evidence is a fabricated pack of lies". Then, other witnesses were successively called. Each one also gave an evidence against Zilkha.

After that, other defendants were compelled to make confessions, which they had not done, and give evidence for the prosecution one against the other.

Albert Habib Thomas confessed that he had conveyed two messages, at two intervals, from Zilkha to Abadan, and admitted that he had no passport. He alleged that Zilkha had told him to go from Basra to Ciba district by Zilkha's own car and driver, and as soon as he would find a guide dressed in black robe with a handkerchief head-gear to leave the car and go with him.

He claimed that when having conveyed the first message, he went in the evening of the next day to Ciba, and when having found a man according to Zilkha's description waiting for him in the street, he left the car. Thomas asked the man: "Are you the guide?" The man replied him: "Did Zilkha send you?" Thomas replied him: "Yes". The guide then told him: "Come on with me". He admitted that the guide was speaking Persian, and he did not know Persian.

The guide then crossed him the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore, from there he took him to a hotel in Abadan. He admitted that he could not know in which direction the guide had taken him.

He claimed that Zilkha had told him to hand over the message to the proprietor of the hotel, to be delivered to "Salawat". When having arrived at the hotel he asked: "Who is the proprieter of the hotel?" A man according to Zilkha's description came, and Thomas told him: "Deliver this message to Salawat". The proprietor of the hotel replied: "Thank you", and Thomas claimed that the proprietor knew about the matter.

He claimed that he had slept in the hotel one night, and returned in the morning of the next day. The guide was waiting for him in the hotel, as he was instructed. The guide took him back to Basra, from there he went to his office. He claimed that Zilkha had given him 50 Iraqi Dinars for conveying this message.

He alleged that after fifteen days when having conveyed the second message, he followed the same procedure, but he went from and returned to Basra on the same day. He alleged that Zilkha had given him 50 Iraqi Dinars for conveying that message.

He claimed that he had conveyed messages from Zilkha to Baghdad, for which Zilkha gave him 50 Iraqi Dinars for the first message, 70 for the second, and 80 for the third and last message.

He alleged that he had conveyed before the revolution of July 17, 1968 a message from Zilkha to Yaakov Gurji Namurdi, on the envelope of the message was written in English the name of the addressee and London, and Zilkha gave him 10 Iraqi Dinars.

Defendant Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari made a confession before the Revolutionary Court that Abd Al-Hamid Al-Damurji with his colleagues, namely, Mohammed Sa'id Al-Naqib, Mundhir Fattah Pasha, Mohammed Fakhri Al-Jamil, Mahmud Baban, Muhsin Mohammed Ali and Fuad Ali Ghalib, set up an organization in Beirut with the aim of settling the question of Palestine, and changing the ruling regime in Iraq.

He also said that 2 Jews, Albert Noonou and Shaul Sassoon Khedhouri, were supervising the work of the organization in Baghdad.

Other defendants of the other series of the ring acted in the same way and also made similar false confessions.

After that, defendant Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha was called. Herein under is a summary of the questions and answers between the President of the Court and this defendant.

Judge - "You have heard the evidence against you that you are the ringleader and financial supporter of this espionage network!"

Zilkha - "By God, it's a pack of lies!"

Judge - (Shouting) "But you know how to spy!"

Zilkha - "By God, I have never been a spy! I have never worked in espionage against this homeland!"

Judge - "You have heard the evidence against you that you are also the ringleader of the sabotage gang, and that you have sent some members of the gang outside Iraq for training in sabotage".

Zilkha - "By God, it's a pack of lies!"

Judge - "Are all witnesses lying? And is their evidence a pack of lies?"

Zilkha - "By God, I am speaking the truth! I am speaking the truth!"

Judge - (Shouting) "Why did they bring you? For nothing?"

Zilkha - "By God, I do not know! I am speaking the truth!"

Judge - "Explain to the Court who is the owner of the wireless transmitter mentioned in the evidence of the witnesses?"

Zilkha - "By God, the evidence is a pack of lies!"

Judge - "For what reason did the witnesses give the evidence against you?"

Zilkha - "I do not know!"

M.P. - *"The defendant admitted in detail his role as ringleader in this case before the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya, which has one investigating judge".*

Judge - "His confession!"

M.P. - *"All right!"*

Judge - "Hear!"

Zilkha - He said 2 words in a low voice not clear, and the Military Prosecutor interrupted him.

The Military Prosecutor read the confession extracted from defendant Zilkha by the Investigating Committee. Herein under is a summary:

Zilkha admitted that at the end of 1964, at the request of the Israeli agent who came to Abadan, he had asked Albert Habib Thomas to find someone who could enter the military Al Maqil area, take photographs of the Russian weapons especially the tanks supplied to Iraq, get information about their kinds and numbers, and submit reports about them.

Thomas brought Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi, and said that he was able to carry out this job. Al-Hawi wanted 200 Iraqi Dinars for each report. Al-Hawi submitted his first report, and the Israeli agent said that the report was good. Al-Hawi submitted several other reports. The responsible men in Israel and Iran were very satisfied with the information they had received from Al-Hawi and the other members of the ring.

The Military Prosecutor claimed that defendant Fuad Gabbay, who was a forwarding agent in Basra, was contacted to find someone who could convey messages by ship outside Iraq. Gabbay brought Sami, the brother of Albert Habib Thomas, who carried out this job satisfactorily.

Before three months, while Zilkha was in Baghdad, Al-Hawi who was informed by Gab-

bay that Zilkha was in Baghdad brought him a message, which Thomas had received from outside Iraq. Zilkha opened the message and found that it had come from the Israeli agents in Holland, in which they inquired about the Soviet rockets supplied to Iraq.

Zilkha also asked Thomas and Al-Hawi to participate in the transfer of a wireless, by which Zilkha was supervising the transmission of information to the American Consulate in Abadan. As reported, a Russian ship had intercepted its signal, and informed the Iraqi Government about it.

Judge - "You have heard your confession, which gives evidence that you are the ringleader and financial supporter of this espionage network. You are also the ringleader and financial supporter of the sabotage gang. You are the man who possesses the wireless transmitter. The evidence proves that you are the sole responsible!"

Zilkha - "Allow me to speak!"

Judge - "Speak! You have heard with your ears and seen with your eyes the evidence of the witnesses one by one against you. Speak! Speak!"

Zilkha - "By God, I have nothing to say! (His voice trembled) I have written this confession according to the evidence given against me by the witnesses!"

Judge - "Speak!"

Zilkha - "By God, I do not know all these men! I do not know neither Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi nor Albert Habib Thomas in all my life!"

Judge - "Why did the Investigating Committee bring you and not another man?"

Zilkha - "The Investigating Committee did not bring me! Al-Hawi has brought me!"

Judge - "Why did he bring you?"

Zilkha - "I do not know?"

Judge - "Speak the truth!"

Zilkha - "Allow me to speak! By God, I do not know Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi! By God, I am innocent ! By God, I am innocent! By God, I am innocent! I have never worked with them! By God, I am innocent! By God, I have never worked with them! I do not know them!"

Judge - "All right! Go out!"

Zilkha - "I do not know them! I have never worked with them!"

Judge - "All right! Go out! Innocent! Innocent!"

On January 15, 1969 all the 17 defendants of the first trial were called to enter the courtroom and stand in the dock.

The President of the Court said: "As the 17 defendants have not appointed lawyers up to now, the Court has decided to appoint lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan to defend them, in accordance with the provisions of the law of the trial of conspirators against the safety of the nation and the corrupters of the regime.



The defendants of the first trial standing in the dock

Lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan then spoke in defence of the defendants. Herein is an extract: "The blessed revolution of July 17, 1968 was accomplished to efface the disgrace of the set-back of June 5, 1967, and to participate in the battles of the Arab revolutions to the full extent."

"It has been proved by the events that happened in the Arab nations that Imperialism and its step-daughter Israel and the rings of espionage networks scattered in the Arab countries were behind all our calamities and troubles. This became quite apparent by the disaster suffered by the armies of the Arab nation of the United Arab Republic. Your Court has really discovered one of the important rings of espionage networks and the conspiracy against the Arab nations".

"The Military Prosecutor has already indicated, in addition to what I have said, the disaster suffered by the Arab nations as a consequence of the sabotage committed by networks of espionage rings, the agents of Imperialism."

"Our Arab nation and people are waiting impatiently for your just verdict. The justice of your honourable Revolutionary Court has encouraged me to accept the appointment to defend the accused".

"By studying the case, and by the evidence of witnesses for the prosecution, it has become evident to your honourable Court that this ring of espionage network working for the interests of Israel was planned and supported by defendant Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha. The roles of the defendants in this ring have been clarified. Consequently, I leave the estimation of the facts to the justice of your honourable Court."

"Regarding defendants Yeheskel Zion Zilkha and Eliahou Elias Saleh Gurji Dannoos, it has become apparent to your honourable Court that there is no legal proof against them. I would therefore request their acquittal by your honourable Court, and to your Court my deepest thanks and respects".

After that, the Court passed its verdict on the defendants of the first trial on the 15th of January 1969. (Details of the sentences are already described).

* * *

SECOND TRIAL

On Saturday the 25th of January 1969 Baghdad broadcast the proceedings of the second trial of the ring. Defendants Da'ud Yeheskel Barukh Dellal (1949), college graduate in Basra, Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel (1948), student in Basra, Da'ud Ghali (1946), student in Basra, and Sabah Haim Dayan (1939), College graduate in Basra, were called.

The President of the Court, after asking the usual questions, said: "The Court has appointed lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan for all of you."

The Military Prosecutor read the bill of indictment. The following is an extract: "By examining the case, it has become clear to the Military Prosecutor that these defendants were contacted, after the disaster of June 5, 1967, by defendant Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha to join the ring of espionage network working for the interests of the foundling Israel. The role specified to them was to sabotage the Iraqi important installations and the vital public utilities. After several meetings with defendant Zilkha, they agreed to join the ring."

"It was arranged to send these defendants to Abadan for training in the use of explosives and sabotages. Actually, a car was prepared to carry them from Basra to Ciba district, from there they were crossed the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore and were then helped escape to Abadan. In Abadan, Salim Battat, an Iranian Jew who was waiting for them, welcomed them and took them in his car to his house. He trained them for two weeks in the use of explosives and time-bombs. After completion of the training, they

were helped escape back to Basra by the same way they had been taken."

"Some time after their return to Basra, Zilkha met them and told them that it was decided to explode the bridge in front of the square of the Lion of Babylonia in Basra on the night of Thursday. They agreed to this decision. Zilkha handed the explosives kept in a carton over to them, and they left to carry out the duties entrusted to them."

"Defendant Naim Khedouri Helali, accused in the third trial, put the explosives under the bridge. After three minutes there was an explosion. The defendants then returned to Zilkha's house and informed him that the operation had been successfully carried out. Each one of them received 120 Iraqi Dinars for his participation in this explosion. This operation has been confirmed by the evidence of witnesses for the prosecution and the confessions of the defendants themselves before the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya."

"Revolutionary Judges! We have to consider the important strategic position of Iraq, its abundant mineral and agricultural resources, the most important are the petrol and sulphur. This gang wanted to sabotage them for many purposes, among them, to serve the interests of Zionism and Imperialism, to destroy the services of the country and the people, to terrorize the public, and strike at the progressive revolution and its gains. The explosives might also have killed innocent people. I have already indicated the roles of Imperialism and their step-daughter Zionism and Israel, which supply and encourage such sabotaging gangs".

"I would therefore demand you sentence these 4 defendants to death by hanging, as a punishment for what their criminal hands have committed, and for terrorizing others who might be willing to join such rings. By their executions, the progressive revolutionary regime in Iraq will be firmly established under the great leader Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr and his loyal revolutionary colleagues."

After that, the President of the Court asked each defendant: "Guilty or innocent?" Each one replied: "Innocent!"

The President then ordered that defendant Da'ud Ghali to remain alone, and the other defendants to leave the court-room.

As a consequence of cruel tortures and threats, the defendants were compelled to make false confessions and give false evidence of witnesses for the prosecution one against the other. Each one of them claimed that Zilkha had sent him to Abadan for training in the use of explosives, and promised to pay him large amounts of money. Each one claimed that after training and returning to Basra, he received 100 Iraqi Dinars from Zilkha.

Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel claimed that Zilkha had instructed him to come to his shop with a change of underclothes and be prepared to go to Abadan.

When Yeheskel went to Zilkha's shop the next evening, he found there a man dressed in robe with a handkerchief head-gear, who took him "in his car".

He claimed that at four thirty in the morning, he had went alone with the man. When having arrived at Ciba district, he found a boat in which the man crossed him the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore. After having arrived at the Iranian shore, the man took him to a café. In the café a man named Abbud Badran came, who took him in his car and helped him escape to Abadan.

After the President having listened to his confession, the defendant was ordered to leave.

Sabah Haim Dayan alleged that he had went in the car arranged for by Zilkha and picked up the other 4 young Jews who were waiting separately around the streets, and all the 5 went together to Ciba district. He claimed that a man had crossed them together the

Shatt Al-Arab river to the Iranian shore and then helped them escape to Abadan.

He alleged that the training was only from photographs of explosives in three lectures. The Military Prosecutor said: "The defendant has now told the honourable Court that the training was simply from photographs. Whereas he mentioned in his confession before the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya a detailed operation of "detonation of explosives, which were kept in a petrol-tin. When the explosives were detonated, the explosion caused the earth's dust to fly. He also mentioned time-bombs, showing that there was actual training for the purpose of carrying out sabotage activities after his return to Iraq."

"By God, I did not see dynamite! Photographs of explosives only! Time-bombs were not shown to us at all!", Dayan replied.

"When did you go to Zilkha's house?", the judge asked him. "I did not go! I did not even know where the house is!", Dayan replied.

After the President having heard his confession, the defendant was ordered to go out.

Da'ud Yeheskel Barukh Dellal claimed that he and the other 4 young Jews had went to Abadan. In Abadan Salim Battat trained them in the use of explosives in a field owned by him.

After the President having listened to his confession, the defendant was ordered to leave.

Da'ud Ghali who was ordered to remain alone in the Court at the opening session of this trial was called again. Herein under is an extract of an exchange of questions and answers between the President of the Court and this defendant:

Judge - Defendant Da'ud Ghali to be called. "Mention to the Court who contacted you to join the ring of espionage and the sabotage gang."

Ghali - "I was contacted by Zilkha to join the sabotage gang".

Judge - "For whose interests was the aim of this gang?"

Ghali - "On the basis of the interests of Israel."

Judge - *(To the Military Prosecutor)* "Any question?"

M.P. - *"Nothing."*

Judge - "Go out!"

Da'ud Yeheskel Barukh Dellal was called again to give evidence against defendant Da'ud Ghali. The following is an extract of an exchange of questions and answers between the President of the Court and this defendant:

Judge - "Did Da'ud Ghali go with you?"

Dellal - "Yes."

Judge - "In what were you trained?"

Dellal - "We were trained in explosives."

Judge - "Did the agent explain to you how to use the explosives?"

Dellal - "There were explosives. The man was Salim Battat."

Judge - "Did Salim Battat train you?"

Dellal - "Yes. He took us in his car to his house. He told us that the training was to be in his ground."

Judge - "Was the training in a ground owned by him?"

Dellal - "Yes."

* * *

Witness Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim, who claimed that he was charged by Zilkha to join the young Jews to Abadan but he refused, gave evidence against each one of them.

Lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan then spoke in defence of the defendants: "The aforementioned 4 defendants were brought to your Court for trial on charges of having been members of a sabotage gang managed and supported by Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha. "Their action is in conformity with the provisions of the Baghdad Penal Code which condemn them to death."

"It has been proved by the proceedings of the trial and the evidence of witnesses that Zilkha exploited the sentiments of these young men and induced them to carry out sabotage activities. The confessions of the defendants are proof of their repentance for what they were induced to do. They deserve pity and clemency as they are still young."

"I am confident that the justice of your Revolutionary Court, when issuing your just verdict, will take into consideration what I have indicated."

After that, the Court passed its verdict on the defendants of the second trial on the 14th of January 1969. All the 4 defendants were condemned to death by hanging.

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THIRD TRIAL

On Saturday the 25th of January 1969 Baghdad broadcast the proceedings of the third trial of the ring. Defendants Naim Khedouri Helali (1950), university student in Basra, Aharon Salman (1948), student in Basra, Sa'id Zaki (1948), student in Basra, and Khedouri Saleh Yeheskel (1950), sick from Basra, were called.

The President of the Court, after asking the usual questions, said: "The Court has appointed lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan for all of you."

The Military Prosecutor read the bill of indictment. The following is an extract: "By examining the case, it has been clear from the evidence of the witnesses that these defendants are members of a Jewish sabotage gang. They were trained in sabotage for sabotaging military and civil installations and important centers in Iraq, for creating confusion and chaos, according to instructions issued to them by the foundling Israel. This gang is managed by defendant Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha."

"These defendants are obedient servants in the hand of Imperialism and its agent Israel. Their training in sabotage is to enable the foundling Israel to manifest its supremacy and realize its ambitions of expansion. The aim of the defendants to carry out such sabotages was confirmed by the evidence for the prosecution."

"I therefore demand you sentence the defendants to death by hanging in accordance with the provisions of the Baghdad Penal code. By their executions, they will be exterminated together with those wishing to sabotage bridges, petrol pipe lines, military installations, and inundate the country with blood and chaos. Their executions will give moral support to the heroic armed forces at the front, waiting for the day when they can realize the wish of the socialistic progressive revolution under the leadership of the great leader Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr and his loyal revolutionary colleagues."

After that, the President of the Court asked each defendant: "Guilty or innocent?" Each one replied: "Innocent!"

The President then ordered that defendant Naim Khedouri Helali to remain alone, and the others were taken out.

Naim Khedouri Helali, who was under torture and threats, was compelled to make his confession exactly as dictated to him. He also claimed that he received 100 Iraqi Dinars

from Zilkha for having gone to Abadan for training in the use of explosives.

Da'ud Yeheskel Barukh Dellal, of the second trial, was called to give evidence against defendant Naim Khedouri Helali. Herein under is an extract of an exchange of questions and answers between the President of the Court and this defendant:

Judge - "Mention to the Court the role of defendant Naim Khedouri Helali in the ring of espionage and the sabotage gang".

Dellal - "Naim Khedouri Helali was in the sabotage gang."

Judge - "Was he trained in Abadan?"

Dellal - "Yes. In Abadan."

Judge - "Who contacted you?"

Dellal - "Zilkha contacted me."

Judge - "In what was he trained?"

Dellal - "He was trained the same as we were trained."

Judge - "What is the aim of this training?"

Dellal - "Carrying out sabotage activities."

Judge - "How much time was the training?"

Dellal - "2 weeks."

Judge - "When you visited Zilkha, was the defendant together with you in Zilkha's house?"

Dellal - "Yes."

Judge - "What did Zilkha ask you?"

Dellal - "Zilkha asked us whether we were able to carry out any sabotage activity."

Judge - "You mentioned in your confession before the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya that Zilkha asked you to explode the bridge. Is it so?"

Dellal - "Yes."

Judge - "In the meeting held in Zilkha's house in which Zilkha decided and told you: "To-day or on Thursday at nine thirty at night, you must carry out sabotage activity."

Dellal - "Yes."

Judge - "It is apparent that Helali was to carry out the sabotage activity. Did Zilkha prepare a carton containing explosives?"

Dellal - "Zilkha said it contained explosives."

Judge - "How much did Zilkha give to Helali?"

Dellal - "100 Iraqi Dinars."

Judge - "And to you also 100?"

Dellal - "Yes."

Judge - "How much to the other group with you?"

Dellal - "Each 100."

Judge - "Did Zilkha tell you that the aim of the gang in which you joined was to work for the interests of Israel?"

Dellal - "Yes."

Judge - *(To Naim Khedouri Helali)* "Is the evidence of the witness correct or not?"

Helali - *"Correct."*

Judge - *(To lawyer)* "Any question?"

Lawyer - *"Nothing."*

Judge - "Go out!"

At the end of this trial, lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan spoke in defence of the defendants according to his usual procedure.

After that, the Court passed its verdict on the defendants of the third trial on the 12th of January 1969. Naim Khedouri Helali was condemned to death by hanging. Aharon Salman and Sa'id Zaki were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Khedouri Saleh Yeheskel was acquitted on bail.

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FOURTH TRIAL

On Sunday the 26th of January 1969 Baghdad broadcast the proceedings of the fourth trial of the ring. Defendants Charles Raphael Horesh (1925), prominent Jewish commission agent in Baghdad, Abd Al-Muhsin Jar-Allah (1924), Moslem merchant in Basra, and Zaki Zetou (1929), Christian merchant in Basra, were called.

The President of the Court, after asking the usual questions, said: "The Court has appointed lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan for all of you".

The Military Prosecutor read the bill of indictment, in which he accused the defendants of treason for the interests of Israel, and demanded their death sentences by hanging in accordance with the provisions of the Baghdad Penal Code.

The President of the Court then asked each defendant: "Guilty or innocent?" Each one replied: "Innocent!"

Defendants Charles Raphael Horesh and Zaki Zetou refused to make confessions and give evidence against others as dictated to them. The President called witnesses who gave evidence against them.

Horesh who was charged with having received 4 messages from Zilkha through Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi said: "By the Almighty God, I have never known Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha in my life. He has been imprisoned with me in the same room in Qasr Al-Nahaya, but I knew who he was only after a long time."

Zetou who was charged with having transferred the wireless transmitter from the Sabbatarian church in Basra to Jack Atrakchi's house said: "In all my life, I have never seen a wireless transmitter. In all my life, I have never seen how big or small it is."

Lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan then spoke in defence of the defendants: "It is known to your honourable Court that the reason of my presence before you is that the text of the law necessitates the appointment of a lawyer for the defence of the defendants. I was therefore charged with this task by your honourable Court in accordance with the law in force. The honourable Court excuses me for examining the evidence according to the sacred duty of defence."

"I request to be excused by the public for my acceptance of the appointment for the defence of the defendants standing before your Court. It was only done because the law necessitates such appointment."

"By studying the case relating to the aforementioned 3 defendants, the defence considers, by the examination of the evidence for the prosecution, that there are confessions and evidence against each of the defendants. What will the position of the defence be on the obtained evidence? And what can the defence say about the confessions made by the defendants before you?"

"Under the circumstances, I can do nothing but to leave the estimation of the evidence to the justice of the honourable Court. If the honourable Court will take the evidence into consideration, I request that the defendants be given sympathy when the Court will issue its just verdict on them. The decision is left to the justice of the Court. The Court might consider whether anyone of them could become a useful citizen in the future."

After that, the Court passed its verdict on the defendants of the fourth trial on the 12th of January 1969. All the 3 defendants were condemned to death by hanging.

* * *

FIFTH TRIAL

On Sunday the 26th of January 1969 Baghdad broadcast the proceedings of the fifth trial of the ring. Defendant Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal (1909), Pakistanian proprietor of a commercial office comprising more than 30 employees in Basra, was called.

The President of the Court, after asking the usual questions, said: "The Court has appointed lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan for you."

The Military Prosecutor read the bill of indictment. The following is an extract: "By examining the case of the defendant, it has become clear that Zilkha instructed witness Al-Hawi to go to the defendant in his office for some work. Al-Hawi went to the defendant, and after having told him the secret word "Mukhlis", as he was instructed by Zilkha, the defendant gave him a message to convey to witness Al-Bachari in Baghdad."

"Al-Hawi actually carried out this task and received 200 Iraqi Dinars from Zilkha for conveying this message. Al-Hawi received four additional messages from the defendant, at different intervals, and conveyed them to Al-Bachari. Al-Hawi received 200 Iraqi Dinars for each message, which is clear evidence that the contents of the messages were important."

"Witness Al-Bachari has confirmed that he received through witness Al-Hawi five messages addressed to Abd Al-Hamid Al-Damurji from the defendant."

"The proceedings of the case indicate that the defendant is a member of the ring of espionage network working for the interest of Israel, whose aims are getting military and civil secrets and conveying the information received by the ring."

"If these messages were strictly commercial, there was no need for the payment of 200 Iraqi Dinars by Zilkha the ringleader of this dangerous network for each message. On the other hand, there was no need for the use of a secret word when conveying messages. The secret word was used by the members of the ring when conveying information or messages, as indicated in the proceedings of the previous trials conducted by your honourable Court."

"The action of the defendant is in conformity with the provisions of the Baghdad Penal Code. I therefore demand you sentence him to death by hanging. By his execution, he will receive the punishment he deserves for what his criminal hands have committed against this country, which gave the means of living and tranquility to him and to his family. His execution will be a restraint on anybody wishing to spy and conspire on our socialistic, liberating, and progressive revolution under the great leader Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr and his loyal revolutionary colleagues."

After that, the President of the Court asked the defendant: "Guilty or innocent?" The defendant replied: "Innocent!"

The defendant refused to make a confession as dictated to him. The President called witness Al-Hawi. Al-Hawi gave evidence against him.

* * *

At the end of this trial, lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan spoke in defence of the defendant according to his usual manner. He confirmed the Military Prosecutor's accusation.

After that, the Court passed its verdict on the defendant of the fifth trial on the 12th of January 1969. Kokal was condemned to death by hanging.

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As a consequence of cruel tortures and threats, most of the defendants of the 5 trials of the ring were compelled to make false confessions and give false evidence as dictated to them one against the other to the Revolutionary Court.

Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha, Charles Raphael Horesh, Zaki Zetou and Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal, who were the exceptions, refused to comply. They were severely tortured in Qasr Al-Nahaya, as testified by Yeheskel who found his brother Ezra Naji disfigured, and by Hay, the undertaker, who found Charles' corpse heavily disfigured before burial.

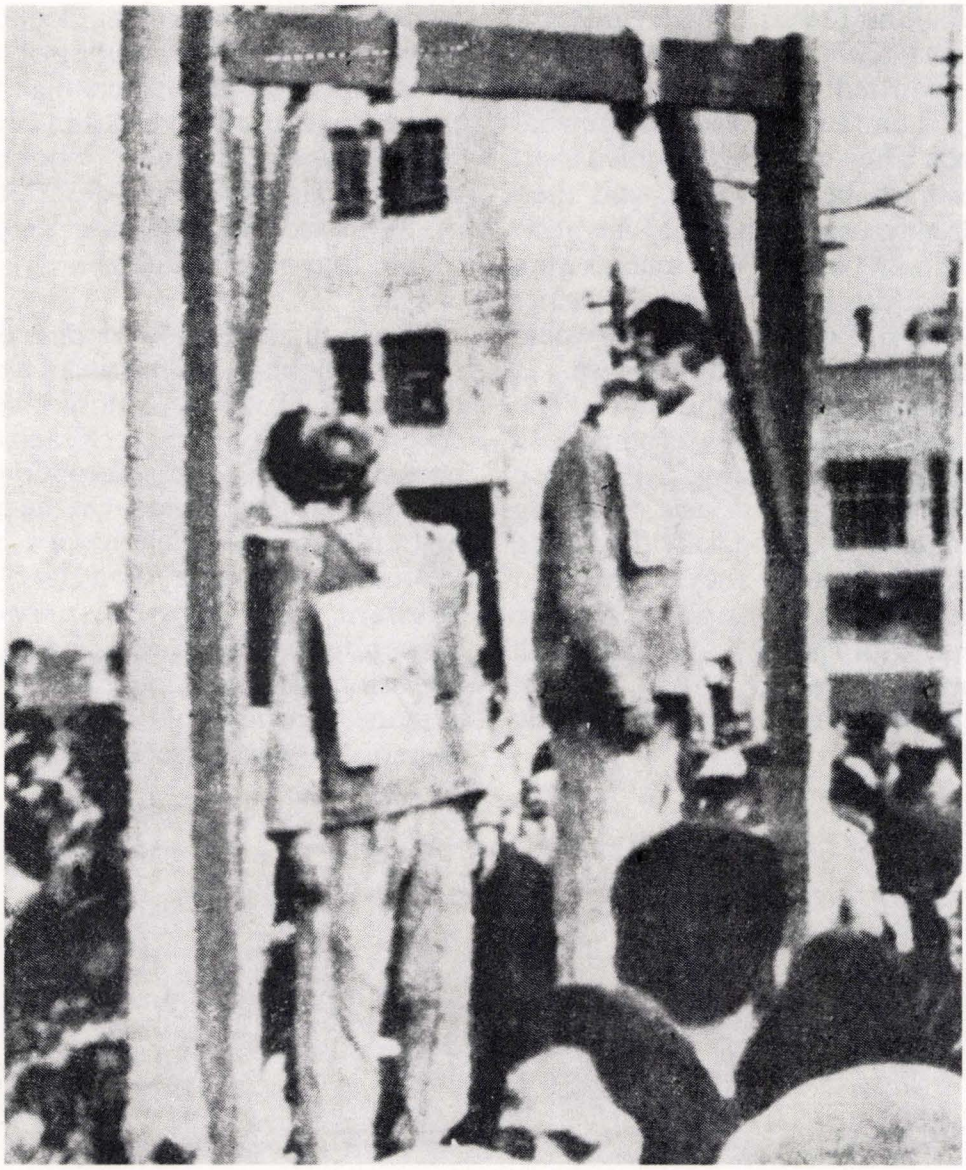
17. Executions

On the morning of Monday the 27th of January 1969 all the Jewish children in Baghdad went as usual to their schools. Within half an hour, all returned to their homes crying and weeping. Their families asked them what was the matter. They weepingly replied that: "The 9 Jews have been hanged, and their corpses are already suspended in the Liberation Square in the South Gate." Their schools were closed down that day in mourning. It was not announced when and where the hanging would be carried out. It was executed by surprise.

The tragic news stunned the Jews. The whole Iraqi Jewish community was plunged in deep mourning and weeping. All Jewish families started to weep, first, as a mourning for the 9 innocent Jews especially the young ones, and second, because they were afraid lest their husbands and sons would also be falsely charged with spying and hanged. All Jewish families heard their Jewish neighbours' cries and weeping which greatly intensified their own.

From the Liberation Square, the sad and distressed Jews heard the broadcaster joyfully announcing the hanging of the criminal spies, and triumphantly calling the public to come to see their suspended corpses. "Today is your festival!" shouted the announcer. He gave a live description of tens of thousands of rejoicing demonstrators converging on the square.

Television then showed one of the most shocking sights in the history of mankind. The corpses of 11 victims, whose faces were uncovered and on the chest of each corpse a big poster was tied, were suspended on scaffolds in the Liberation Square. On the posters were written in large Arabic letters: Spy! Name! Profession! (in case of a Jew) Jew! City! Jubilant huge crowds surrounded the suspended corpses. Over the radio and television, wild rejoicing, frenzied chanting of slogans, thunderous hand clapping and hysterical cheering were heard.



The hanging

The radio and television heralded that the ruling regime pledged to crush spies. They screamed that: "This is the beginning!" "Not one spy shall remain in Iraq!" They announced that 200,000 students and workers were shouting: "Death to all traitors and Imperialistic collaborators!" They said that the exuberant demonstration lasted until after midday. They added that: "The people of Iraq are rejoicing because this is the first time that traitors against the Iraqi Republic are hanged!" Planes roared over the capital, and cables enthusiastically supporting the Revolutionary Court's decision flowed into Qasr Al-Nahaya from all high rank army officers and public organizations, federations and associations throughout the country.

Released Jewish survivors testified that at the same time the prison authorities in Qasr Al-Nahaya had installed loud-speakers in the prison-yard and took hundreds of prisoners there. They also placed radios, turned up loudly, in the corridors of all cells of those prisoners too crippled by tortures who could not go to the yard, so that the jubilant cries from the Liberation Square, announcing the hanging of the spies, the rejoicing demonstrators and the pledge of the ruling regime to crush all other spies, could be heard throughout.

On that day in Qasr Al-Nahaya food was distributed as usual, but none of the prisoners could eat, as they were too horrified.

Before the hanging, the Directorate General of Awqaf in charge of religious matters sent a message to the Chief Rabbi, Sassoon Khedhouri, directing him to send someone to the Baghdad Jail on the eve of January 27 to recite prayers with the condemned Jews. The Chief Rabbi sent Yusuf Sa'ati (1904-69), who was working in the Jewish Community. (His own story continued in "The Unbearable Shock").

Khatun Sa'ati, Yusuf Sa'ati's widow, testified that her husband before his death had told her that he was taken into a room filled with armed guards. 8 Jews clothed in red pyjamas stood handcuffed in the middle of the floor. A bright light flashed upon them, and all appeared in glowing red. Yusuf was highly horrified by the dreadful sight. He then started reading the traditional prayers in Hebrew, and the Jewish victims repeated his words: "Hear O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One!" The prison guards shouted at Yusuf and threatened him with their weapons that he must recite the prayers in Arabic not in Hebrew, otherwise, they would beat him. Yusuf frightfully trembled like a leaf stopped reciting the prayers in Hebrew and started to read them in Arabic. After the prayers, he was ordered to leave. He left shocked, terrified and trembling.

Hay, the undertaker, testified according to reliable sources that, at one o'clock after midnight on Monday the 27th of January 1969, 11 victims among them 8 Jews were hanged. The victims were hanged before the broadcast of the verdicts. The hanging ceremony was attended by the members of the Revolutionary Court.

Before the hanging, all the Jewish and non-Jewish victims who were standing in front of the gallows cried out together in an excessively emotional voice: "We are innocent! We are innocent! We are innocent! Witness Heaven! Witness Heaven!"

After the hanging, at two o'clock after midnight on Monday the 27th of January 1969, the corpses of the 11 victims were taken to the Liberation Square near the South Gate, where they were suspended on scaffolds just installed.

3 other victims, among them Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha, were sent by plane to Basra where they were hanged, and their corpses were suspended in a square in Basra. Their faces were also uncovered and on the chest of each corpse a big poster was also tied similar to those on the chests of the other victims who

were hanged in Baghdad. Baghdad radio announced that huge rejoicing demonstrations also took place in Basra. It was said that thousands spent the night in the open waiting to see the hanging. Jubilant crowds also surrounded the suspended corpses, chanted slogans frantically, hand clapped hysterically, and rejoiced and cheered wildly.

The possessions in Iraq of the victims hanged were confiscated as usual according to Government regulations in force.

Jews Hanged and Suspended in the Liberation Square in Baghdad

1. Charles Raphael Horesh (1925), prominent commission agent in Baghdad.

2. Yaakov Gurji Namurdi (1931), clerk in Bahjat Hasan Transport Co. Basra.

3. Fuad Gabbay (1939), forwarding agent in Basra.

4. Sabah Haim Dayan (1939), college graduate, Basra, auto spare parts dealer.

5. Da'ud Ghali (1946), student in Basra.

6. Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel (1948), student in Basra.

7. Da'ud Yeheskel Barukh Dellal (1949), college graduate in Basra.

8. Naim Khedouri Helali (1950), university student in Basra.

Non-Jews Hanged and Suspended in the Liberation Square in Baghdad

9. Abd Al-Muhsim Jar-Allah (1924), Moslem merchant in Basra.

10. Zaki Zetou (1929), Christian merchant in Basra.

11. Albert Habib Thomas (1938), Christian employee in Basra.

Jew Hanged and Suspended in a Square in Basra

12. Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha (1918), prominent porcelain merchant in Basra.

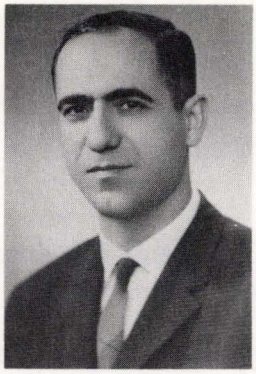
Non-Jews Hanged and Suspended in a square in Basra

13. Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal (1909), Pakistanian owner of a commercial office comprising more than 30 employees in Basra.

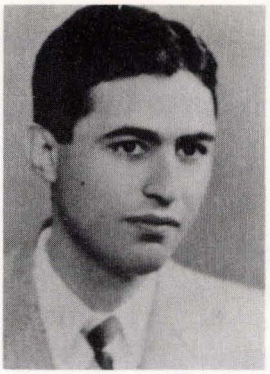
14. Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim (1950), Moslem student in Basra.

Non-Jew Hanged Later in Baghdad (without suspension in the Liberation Square)

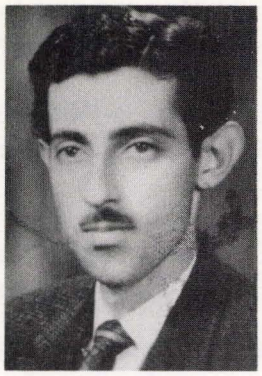
15. Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari (1910), Moslem advocate in Baghdad.



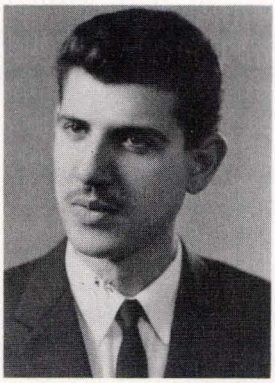
Charles Raphael
Horesh



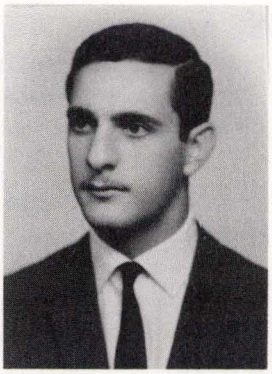
Yaakov Gurji
Namurdi



Fuad Gabbay



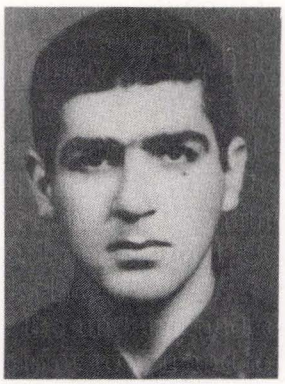
Sabah Haim Dayan



Da'ud Ghali



Yeheskel Saleh
Yeheskel



Da'ud Yeheskel
Barukh Dellal



Naim Khedouri
Helali



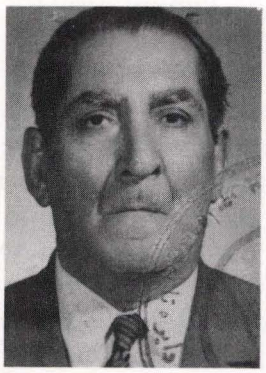
Ezra Naji Zion
Zilkha

Jews Acquitted



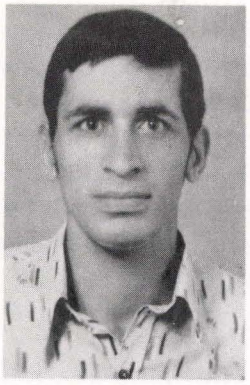
Yeheskel Zion Zilkha

1. Yeheskel Zion Zilkha (1900), elder brother of Ezra Naji. (His own story continued from "The Trials"). He testified that he had been released with a cash of 1,000 Iraqi Dinars about twenty-five days after the hanging. As he had no more money, the Jewish Community paid the amount on his behalf. When passports were issued to Jews again, he was granted a passport, but was withdrawn by the Military Intelligence Department. He was a partner with his brother Ezra Naji. Their two stores were wholly confiscated including his share.



Saleh Yeheskel
Abraham

2. Saleh Yeheskel Abraham (1908-77), liquor and empty bottles merchant in Basra, father of Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel who was hanged. At night on November 5, 1968 he was arrested at home. He was released with a cash of 1,000 Iraqi Dinars paid by his relatives.



Khedouri Saleh
Yeheskel

3. Khedouri Saleh Yeheskel (1950), the second son of Saleh Yeheskel Abraham. He testified that he had been imprisoned in a dark small solitary cell in the underground cellar of Qasr Al-Nahaya, and cruelly tortured.

Stinging blows were stricken at the back of his neck as a consequence of which, his cerebellum was gravely injured, and he suffered from severe mental disorders and hallucination. He became epileptic and hysterical.

One of his hands was immersed into a boiling water, and the whole outer layer of the skin and all the nails were completely removed. He suffered from shooting pain, and the inner layer became putrefied. As his hand was severely injured, his wound was treated by the prison male nurse in his cell. Although the wound healed up after a long time, he could not move his fingers. They became stiff and attached together. After leaving Iraq, he underwent two operations, and he could move his fingers. Furthermore, the torturers broke one of his front teeth.

As he became sick and epileptic, he was released with a cash of 500 Iraqi Dinars in-

stead of 1,000 Iraqi Dinars paid by his relatives.

4. Eliahou Elias Saleh Gurji Dannoos (Eli Dannoos) (1941). He returned to Baghdad following the warning issued by Prime Minister Tahir Yahya in 1964 during Abd Al-Salam Aref's regime to all Iraqi Jews abroad to return to Iraq, otherwise, they were to be denationalized, and all their landed property in Iraq were to be sequestrated.

On November 13, 1968, when Charles Raphael Horesh was arrested at his office, he was also arrested while seeking a job there. He was released with a cash of 1,000 Iraqi Dinars paid by his relatives.

The court acquitted 2 Moslems and 4 Jews. The Moslems were each released on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars. But the Jews were each released with a cash of 1,000 Iraqi Dinars. The young Jew who became sick and epileptic was released with a cash of 500 Iraqi Dinars. Yeheskel Zion Zilkha affirmed that in case of non-payment, each Jew was liable to serve a sentence of one year's imprisonment.

* * *

On January 29, 1969, two days after the hanging, the Post-mortem Department phoned the Chief Rabbi to send some men to take the corpses of the Jews hanged for burial. The Chief Rabbi sent Hay Da'ud Bassoun (Yusuf Bassoun) with 2 assistances.

Hay affirmed that at night the Post-mortem had handed the corpses of 8 Jews hanged over to him, with a medical report certifying their deaths. He found the corpses clothed in one-piece red pyjamas over their under-clothes. They wore their own socks. He saw one of Fuad Gabbay's eyes blinded, Charles Raphael Horesh's corpse heavily disfigured, and the corpses of the other Jews injured. He clothed each corpse in burial clothes over the outer garments and marked it with the respective name and number. The armed guards protested. He replied that burial clothes are for all dead.

About 50 military cars filled with armed secret Security police escorted Hay to the Jewish cemetery to ensure secret burial. The martyrs' families were not allowed to attend. As the Chief Rabbi was afraid lest the populace would remove the corpses from their graves and destroy them, he arranged the building of the graves with reinforced concrete on the same night.

The Chief Rabbi also sent Yusuf Sa'ati to the Jewish cemetery to recite "Kaddish", the traditional prayer for the dead. Yusuf's widow affirmed that, while her husband was reciting the prayer, the Security police had threatened him that he ought not to read prayer for criminal spies. He told them that prayer is traditional burial rite in all religions. He trembled with fear lest he was to be harmed.

* * *

The grieved and distressed Jews in Baghdad declared the black day of the hanging of 9 Jewish martyrs a day of fast and mourning, and remained bitterly weeping in their homes.

In the afternoon, they held a most impressive "Hespaid", lamentation for the dead, and "Selihoth", penitential prayers, at Meir Tweg Synagogue. The first, as a mourning for the 9 innocent Jews who were hanged, and the second, to pray to God for mercy to deliver their husbands and sons who might also be falsely charged with spying and hanged.

"Hazzan", cantor, Salman Dabby, recited "Hashkaba", prayer for the repose of the souls of the dead, lugubriously read "Qinah", lamentation, with such feelings that all the men, women and children fiercely wept.

All lifted their hands towards Heaven solemnly praying to God to perform a miracle and save them from such persecutions. All cried out together: "God save us! God save us! God save us!

Subsequently, the Jews in Baghdad declared frequent fast days, and held "Selihoth" in the afternoon at the same synagogue, where they wept and prayed to Saviour God for deliverance.

On the 7th, 21st, and 30th days, and on the first anniversary of the hanging of 9 Jews in Iraq, the Jews in Baghdad declared a day of fast and mourning, and held "Selihoth" and memorial services at Meir Tweg Synagogue.

On the 30th day, Yeheskel Zion Zilkha, just recently released, cried and wept so emotionally and bitterly over the hanging of his brother that the grief of the congregation was intensified, and the whole atmosphere was transformed into incessant tears, violent fits of crying, and passionate weeping.

* * *

The hanging of innocent Iraqi Jews in Baghdad and Basra on religious discrimination shocked the world. Mass rallies held in many countries raised protests against the hanging. In New York City tens of thousands demonstrated before the UN and the Iraqi Mission.



The demonstrations in front of the Iraqi Embassy in London



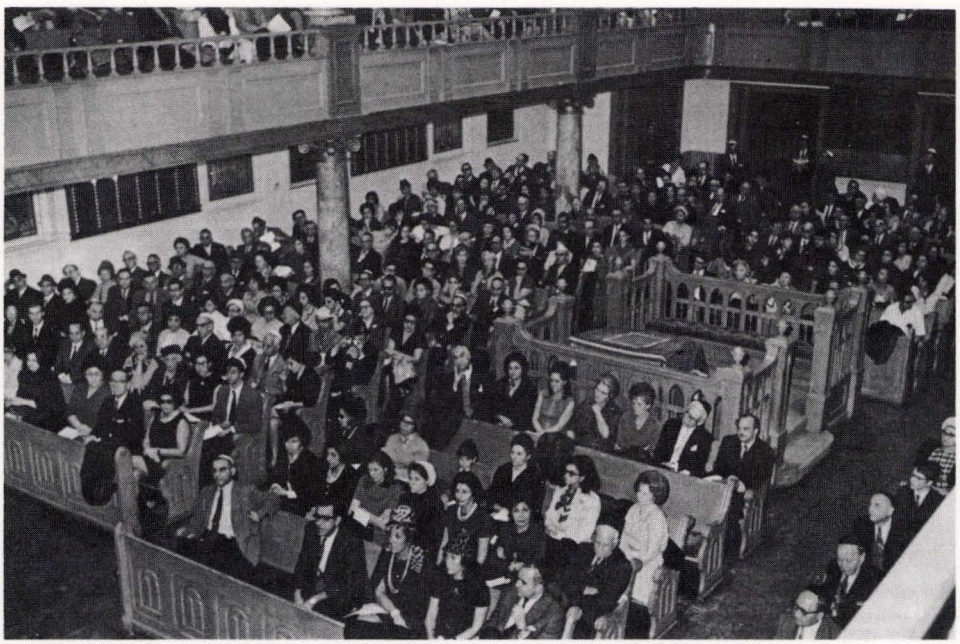
The demonstrations in Rome

The American Jews of Iraqi origin in New York reacted on the hanging of 9 Jewish martyrs in Iraq and founded the American Committee for Rescue and Resettlement of Iraqi Jews under the presidency of Professor Heskel M. Haddad, M.D.

On the first anniversary, the President of the Committee organized a mass memorial service at Kehilath Jeshurun, one of the major synagogues in New York City, which attracted thousands of Jews and non-Jews. The audience crowded the main sanctuary and balcony, with several hundreds standing in the street listening to the speakers on loud speakers.



Professor Heskel M. Haddad addressing the memorial service in New York.
Left to right
On the podium: 2nd US. Congressman Lowenstain,
3rd US. Senator Goodell,
5th Ruben Horesh, whose brother Charles
Horesh was hanged in Baghdad



The audience

The UN. Secretary General, U. Thant (1909-74), expressed his regret and concern at the hanging of 14 victims including 9 Jews in Iraq on charges of espionage. He feared that it would harm peace efforts in the area.

A UN. spokesman said that on January 13 U. Thant had called at the Iraqi Ambassador, Adnan Pachachi, and requested him to convey his "deep concern" at the trials to the Baghdad Government. The Secretary General drew particular attention to the impact they would have on public opinion both inside and outside Iraq. But no reply to the appeal was received.[1]

* * *

The 9 innocent Iraqi Jews hanged in Iraq were sacrifices and martyrs on false charges of spying for the interests of Israel. Israel, in order to render its sacred duty towards them from the humanitarian, religious and moral point of view, mourned their deaths, paid due homage to their memories, and undertook several projects to immortalize their names. Mass rallies were held throughout the country.

The full House of the Knesset, with the Prime Minister and most Cabinet Ministers in attendance, stood in silence to pay its respects to the martyrs. The Knesset Speaker, Kadish Luz, read out their names at the start of the session. Chief Rabbi, Yitzhak Nissim (1896-1981) who hails from a Baghdad family, sat above in the V.I.P. gallery with relatives of the martyrs. The Interior Minister, Haim Moshe Shapiro, ordered the national flag on Government and public institutions buildings to be flown at half-mast from noon on Monday the 27th till sunset on Tuesday the 28th of January 1969.[2]

Levi Eshkol, who was the Prime Minister of Israel, called on the world to act forthwith to prevent more murderous acts like the criminal hanging of 9 Jewish martyrs in Baghdad and Basra. Herein is an extract of his address: "What we have feared has come true. At dawn, the Iraqi authorities hanged 9 Jews. Let us pay homage to their memories. The blood of the innocent martyrs of Babylon cries out to us and to the world from Iraqi soil. The land of Iraq has become one great prison for the Jewish remnant. They are prey to terror. Iraq has become a gallows to its Jewish citizens."[3]

"For 2500 years, the Jews have helped to build up Babylon-Iraq with all their hearts and souls. Now, the persecutions have culminated in the hanging of 9 Jews, while Iraq's leaders threaten that "this is not the end". The sole and only crime of these martyrs consists in their Jewishness. We know fully well, and I declare, that all accusations levelled at these Jews were entirely baseless. It is not for nothing that their trial took place behind locked doors."

"As soon as we learned of the death sentences, we appealed to everybody likely to take action in order to rescue these people in Iraq. Many, including governments, personalities, religious leaders, as well as the U.N. Secretary General have appealed to the Baghdad rulers, but their endeavours have been fobbed off with mendacious denials, deliberate misleading, and hypocritical replies. These lies were meant to cover up for the murderous death sentences already passed, in spite of statements to the contrary. Once the ground had thus been prepared, the murder was carried out."

"From this rostrum, I demand that the entire world should act, each one to the best of his

1 Jerusalem Post No 12478 d. 28.1.69.

2 The same newspaper.

3 The same newspaper.

capacity, in order to avert further acts of murder, to save the families, and to protect the Jewish remnant. If there is a conscience in this world, let its voice be heard, now! Let it awaken to the immediate need to rescue the remnant of the Jewish communities from the Arab countries."

"Our hearts mourn for the victims, and our fraternal feelings go out to the bereaved families and communities."[4]

* * *

After Levi Eshkol's address, many members of the Knesset made similar brief statements. Abba Eban (1915), the Foreign Minister, sent a note to U. Thant, in which he urged him to take steps to safeguard the remaining Jews in Arab countries.[5]

* * *

4 The same newspaper.
5 The same newspaper.

On the 7th day of the hanging of 9 Jews in Iraq, a memorial service, planned and organized by David Petel the Chairman of the Organization of Immigrants from Iraq in Israel, was held under the patronage of Yigal Allon (1918-1980) the Deputy Premier, at a public square in Ramat-Gan.

At the platform were installed 9 stands in black colour bearing 9 torches as a token of respects for the 9 martyrs. At the front of each stand a wreath was laid. Behind the stands was erected a huge white screen on which the names in large Hebrew letters of the 9 martyrs were projected.

The service was attended by Yigal Allon, Shlomo Hillel the Minister of Police, the Mayor of Ramat-Gan, and a large audience mostly Jews emigrated from Iraq. On one side a Yemenite Jew wearing a "Zizith" over his clothes read prayer for the souls of the Jewish and non-Jewish martyrs. On the other side weeping families and relatives bitterly mourned their martyrs.

Behind the audience were demonstrators bearing large black banners, gallows, and placards written in Arabic rhymed prose that listed the crimes of the prevailing Iraqi rulers.

David Petel opened the service. After having recited the names of the martyrs, the torches were lighted. He was followed by Yigal Allon, Shlomo Hillel, and the Mayor of Ramat-Gan. At the end of the service, the demonstrators marched through the streets of Ramat-Gan.



The platform with the 9 stands and the screen



The audience

Right to left:

1st row: 2nd Shlomo Hillel
3rd the mayor of Ramat-Gan
4th Yigal Allon



Demonstrators with gallows and placards



Demonstrators with banners and placards

* * *

On the 30th day of the hanging of 9 Jews in Iraq, a solemn memorial service, planned and organized by David Petel, was held, under the patronage of Abba Eban the Foreign Minister, at the Hekhal Hattarbut Auditorium in Tel-Aviv. It accommodated 3,000 persons.

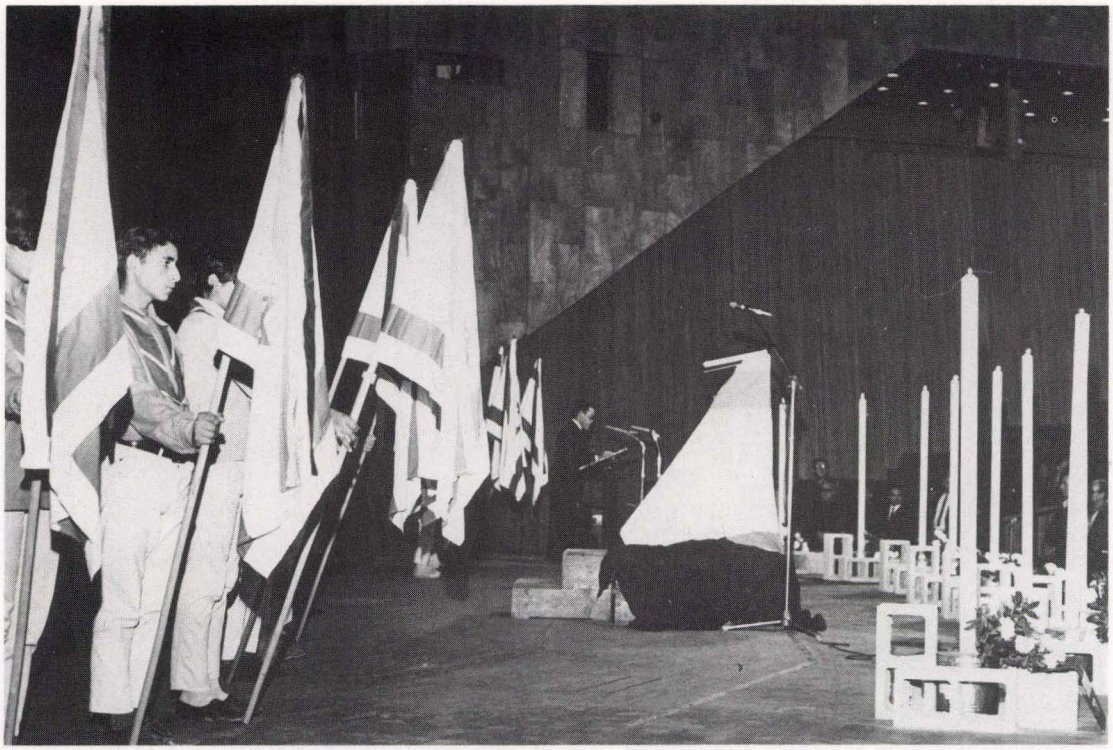
At the stage were erected 9 stands in white colour bearing 9 specially manufactured tall waxcandles as a symbol of reverence for the 9 martyrs. At the front of each stand was painted the name of each martyr in large Hebrew letters in white on black paint, above which a wreath of large white flowers was laid. Behind the stands was a platform covered with black cloth on which a rostrum veiled in a large Israeli flag was installed. At the back stood boys-scouts bearing large Israeli flags, on the right side of which stood mourning musicians.

The service was attended by high Government personalities and a large audience especially Jews emigrated from Iraq and families and relatives of the martyrs.

After David Petel having opened the service and read the names of the 9 martyrs, a boy-scout with a lighted candle in his hand lit the candles. Abba Eban then spoke, and was followed by other Government personalities, among them Abraham Halima judge of District Court in Tel-Aviv.



A view of the stage with the 9 stands and the rostrum



Boys-scouts bearing the Israeli flags behind the rostrum



The mourning musicians



The audience



David Petel opening the service and reading the names of the 9 martyrs



A boy-scout lighting the candles

* * *

Mass demonstrations in protest against the hanging of 9 Jews in Iraq were also held in Ramla and in Or Yehuda, where there are many Jews of Iraqi origin.

Israel named streets and public parks after the 9 martyrs. A public park in Or Yehuda was named "the Park of the Nine", in which a memorial rock was erected. At the front of the rock were painted the names of the 9 martyrs in large Hebrew letters in white on black paint. Another public park in Bnei Brak was named "Babel Victims' Park".



The memorial rock at the Park of the Nine
in Or Yehuda

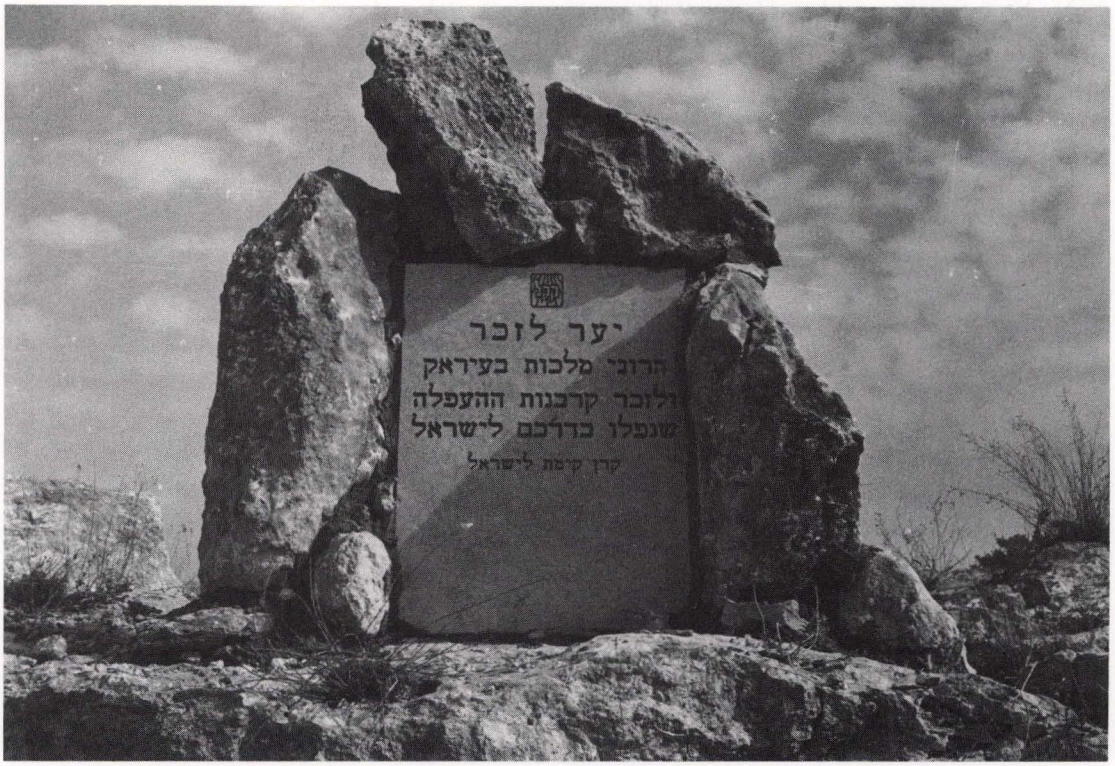
* * *

In 1969 David Petel collected contributions and planted a commemorative forest of evergreen trees on a vast land of great historical significance of the Keren Kayemeth Leisrael, Jewish National Fund, beyond the town of Lod, in which a memorial rock was erected, to commemorate all Jewish martyrs who were hanged and those who were tortured to death in Iraq as well as those who died on their way to Israel. The evergreen trees as a symbol of the martyrs' eternity in contrast to the annihilation of their lives in Iraq. The forest to be used as a public picnic area.

On July 19, 1972 the rock was ceremoniously unveiled by Golda Meir (1898-1978) the Prime Minister and David Petel. After a cantor having read verses of the Psalms of David, David Petel opened the ceremony, and was followed by Shlomo Hillel, Yaakov Zur the Director of the Keren Kayemeth, and Golda Meir.

A tree was then planted in the name of each martyr by the audience, mostly widows, orphans, relatives of the martyrs, by Golda Meir, and by Nuzhat Katsab a member of the Knesset emigrated from Iraq.

At the end of the ceremony, the cantor recited prayer for the souls of the martyrs with the accompaniment of a mourning tune of a violinist, and the audience stood in silence to pay respects to the martyrs' memories.



The memorial rock at the forest



Government personalities at the unveiling of the rock
Left to right: Shlomo Hillel, Golda Meir, Yaakov Zur, and David Petel



The audience



A cantor reading prayer with the accompaniment of a mourning tune of a violinist



The audience standing in silence to pay respects to the martyrs' memories

* * *

On the tenth anniversary of the hanging of 9 Jews in Iraq, a solemn memorial service, planned and organized by David Petel, was held at Ohel Shem Synagogue, Pardes Kas, Bnei Brak, on the evening of Thursday the 8th February 1979.

At the platform sat Samuel Weinberg the Mayor of Bnei Brak, Shlomo Hillel a member of the Knesset, Yosef Ovadia the Rishon Le Zion the Chief Rabbi of the Sephardi communities, and Rabbi David Shaul Shammash. The service was attended by the families and relatives of the martyrs and a large audience of Jews emigrated from Iraq.

After "Minhah" prayer, David Petel opened the service at the platform. At the end section of the upper gallery facing the platform, the son of Charles Raphael Horesh, who was hanged in Baghdad, unveiled a commemorative large flat white marble monument, on which were engraved in black Hebrew letters the names of the Jewish martyrs who were hanged and those who were tortured to death in Iraq as well as those who died on their way to Israel. At the front of the platform, the son of Jack Atrakchi, who was tortured to death in Baghdad, lighted a candle.

The Chief Rabbi then spoke from the religious point of view, and was followed by the Mayor of Bnei Brak, Rabbi Shammash, and Shlomo Hillel.

The service ended with the evening prayer, and "Hashkava" was read by Rabbi Shammash for the repose of the souls of the martyrs, and the audience stood in silence to pay tribute to their memories.



David Petel opening the service at the platform

Left to right:

Sitting: 1st Shlomo Hillel
2nd Chief Rabbi Yosef Ovadia
3rd Rabbi David Shaul Shammash



A part of the monument
Beside the monument standing in grief Charles Raphael Horesh's widow with her daughter.

* * *

Despite the humanitarian clamour raised by the world conscience following the hanging in Iraq on January 27, 1969, other victims including Jews were also hanged in Baghdad. The only reaction from the Iraqi Government this time was that the corpses of the victims were not suspended in the Liberation Square. The new hanging was announced over the radio, television and in the press.



Yitzhak Eliahou Dellal

On August 25, 1969 the following 2 Jews were hanged in Baghdad:

1. Yeheskel Raphael Yaakov, banker in Basra. He was arrested on false charges of spying and supplying money to Israel.

2. Yitzhak Eliahou Dellal (1923), Toshiba Agent in Baghdad. He was arrested in the evening on January 4, 1969, together with Abd Al-Jabbar Abd Al-Karim Al-Hilfi who was his Moslem partner for many years, on the same false charges. His partner was also hanged.

Released Jewish survivors affirmed that the 2 Jews were imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya and tortured, secretly tried by the Revolutionary Court, and condemned to death without a hearing.



Naji Sa'ati

On October 7, 1969 the following Jew was hanged in Baghdad:

3. Naji Sa'ati (1906), wealthy large estate proprietor.

His sister-in-law, Khatun Sa'ati, his brother Yusuf Sa'ati's widow, testified that in the forenoon on May 14, 1969 a girl and a secret Security police had come to their house where Naji Sa'ati was living. They told Naji that they wanted him to come with them, and just wanted to ask one question and would then bring him back.

His relatives on seeing that Naji did not come back started to make inquiries about his whereabouts, but in vain. They then took clothes, food, pocket-money and went to the Ministry of Defence. The Military guards at the gate of the Ministry took these items from them, but did not give them a receipt, and refused to disclose to them Naji's whereabouts.

On July 13, 1969 the police came to their house again. This time, he took Naji's car. It was driven by his nephew, Prince, who was detained one day from morning till the following morning.

In the afternoon on October 7, 1969 a prison guard came to their house and told them that Naji was to be hanged that evening, and he wanted to meet them before his execution to bid them his last good-bye.

Khatun went with her son, Prince, to the Baghdad Jail. They were taken into a room in

which there were armed guards all around. Two prison guards brought Naji into the room. His hands were secured with handcuffs. Naji sat between her and her son. He saw her wearing mourning apparel and knew that his brother was dead. Naji was very thin about half his original weight. He embraced them warmly and wept bitterly. He said: "Innocent people should not be hanged". His costly gold watch was taken by the prison guards. His relatives were ordered to leave the prison on termination of the time allowed for their meeting. After that, the prison guards secured Naji's hands again, and took him away.

Released Jewish survivors affirmed that Naji had been imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya on false charges of spying and supplying money to Israel. He was tortured, secretly tried by the Revolutionary Court, and sentenced to death without a hearing.



Albert Noonou

On January 22, 1970 the following Jew was hanged in Baghdad:

4. Albert Noonou (1917), wealthy business man in Baghdad. He was affected with thrombosis before one year, and was convalescing when he was arrested in September 1968 on false accusation of complicity with the alleged ring of espionage network.

In the condemned section of the Baghdad Jail were imprisoned for about three months 7 victims, among them the aforementioned Jew, who had been sentenced to death on false charges of spying for the interest of Israel. Clemency was expected each day. Their families and relatives were allowed to bring them food and other articles. Those victims were imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nayaha for many months, where they were tortured, secretly tried by the Revolutionary Court, and condemned to death without a hearing.

By misfortune, 34 former high rank army officers, the most important Rashid Muslih the Military Governor General during Abd Al-Salam Aref's regime, and some civilians charged with alleged conspiracy, were executed on January 22, 1970.

In order to annihilate all suspected elements, the Iraqi Government also gave order for the executions of the 7 victims.[6] The Military officers were executed by firing squads and the civilians by hanging.

Shaul Sassoon Khedhouri, the son of the Chief Rabbi, an employee. He was imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya for many months with Albert Noonou on the same false charges of complicity with the alleged ring of espionage network. He was under the penalty of death, but was acquitted and released even without bail.

6 As confirmed by Haim.

18. Proof of Premeditated Executions

Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi

1. Baghdad television showed an ex-soldier, Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi, who claimed that he was a spy in a network of espionage for the interests of Israel.

o. Al-Hawi was speaking in a relaxed natural manner, and the expression of his face and behaviour clearly showed that he was not a spy, but just a reporter giving information about a ring of spies. He was not hanged. If he had really been a spy arrested by the Security Police Department, he could not from a psychological point of view have spoken so naturally, and the expression of his face and behaviour would have been badly affected, and he would have been hanged.

2. He mentioned the names of some members of the ring, and in case of a Jew, he especially mentioned "Jew" under the ringleader of a Jew, Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha.

o. This proves that Al-Hawi expressly intended to show that most of the members of the ring were Jews.

3. He claimed that the ring's activities were to get military information about the Iraqi armed forces and the kinds of their weapons.

o. Iraq is not adjoining Israel, and Israel is not interested in getting that information, showing that Al- Hawi's claim was absolutely false.

4. He alleged that Zilkha had asked him to submit reports about the military units in Basra. He also alleged that he had submitted reports about the naval and air bases and the infantry training center.

According to the Baghdad news broadcast, Al-Hawi's first report contained details of weapons in the infantry training center, the second report contained information about the tanks, and last report contained information about the air base, the method of training, and number of air officers. He also submitted another report about the new naval base and the number of torpedoes it contained.

o. This information is top military secret and is only known to high rank army officers. How could an ex- soldier have contacted such officers and gotten such secret from them without being arrested on spying charges, before he could have submitted such information to Zilkha?

5. He claimed that Zilkha had given him large amounts of money for purchasing beads and other gifts, by which he could entertain friendly relations with army officers.

o. High rank army officers never use beads. How could an ex-soldier have dared to give such gifts for such purpose to such officers without being arrested by them? This proves that Al-Hawi's claim was false.

6. He alleged that he had submitted reports to Zilkha he received from some army officers who gave him false information.

o. This shows that the officers knew that Al-Hawi was spying, and they expressly gave him false information. If Al-Hawi's allegation were correct, the officers would have duly arrested him on spying charges, before he could have submitted his first report. On the contrary, he alleged that he had submitted several reports, clearly showing that his allegation was false.

7. He claimed that Zilkha had given him 200 Iraqi Dinars for each report.

o. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim, whom Zilkha ordered to get similar information, claimed that Zilkha had given him 10 or 15 Iraqi Dinars for each report. As each spy's claim differs one another, this shows that the claims of both spies were false.

8. He alleged that the ring had worked with full confidence before the revolution of July 17, 1968, as some Government personalities of Prime Minister Tahir Yahya protected its activities. But after this revolution, the ring worked with caution.

o. After the Six-Day War, Tahir Yahya took fiercest discriminatory measures against the Jews in Iraq and persecuted them violently, proving that Al-Hawi's allegation was absolutely false.

9. He claimed that "our brave army officers" had given him incorrect information, and Zilkha doubted such information.

o. How could Zilkha or Israel have known that the information was incorrect? Al-Hawi claimed that he was a spy in the ring, whereas he himself seemed very happy that the officers had given such information, strengthening the evidence that he was not a spy.

10. He alleged that he had conveyed 4 messages from Zilkha in Basra to Charles Raphael Horesh in Baghdad, for which reason Horesh was charged with being a spy.

o. Al-Hawi did not allege that he had received any message from Horesh to Zilkha. If the 4 messages had been spying ones from the Israeli Agent inquiring about military information, and if Horesh had really been a spy, he would have given Al-Hawi replies to the messages. As Horesh did not give any message, this proves that the 4 messages, if there were any, were strictly commercial. This shows that the conveyance of spying messages from Zilkha to Horesh was utterly false, and that Zilkha and Horesh were falsely charged with espionage.

11. He claimed that he had conveyed 5 messages from Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal in Basra to Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari in Baghdad for delivery to Abd Al-Hamid Al-Damurji.

o. Al-Hawi did not claim that he had received any message through Al-Bachari from Al-Damurji to Kokal. If the 5 messages had been spying or plotting ones from Israel or any Imperialistic country inquiring about military and political information or conspiring against the ruling regime, and if Al-Damurji had been really involved in the ring, he would have given through Al-Bachari replies to Kokal's messages. As Al-Damurji did not, this proves that the 5 messages, if they existed, were strictly commercial, that the conveyance of spying or plotting messages from Kokal to Al-Damurji was false, and that Kokal, Al-Bachari, and Al-Damurji were falsely charged.

12. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, Al-Hawi alleged that he had been charged by Zilkha to convey a message to "Salawat" in Al-Fardos Hotel in Abadan, and that Zilkha had told him to go via Ciba, and in Ciba to inquire about the guide "Haj Yasin". He alleged that the guide had crossed him the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore.

According to the Baghdad news broadcast, Al-Hawi went to Abadan in the morning and returned to Basra in the evening.

o. By alleging that Zilkha had told him to go with a guide to Abadan, it is evident that Al-Hawi had no passport. How could Al-Hawi have crossed the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore without a passport in the

morning, where armed military guards watching all along the Iraqi shore, without his being duly arrested?

13. He claimed that after having arrived at the Iranian shore, he took a taxi to Al-Fardos Hotel, in Abadan, in which he registered for a room under the name of "Haj Saleh", where he stayed only one hour. With regard to passport, he alleged: "I know them all".

o. As Al-Hawi admitted that he had stayed in the room only one hour, he could have waited for "Salawat" in the lobby without registering for a room. By claiming so, he intended to show the importance of the secrecy of the message.

According to international rules, anyone who registers for a room in an hotel must produce his passport if he were a foreigner, or his local identity card if he were a citizen. As Al-Hawi, a foreigner, had neither a passport nor a Persian identity card, he could not register for a room in the hotel in Abadan. His claim "I know them all" meant that he had been in the hotel before and knew all its management staff. Even in such case, the proprietor of the hotel could not by law register for a room for Al-Hawi without a passport. This shows that Al-Hawi's allegation was utterly false.

14. He alleged that after having stayed in his room only one hour, he was contacted by "Salawat", and after having closed his room's door, he delivered the message to him.

o. It is evident that Al-Hawi took greatest care to prevent the proprietor of the hotel from knowing what he had delivered to "Salawat", which means the proprietor was not a member of the ring.

15. He claimed that "Salawat" had told him: "You have arrived at four o'clock in the afternoon". According to the Baghdad news broadcast, Al-Hawi went to Abadan in the morning.

o. It is evident that Al-Hawi required some 10 hours to travel from Basra to the hotel in Abadan. If he had taken a taxi, as alleged by him, he should have normally arrived within some 4 hours, evidencing that his statement was false.

16. He alleged that "Salawat" had taken him for a two-hour pleasure trip, and at six o'clock in the evening, they went to the Iranian shore, where he found a boat and returned to Iraq.

o. How could Al-Hawi have returned without a passport to the Iranian shore in the evening, without his being duly arrested by the Iranian authorities or by the Iraqi authorities on the Iraqi shore?

The above points are clear evidence that Al-Hawi's claim of having gone to and returned from Abadan to convey a message was absolutely false.

17. He alleged that he had conveyed messages from Zilkha to Sami, Albert Habib Thomas's brother, for conveyance by ships outside Iraq, and that Zilkha had given him 200 Iraqi Dinars for each message.

o. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim claimed that he had conveyed similar messages from Zilkha to Sami, and Zilkha gave him 10 Iraqi Dinars for each message. Albert Habib Thomas claimed that he had conveyed 2 messages from Zilkha to Abadan, for which Zilkha gave him 50 Iraqi Dinars for each message. Thomas also alleged that he had conveyed messages from Zilkha in Basra to Baghdad, and that Zilkha gave him 50 Iraqi Dinars for the first message, 70 for the second, and 80 for the third and last message. As each spy's story differs from the other, this shows that the allegations of the 3 spies were utterly false.

18. He claimed that Zilkha had a wireless transmitter and transferred it to the Sabbatarian church in Basra. Later, afraid of the

authorities, he transferred it to Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim's house.

o. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, Al-Hawi claimed that Zilkha had transferred the wireless transmitter to Jack Atrakchi's house. As each time, Al-Hawi made a different claim, it shows that his claim was false.

19. He alleged that Zilkha had informed him that arrangements were made to send young Jews to Abadan for training in sabotage for carrying out sabotage activities in Iraq.

o. Al-Hawi never admitted neither before the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya nor before the Revolutionary Court that Zilkha had asked him to go with the young Jews for training in the course of sabotage.

As the above claim was top secret and high treason against the Government and the country, Zilkha would never have disclosed to Al-Hawi that top secret, as he did not want any assistance from him, this shows that Al-Hawi's allegation was utterly fabricated.

20. When the Revolutionary Court issued its verdict on the first trial, the Court condemned Al-Hawi to death. But after Al-Hawi's strong protest against the judgment, the Court duly commuted his sentence to imprisonment for life.

o. This proves that the Court's verdict, the protest, and commutation were all fictitious. Commutation of sentence cannot be made by the Court, but by the President of the Republic who either approves the Court's verdict or commutes the sentence.

21. Al-Hawi was jailed in a separate cell in the Baghdad Jail.

o. It was rumoured later that he was secretly released from jail and exiled to an Arab country. If this rumour were correct, he could have been recalled at any time and re-imprisoned temporarily for some time for silencing the prospect of world protests.

Al-Hawi's other statements were re-examined in the Military Prosecutor's bills of indictment.

The Security Police Department

1. Qasr Al-Nahaya authorities took stringent care not to let any of the ring's victims who were to be hanged be tortured to death. When any victim was in a dangerous condition, he was taken at once to a hospital for treatment.

o. This is clear evidence that the prison authorities were instructed by the aforementioned Department to preserve the lives of the ring's victims, so that they would be hanged as spies.

2. According to reliable sources, before the hanging, all the ring's victims who were facing the scaffold emotionally cried out: "We are innocent! Witness Heaven!"

o. This is a positive proof that the ring's victims were really innocent. If they had been actually guilty, they could never from a psychological point of view have cried out in such an emotional tone. But they would have been silent, and they would have the look of gallows-birds worthy of the gallows-tree.

3. After the hanging, a large poster was hung on the chest of each corpse suspended in the Liberation Square in Baghdad and in a square in Basra. But on each Jewish corpse "Jew" was specifically written in large Arabic letters. No such distinction was made on Moslem and Christian corpses.

o. This indicates that the aforecited Department intended to show that the members of the ring were "Jews", and planned their executions on religious discriminatory grounds.

4. After the clamour raised by the International Conference, the ruling regime admitted the existence of discriminatory measures against the Jews in Iraq.

o. This is an official confirmation of the aforecited Department's planned executions.

5. In the first series of the ring was a Moslem shepherd who was set free on the spot without bail.

o. This shows that the above Department especially included the shepherd in the espionage network to demonstrate to the world that the ring was real and comprised all sects and various classes of the public.

The Investigating Committee

1. Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha was disfigured and his teeth were broken, as testified by his brother Yeheskel. Charles Raphael Horesh's corpse was severely disfigured, and the corpses of the other Jewish victims were injured, as certified by Hay.

o. This shows that the aforenamed Committee was instructed by the Security Police Department to force the ring's victims by tortures to sign or make false confessions and give false evidence against each other.

2. Before releasing the 4 Jews who were acquitted, the prison authorities warned them that if they would divulge the kind of tortures in Qasr Al-Nahaya, they risked being arrested again.

o. This shows that the prison authorities were aware that the severe tortures inflicted by the aforegoing Committee on Jewish victims were inhuman and an infringement of the International Human Rights.

The Revolutionary Court

1. After the defendants of the ring having been tortured in Qasr Al-Nahaya about one and a half months, they were taken in 5 series for trials by the aforementioned Court.

o. The Court opened on January 4, 1969 and issued its verdicts on the 12th, 14th and 15th of January, that means the trials of the 5 series lasted only 12 days, proving that the defendants' sentences had already been prejudged.

2. Jewish survivors released from Qasr Al-Nahaya testified that the defendants of the ring were very dirty, full-bearded and their shirts, trousers, shoes and neck-ties were torn by the torturers.
Before the opening session of the Court, the prison authorities made them wash themselves, shaved them, cleaned their coats, and purchased new shirts, trousers, shoes and neck-ties to them to wear when going to the Court.

o. This is clear evidence that the Court instructed the prison authorities to ensure that the defendants must have good appearance, as they would be shown over television.

3. The President of the Court opened the first session by this extract of address: "We open the first session to try the spies, agents and sabotage gangs of Imperialism and Israel."

o. Before hearing the case in point of the defendants, the President named them. "Spies, agents, and sabotage gangs", in contradiction to the provisions of article 11 of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence. This proves that the President opened the Court to condemn them and not to try them, another proof that the executions were planned in advance.

4. In the first part of the first trial of the opening session shown on television, the President of the Court asked each defendant: "Have you appointed a lawyer?" Each one replied: "No!"

o. The defendants were imprisoned in Qasr Al- Nahaya, where they were savagely tortured and not allowed to meet their families or any representative of the outer world. Their families did not know even their whereabouts. How did a President of a Court acting as a judge ask such question? How could the defendants have appointed lawyers under such conditions?

5. The President of the Court asked each defendant: "Do you want to appoint a lawyer?" Some replied: "Yes," and some wanted to meet their families to appoint private lawyers. The President told them to submit applications to the Court, and the Court would call their private lawyers.

o. The President showed on television the exchange of the questions and answers of the first part of the opening session, that the defendants were allowed to appoint their own lawyers, in contradiction to his statement in the second part held behind closed doors.

6. The Military Prosecutor then requested the Court to conduct the trials secretly. The President of the Court replied: "In view of the fact that the trials have relation to the safety and security of the country and the military units, the Court has decided to agree to his request."

o. The President's claim was incorrect, showing that injustice was planned and committed. If justice was done by the Court, the trials would have been held openly, showing the executions were planned in advance.

7. As testified by Yeheskel Zilkha and other Jewish victims of the first trial who were acquitted and released, in the second part of the opening session held behind closed doors, the President of the Court said: "The Court has appointed lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan for all of you." But lawyer Ridhwan did not attend any sessions of the first trial.

o. As the President's aforementioned statement contradicted his declaration in the first part of that session, this proves that it was told to the defendants but not broadcast. This further proves that the President actually neither allowed any defendant to appoint any lawyer to defend him nor was any lawyer allowed to defend anyone of them.

8. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, when the Court issued its verdict on the first trial of 17 defendants, the President of the Court called them to the Court and said: "As the 17 defendants have not appointed lawyers, the Court has decided to appoint lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan to defend them." Lawyer Ridhwan then appeared at the end of this trial and spoke in defence of the defendants. His statement of defence was already prepared.

o. As the President's aforecited statement contradicted his declaration in the second part of the opening session, this proves it was broadcast but not told to the defendants. The President broadcast this declaration to conform with his declaration in the first part of that session, that the defendants themselves did not appoint lawyers.

The whole affair clearly shows, first, the reason for the Court's intention to conduct the trials secretly, and second, that the Presi-

dent wanted to show that the defendants were allowed to appoint their private lawyers.

9. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the other 4 trials, the President of the Court flatly told each defendant: "The Court has appointed lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan for you."

o. This is another positive proof that the President did not allow any defendant to appoint any lawyer to defend him.

10. As testified by Jewish victims of the first trial who had been acquitted and released, when the Court conducted the trials secretly issued its verdict on the defendants of the first trial among them Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha and his brother Yeheskel, the President of the Court claimed that Jack Atrakchi had escaped from prison and was condemned to death in absentia.

o. Yeheskel Zilkha testified that, while he sat near his brother Ezra Naji in the prison car when they were taken to the opening session of the Court, and while they were going to and returning from the lavatory in the Baghdad Jail, Ezra Naji disclosed that Jack Atrakchi had been tortured to death and the Investigating Committee showed him his disfigured corpse to frighten him and force him make a false confession. This disclosure is in flat contradiction to the President's allegation.

11. The Court acquitted 2 Moslems and 4 Jews. The Moslems were each released on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars, and 3 Jews each released with a cash of 1,000 Iraqi Dinars, and 1 sick young Jew released with a cash of 500 Iraqi Dinars. In case of non-payment, each Jew was liable to serve a sentence of one year's imprisonment, as testified by Yeheskel.

o. This shows that the Jews were maltreated on religious discriminatory grounds.

12. 2 Jews were imprisoned on the same accusation of complicity with the espionage ring, Albert Noonou was hanged, and Shaul Sassoon Khedhouri was acquitted and set free even without bail.

o. As Shaul's father, the Chief Rabbi, had pleased the Iraqi Government by his false declarations to the fact finding deputations of European newspaper reporters who came to Baghdad following the first executions, and because of his frequent false broadcasts that the Jews in Iraq were enjoying full freedom and liberty, the Revolutionary Court acquitted and released his son even without bail. Albert Noonou should also have been acquitted.

The Military Prosecutor

1. In his bill of indictment for the first trial, he said that the national regime must exterminate all treacherous elements, agents and spies to realize its aims and programmes. He also said that the trial was the fulfilment of the revolution's promise.

o. By this statement, it is evident that the Military Prosecutor considered the executions of the members of the ring an absolute necessity to realize the aims and fulfilment of such promise, showing premeditated executions.

2. He said that giving military information to Israel would enable it to destroy the aerodromes and war-planes in Iraq, crush the Iraqi army, and then occupy the country.

o. How did a Military Prosecutor who should have known how to act in a position of a legal public prosecutor express such a false statement? Iraq does not adjoin Israel. How could Israel if it has military information carry out such operation?

3. He demanded that the Court sentence to death those defendants who gave Israel information about Iraqi troop movements at the front.

Getting such information from soldiers returning from the Jordanian front was absolutely useless, because it took some time for such soldiers to return to Basra. During this time, the Iraqi troop movements at the front were changing. Israel has reconnaissance warplanes, and it instantly knows about such information without the need of resorting to *ad hoc* spies. This is proof that the Military Prosecutor's statement was false, proving premeditated executions.

4. He said that the defendants' executions would frustrate the dreams of other agents and spies working for the interests of Imperialism and Israel.

o. By this statement, it is evident that the Military prosecutor intended to use the defendants' executions as a means to prevent any attempt against the ruling regime.

5. He claimed that Zilkha had asked Al-Hawi to submit reports about military secrets and Iraqi weapons especially the kind of Russian arms supplied to the Iraqi army, and to convey messages in and out of Iraq. He also claimed that Al-Hawi had attended many meetings in Albert Habib Thomas's house, which Zilkha had also attended. He also claimed that Al-Hawi had submitted several such reports by contacting some army officers.

o. The aforementioned information is a military top secret and could only be gotten from high rank army officers. How could an ex-soldier have contacted such officers and gotten such secret from them without being duly arrested on spying charges before he was able to submit his first report? And how could Zilkha, who was at the time because of being a Jew watched by the secret Security police day and night and not allowed to leave his house after sunset, have attended meetings in Thomas's house at night? This evidence shows that there were no reports, and consequently no messages and no meetings.

6. He said that Zilkha had asked Jamal Sabih Al-Hakim to submit reports about the Iraqi army, and that Al-Hakim had contacted some army officers and some naive soldiers returning from the front and gotten military secret from them and submitted the information to Zilkha. He claimed that Al-Hakim had conveyed messages from Zilkha to Sami, Albert Habib Thomas's brother, who sent them to Israel by ship.

o. This information is a military secret. How could a student have contacted army officers and gotten military secret from them without being duly arrested on spying charges, before he was able to submit the information to Zilkha? And how could naive soldiers returning from the front have known such military secret? These queries are clear evidence that all those allegations were false, showing that the executions were premeditated.

7. He claimed that Zilkha had a wireless transmitter concealed in a church in Basra.

o. In his bill of indictment, the Military Prosecutor did not mention that the wireless transmitter had been found by the Security Police Department. The police must have searched the Sabbatarian church, Zilkha's house, Al-Hakim's house, Jack Atrakchi's house, and the houses of all the members of the ring.

If the Security Police Department had found the wireless transmitter, the Military Prosecutor would have heralded in his bill of indictment that the wireless had been found, and it would have been shown on television as evidence for the prosecution. It is clearly evident that the Security Police Department found nothing, proving that there never was a wireless transmitter.

8. He alleged that Zilkha had supervised the transmission of information to a Consul of a foreign country by way of a wireless transmitter. He also claimed that a foreign ship had intercepted its signal and informed the Iraqi government. When Zilkha knew the matter, he transferred the wireless transmitter from the church to Atrakchi's house with the assistance of the ring's members.

o. If there had really been a wireless transmitter signal, the Iraqi Government warships in the port of Basra should have immediately intercepted it before a foreign ship. As the Military Prosecutor did not claim so, it proves that the Government warships had not intercepted such a signal, proving that this statement was false.

9. Zilkha claimed in his confession that he had been supervising the transmission of information to the American Consulate in Abadan.

o. According to the Baghdad news broadcast, Al- Hawi claimed that Zilkha had a wireless transmitter by which he was contacting "Salawat" in Abadan. As the claims of the Baghdad news, Al-Hawi, and Zilkha differ from one another, it shows that all the 3 claims were false.

10. He alleged that defendant Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari in Baghdad had received from Sadiq Ja'far Al-Hawi several messages which Al-Hawi received from defendant Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal in Basra, for delivery to Abd Al-Hamid Al-Damurji in Baghdad to whom the messages were addressed.

o. If the messages had been real and addressed to Al-Damurji, Zilkha should have instructed Al-Hawi to deliver them directly to him. At the time, Al-Damurji who was involved in the ring was in Baghdad. Al-Hawi could have delivered the messages directly to him.

It is evident that there was absolutely no need at all to convey messages addressed to Al-Damurji through the intermediary of Al-Bachari. This is clear proof that Al-Bachari regarded as hostile to the ruling regime was charged with complicity in the ring.

11. He claimed that the ring's plan was to smuggle weapons to their supporters in Al Diwaniyah and Al Nasiriyah towns in the South of Iraq to help them make a coup against the ruling regime. Al-Bachari was asked by Al-Damurji and his colleagues in Beirut to move to Basra to facilitate the smuggling. The plan was supported by Abd Al-Rahman Al-Bazzaz and Abd Al-Aziz Al-Uqayli whose functions were to organize military units for the coup.

According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, Al-Bachari made a confession that Al-Damurji with his colleagues set up an organization in Beirut to make a coup against the ruling regime with 2 Jews, Albert Noonou and Shaul Sassoon Khedhouri, to supervise the organization's activities in Baghdad.

o. No coup d'état in the world could in the present day have been successfully achieved by light weapons only. Therefore, for carrying out a successful coup, huge quantities of heavy weapons such as tanks and warplanes should have been smuggled into Iraq. How could such weapons have been smuggled into Iraq without being discovered?

If a successful coup could have been miraculously achieved by light weapons only such as revolvers, machine-guns, hand grenades and explosives, huge quantities of such weapons should have been smuggled into Iraq. How could such quantities of these weapons have been smuggled into Iraq without being discovered? And how could Al-Bachari, an advocate and merchant, have facilitated the smuggling without being arrested for high treason and sentenced to death and hanged?

A coup could have been successfully achieved if it had been carried out by some plotters from inside Iraq but not from outside. It would have needed the imperative co-operation of some army officers of the ruling regime. As Al-Bazzaz and Al-Uqayli were of the former regime regarded as hostile to the ruling regime, they could absolutely not have been able to contact some army officers of the ruling regime to join them in their treason against the revolution. If they had done so, they would have been arrested for high treason and executed.

How could Al-Damurji have carried out a successful coup in Iraq from Beirut with 2 Jews, one under convalescence from thrombosis and one an employee when both were at the time because of being Jews watched by the secret Security police day and night and not allowed to move beyond their residential quarter, to supervise the organization's activities in Baghdad?

And how could Al-Bazzaz and Al-Uqayli have been able to organize military units without the co-operation of some army officers of the ruling regime and without adequate quantities of heavy weapons? If they had been really discovered plotting against the revolution, they would have been duly brought to trial for high treason and executed. But to the contrary, they were both imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya for a long time, cruelly tortured, and after Al-Bazzaz had been rendered useless, he was released.

How did a legal prosecutor express such false imaginary exaggerations? Logic dictates that, first, Al-Bachari's confession was false, and second, the Military Prosecutor's whole allegation was completely fabricated.

12. In his bill of indictment for the second trial, he alleged that Zilkha had contacted after the Six-Day War young Jewish students to join the ring. After several meetings with them, they agreed. It was arranged to send them to Abadan for training in the use of explosives to sabotage Iraqi important installations and vital public utilities, and the mineral resources the most important are the petrol and sulfur.

o. Committing such extensive and intensive sabotage activities in Iraq would require enormous quantities of explosives and other sabotage materials.

The Military Prosecutor did not mention in his bills of indictment or during the proceedings of the trials that the Security police had discovered such sabotage materials or even one single explosive in Zilkha's house or in any of the houses of the ring's members, proving that nothing was found.

How could such sabotage activities have been committed in Iraq by 5 helpless young Jewish students who did not possess a single explosive or other sabotage material? With nothing one does nothing! Nothing for nothing! I leave the answer to the reader!

13. He claimed that a car had been arranged to carry the Jewish students from Basra to Ciba district.

According to the broadcast of the proceedings of this trial, Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel claimed that Zilkha had instructed him to come to his shop with a change of underclothes and be prepared to go to Abadan. In the following evening, he went to Zilkha's shop and found a man dressed in robe with a handkerchief head-gear who took him alone "in his car" to Ciba at four thirty in the morning.

Sabah Haim Dayan claimed that he had gone in the car arranged by Zilkha and picked up the other 4 young Jews who were waiting on different streets, and all the 5 went together to Ciba district.

o. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, Albert Habib Thomas claimed that he had conveyed messages from Zilkha to Abadan. He alleged that Zilkha had instructed him to go from Basra to Ciba district by Zilkha's own car and driver, and as soon as he would find a man dressed in robe with a handkerchief head-gear to go

with him, proving that the words "His car" mentioned by Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel, he meant "Zilkha's own car and driver", and that the man "dressed in robe with a handkerchief head-gear" was a guide.

After the Six-Day War, the Jews, their cars, houses, offices and shops were on religious discrimination watched by the secret Security police day and night. The Jews had to be in their own houses before sunset. They were not allowed to go beyond their residential quarter or gather with their friends in the streets without the risk of arrest and death. All Jewish telephones were cut off. Private chauffeurs, usually Moslems, were ordered not to work for Jews. The Jews kept their cars in their own garages. The general public were warned to watch the Jews, not to co-operate with them, not to allow them enter their houses, offices and shops. Chapter "Persecutions" gives full detailed description. This proves that Zilkha could neither contact anyone nor send his car and driver, and that the Jewish students could neither have left their own houses after sunset nor have gone beyond their residential quarter.

How could Zilkha have contacted the guide to come to his shop? And how could Zilkha have arranged his car and driver to carry the 5 Jewish students from Basra to Ciba district? And how could persecuted young Jewish students, each with a pack of underclothes, have left their own houses late at night and waited for Zilkha's car to carry them to Ciba district, without being duly arrested before they were picked up in the car? Even the most naive man cannot believe this.

14. He alleged that the Jewish students had been crossed the Shatt Al-Arab river to the Iranian shore.

According to the proceedings of this trial, Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel alleged that when having arrived in Ciba district, the man dressed in robe with a handkerchief head-gear crossed him by boat the Shatt Al-Arab river and went with him.

o. As Zilkha had arranged for the guide to be in his shop, as claimed by the Military Prosecutor, to cross together the 5 young Jews the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore, this shows that they had no passports.

At that time, the escape route from Ciba district by illegally crossing the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore was definitely inaccessible, as Iraqi armed military guards were watching all along the Iraqi shore day and night, and no Jew was ever able to escape without the risk of arrest and death.

How could the guide have crossed together the 5 young Jews the Shatt Al-Arab river to the Iranian shore without passports during the climax of persecutions of Jews, without being duly arrested by the Iraqi authorities?

15. He claimed that the guide after having crossed the young Jews the Shatt Al-Arab river to the Iranian frontier helped them escape to Abadan.

According to the proceedings of this trial, Yeheskel Saleh Yeheskel claimed that when having arrived at the Iranian shore, the man dressed in robe with a handkerchief head-gear took him to a café. In the café he met Abbud Badran who took him in his car and helped him escape to Abadan.

o. How could Zilkha have contacted "Salawat" in Abadan to send Abbud Badran in his car to the café near the Iranian shore to aid the 5 young Jews escape to Abadan, whereas it has already been proved in point 13 this was impossible.

16. He alleged that in Abadan Salim Battat had taken them in his car to his house, and trained them for two weeks in the use of explosives and time-bombs.

According to the proceedings of this trial, Sabah Haim Dayan said that the training was only from photographs of explosives. The Military Prosecutor claimed that the defendant had mentioned in his confession before the Investigating Committee a detailed operation of detonation of explosives which

were kept in a petrol-tin, and when the explosives were detonated, the explosion caused the earth's dust to fly. The defendant also mentioned time-bombs, showing that the training was real for the purpose of carrying out sabotage activities after the return of the young Jews to Iraq. Dayan replied: "By God, I did not see dynamite at all! Photographs of explosives only! Time- bombs were not shown to us at all!" The judge asked him: "When did you go to Zilkha's house?" Dayan replied: "I did not go! I do not even know where the house is!"

o. How could Sabah Haim Dayan who had been cruelly persecuted have made a vivid description of the detonation of explosives in the dramatic rhetorical style he used in his confession before the Investigating Committee?

If the Jewish students had really written their own confessions themselves, Dayan could not have written it in such style, proving that his confession was not written by him at all, and that each one of the young Jews was threatened by the Investigating Committee to write a confession as dictated to him or sign one already written.

By scrutinizing the confessions and evidence extracted from the Jewish students by the Revolutionary Court, one can easily realize their naivety, despair and fear. The young ones whose ages were between 19 and 23 years replied in the affirmative to the questions the President of the Court asked them to confess or confirm. A glance to their confessions and evidence will confirm this statement. Whereas, Sabah Haim Dayan 30 years old had the courage to reply as he did.

The Jewish students gave confessions and evidence before the Revolutionary Court with regard to the training in the use of explosives in a short and ambiguous form, and the President was satisfied with such answers. If the Jewish students had been actually trained in the use of explosives in Abadan, the President would never have been satisfied with such replies, but he would have demanded them to give clear replies and a description of the detonation of explosives as evidence for the prosecution.

Da'ud Ghali 23 years old, who was ordered to remain alone in the Court at the opening session of his second trial, gave a short affirmative confession. Naim Khedouri Helali 19 years old charged with blowing up the bridge, who was ordered to remain alone in the Court at the opening session of his third trial, replied that the evidence of Da'ud Yeheskel Barukh Dellal against him was correct.

These queries are clear evidence that each one of the Jewish students was threatened by the Revolutionary Court to make a confession and give evidence as dictated to him, and that each one was afraid to admit anything contrary to what he had been forced to confess or confirm, proving that the confession and evidence of each one were completely false, and that the Military Prosecutor's allegation was absolutely fabricated.

17. He claimed that after completion of the training, the Jewish students had been helped escape back by the same way they had been taken.

o. How could Jewish students have returned by boat together without passports from the Iranian shore to the Iraqi one, without being duly arrested by the Iraqi military guards, whereas it has already been proved in point 14 this was impossible.

18. He did not state that the Jewish students brought explosives and time-bombs back with them to sabotage the important installations, the vital public utilities, and the mineral resources in Iraq.

This proves that Zilkha must have had an adequate supply of such sabotage materials, and that he did not require any from the agent. If such were the case, Zilkha should have known how to detonate explosives, and therefore, there was absolutely no need at all to risk the lives of 5 Jewish students, at the

climax of persecutions of Jews, by sending them illegally to Abadan for 2 weeks, and by returning them illegally to Basra, and by spending lots of money on them, so that the Israeli agent could train them how to detonate explosives.

As the Jewish students did not bring explosives and time-bombs, and as it has already been proved in point 12 that not one single explosive was found in Zilkha's house or in any of the houses of the ring's members, this proves that the Military Prosecutor's allegation that Zilkha had sent the Jewish students to Abadan for training in the use of explosives was completely baseless.

19. He claimed that Zilkha had contacted the Jewish students to go to Abadan for training in the use of explosives for carrying out sabotage activities in Iraq for the purpose of serving the interests of Israel.

o. According to the proceedings of this trial, each one of the Jewish students claimed that Zilkha had contacted him to go to Abadan for training by having promised to pay him a large sum of money. Each one of them claimed that, after the training and his return to Basra, he had received 100 Iraqi Dinars from Zilkha.

If their claim were correct, it is clear evidence that each one went to Abadan for training for the sake of getting 100 Iraqi Dinars and not for the sake of serving the interests of Israel, in contradiction to the Military Prosecutor's claim.

How could young Jews, during the climax of persecutions of Jews, have risked their lives for the sake of 100 Iraqi Dinars each?

These queries are clear evidence that the Military Prosecutor's claim was utterly false.

20. He said that, after the Jewish students' return to Basra, Zilkha had instructed them to blow up the bridge at night. Zilkha gave them the explosives kept in a box, and they went to carry out the operation. Naim Khedouri Helali put the explosives under the bridge. After three minutes there was an explosion. They then returned to Zilkha's house and informed him that the operation had been successfully carried out.

o. How could Jewish students have left their own houses at night, gathered in the streets, and gone to Zilkha's house to receive a carton filled with explosives, and then gone to blow up the bridge without they and Zilkha being duly arrested? And without the box of explosives being confiscated? And without Zilkha's house being searched on charges of conspiracy and high treason? And how could the Jewish students have returned together at night to Zilkha's house without being arrested? Whereas it has already been proved in point 13 this was impossible.

These queries clearly show that the Military Prosecutor's allegation was baseless and completely fabricated.

21. He claimed that the Jewish students had participated in the explosion of the bridge for the purpose of serving the interests of Israel.

o. In his bill of indictment for this trial, the Military Prosecutor claimed that each one of the Jewish students had received 120 Iraqi Dinars for his participation in that explosion. If his claim were correct, it clearly shows that each one of them participated in that operation for the sake of receiving 120 Iraqi Dinars and not for the purpose of serving the interests of Israel, in contradiction to his claim.

How had young Jews risked their lives in that operation for the sake of getting 120 Iraqi Dinars each? Whereas it has already been proved in point 19 this was impossible.

22. He alleged that Zilkha had given the explosives kept in a box to the Jewish students.

o. How could Zilkha have done so? Whereas it has already been proved in point 12 that he had not even one single explosive. This proves that the Military Prosecutor's allegation was completely fabricated.

23. He asked the Revolutionary Court to sentence to death by hanging the 5 Jewish students as a punishment for what their criminal hands had committed, and for terrorizing others who might be willing to join such rings. By their executions, the revolutionary regime will be firmly established.

o. In each of the aforecited points, it has already been proved that the Jewish students were innocent, and that their hands did not commit any crimes, in flat contradiction to the Military Prosecutor's claim.

24. In his bill of indictment for the fifth trial, he claimed that Al-Hawi had conveyed 5 messages from Abd Al-Hussein Nur Mohammed Haj Jita Kokal in Basra to Abd Al-Hadi Al-Bachari in Baghdad.

o. According to the proceedings of the first trial, he claimed that Zilkha was the ringleader of the espionage network. He alleged that Al-Hawi had conveyed several messages received from abroad and delivered them to Zilkha while he was in Baghdad. He also alleged that Fuad Gabbay had asked Al-Hawi to convey a message received from abroad to Zilkha while he was in Baghdad.

This proves that all messages received from abroad were only submitted to Zilkha even if he were in Baghdad and not to any other member of the ring. This shows that the messages conveyed by Al-Hawi from Kokal to Al-Bachari, if they were real, were strictly private or commercial. If they were spy messages received from abroad, as claimed by the Military Prosecutor, they should have been submitted to Zilkha, and after Zilkha had read their contents, he would have conveyed them to Baghdad either through Al-Hawi or Thomas, as testified by Al-Hawi who had confirmed that he conveyed 4 messages from Zilkha in Basra to Charles Raphael Horesh in Baghdad.

The Military Prosecutor also alleged that Al-Hawi had been instructed by Zilkha to convey messages outside Iraq through Sami, Albert Habib Thomas's brother. This proves that all messages conveyed outside Iraq were only sent by Zilkha. This is clear evidence that no other member of the ring was allowed to convey messages from Basra to Baghdad or from Basra out of Iraq, showing that the Military Prosecutor's allegation was false.

25. According to the proceedings of this trial, Zilkha instructed Al-Hawi to go to Kokal in Basra for some work. Al-Hawi went to Kokal's office, and after having told him the secret word "Mukhlis", as instructed by Zilkha, Kokal gave him a message to convey to Al-Bachari in Baghdad. At other times, Kokal gave him other 4 messages to convey to Al-Bachari.

o. It has already been proved that messages received from abroad, if there were any, were only submitted to Zilkha even if he were in Baghdad and not to any other member of the ring. After Zilkha had read their contents, he conveyed them, if he were in Basra, to Baghdad through Al- Hawi or Thomas.

From this, it is evident that there was absolutely no need at all for Zilkha to convey messages received from abroad from Basra to Baghdad through Kokal as an intermediary, proving that Kokal was expressly involved in the conveyance of messages, as a means to hang him.

26. He claimed that Al-Hawi had received 200 Iraqi Dinars from Zilkha for each message he conveyed from Kokal in Basra to Al-Bachari in Baghdad, which shows that the contents of the messages were important. He also claimed that the aim of the ring was to get military and civil secrets and convey the information out of Iraq. If these messages were strictly commercial, there was no need for Zilkha to pay 200 Iraqi Dinars for each message. Consequently, the Military Prosecutor considered Kokal a member of the ring.

o. It is clearly evident that because Al-Hawi claimed that he had received 200 Iraqi Dinars from Zilkha for each message he conveyed from Kokal to Al-Bachari, the Military

Prosecutor regarded the contents of the messages as important and as spy messages. He also considered Kokal a member of the ring and asked for his death sentence. As a consequence, Kokal was hanged.

According to the proceedings of the first trial, Thomas claimed that he had conveyed before the revolution of July 17, 1968 a message from Zilkha to Yaakov Gurji Namurdi, on the envelope of which was written the name of the addressee and London, and Zilkha gave him 10 Iraqi Dinars.

Because Thomas claimed that he had received only 10 Iraqi Dinars from Zilkha for conveying this message, it must be regarded that its contents were not important and that the message was strictly a commercial one and had nothing to do with spying.

How did the Military Prosecutor regard the contents of this message as one of importance from a spy? And how did he consider Namurdi a member of the ring and ask for the death sentence, which he received, in absolute contradiction to his claim? This proves that Namurdi was falsely charged with complicity in the ring.

27. The Military Prosecutor asked the Revolutionary Court to sentence Kokal to death by hanging as a punishment for his crime against his country. He said his execution would be a restraint on anybody wishing to spy on and conspire against the revolution.

o. From these points, it has been proved that Kokal was innocent, and that his hands did not commit any crime, in flat contradiction to the Military Prosecutor's claim.

Lawyer Ibrahim Ridhwan

1. According to the proceedings of the 5 trials, this lawyer appointed by the Revolutionary Court spoke in defence of the defendants only at the end of each trial.

o. He neither questioned the bills of indictment of the Military Prosecutor nor cross-examined the witnesses for the prosecution. But instead, he added fuel to the fire. He never acted as counsel for the defence, and he therefore violated the sacred duty of defence.

No counsel for the defence in the world has ever supported the bills of indictment of the Public Prosecutor instead of questioning them? No counsel for the defence has ever supported the evidence of witnesses for the prosecution against his defendants instead of cross-examining them? No counsel for the defence has ever demanded the executions of his defendants, in absolute contradiction to the sacred duty of defence! This is unlawful!

2. In his statement of defence for the first trial, he claimed that the Court had disclosed one of the important rings of espionage networks, which were the cause of all Arab calamities and troubles, and demanded the Court issue a just verdict on this ring.

o. By this statement, he has, first, confirmed that the defendants of the ring were real spies, and second, he demanded the Court issue its just verdict on them, which means a demand for execution.

3. In his statement of defence for the second trial, he alleged that Zilkha had induced the young Jews to carry out sabotage activities. They deserve pity and clemency as they are still young. But he asked the Court issue a just verdict.

o. By his statement, first, he confirmed that the defendants were members of a sabotage gang, and second, although he requested pity and clemency, as a formality, he demanded the Court issue a just verdict on them, which meant their executions.

4. In his statement of defence for the fourth trial comprising of 3 defendants, he requested the Court excuse him for examining the

evidence according to the sacred duty of defence. He accepted the appointment because the law necessitated such appointment. He claimed there had been confessions by and evidence against each of the defendants. He requested the Court that the defendants be given sympathy when issuing its just verdict.

o. By his statement, first, he confirmed that the Court did not allow the appointment of a lawyer, and second, he acknowledged that the defendants were real spies, and third, although he requested that the defendants be given sympathy, as a formality, he demanded the Court issue a just verdict, which meant their executions.

In his statement, he used extraordinary eloquence and tactics against his defendants for ensuring their executions. In fact, 2 out of the 3 defendants refused to make confessions, in contradiction to his statement, as confirmed in the proceedings of that trial.

5. According to all his statements of defence, it is clearly evident that he is an efficient, eloquent and tactical lawyer.

o. But he used his efficiency, eloquence and tactics against his defendants. By examining his statements of defence of each trial of the ring, one can easily realize the correctness of this statement. The behaviour of that lawyer in the case proves that he acted as a public prosecutor and that he was a member of the Revolutionary Court. Otherwise, if he were counsel for the defence, he should have used his efficiency, eloquence and tactics for the defence of his defendants and not against them, or he should, at least, when the Court issued verdicts of death penalty on them, have appealed for clemency for commutation of the sentences, in accordance with the provisions of article 8 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that everyone has the right to an effective judicial appeal. This proves that this lawyer did not act how a lawyer should. Woe to the man whose advocate becomes his accuser!

Albert Habib Thomas

1. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, Thomas claimed that he had conveyed 2 messages from Zilkha to Abadan, and admitted that he had no passport. He alleged that Zilkha had told him to go from Basra to Ciba district with Zilkha's own car and driver, and on finding a guide dressed in black robe with a handkerchief head-gear waiting for him to go with him.

o. How could Zilkha have given his car and driver to Thomas to go to Ciba, where there was a guarded frontier post? And how could Zilkha have contacted the guide at the shore of the river and asked him to wait for Thomas in the street? Whereas it has already been proved in point 13 of the Military Prosecutor this was impossible.

2. He claimed that he had held a conversation with the guide who spoke Persian, and admitted that he himself did not know Persian.

o. How could Thomas have been able to do so?

3. He claimed that when having conveyed the first message, he went to Ciba in the evening of the next day. There the guide crossed him by boat the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore.

o. How could Thomas have crossed the Shatt Al Arab river to the Iranian shore in the evening without a passport, before the eyes of the armed military guards watching all along the Iraqi shore, without being duly arrested by the Iraqi authorities?

4. He claimed that after having arrived at the Iranian shore, the guide took him to a hotel in Abadan. He admitted that he could not know by which route the guide had taken him.

o. By that statement, it is evident that the guide escaped Thomas over the border to Abadan by taking him by a roundabout way. As Thomas did not claim that the guide had taken a taxi, as Al-Hawi claimed, it means that he made him to walk. Walking to Abadan by a roundabout way would require some 9 hours. How could Thomas have walked 9 hours at night and arrived at the hotel in Abadan at the same night? As Al-Hawi claimed that he had been instructed by Zilkha to convey a message to "Salawat" at Al-Fardos Hotel in Abadan, it is evident that the hotel to which the guide took Thomas was Al-Fardos Hotel.

5. He certified that after having arrived at the hotel, he asked who was its proprietor. A man fitting Zilkha's description came, and Thomas said to him: "Deliver this message to "Salawat". The proprietor of the hotel replied: "Thank you", and Thomas claimed that the proprietor had known about the matter.

o. By that statement, Thomas intended to indicate that the proprietor of the hotel was also a member of the ring.

Whereas Al-Hawi claimed that when having delivered a message to "Salawat" in Al-Fardos Hotel in Abadan, he registered for a room, and after having stayed in the room about one hour, he was contacted by "Salawat", and after having closed his room's door, he delivered the message to him. This proves that Al-Hawi took greatest care to ensure that the proprietor of the hotel was not a member of the ring.

6. He claimed that he had slept in the hotel one night and returned the next morning, without mentioning that he registered for a room in the hotel.

o. Whereas Al-Hawi, although he admitted that he had stayed in his room only about one hour, claimed that he had registered for a room in the hotel. How could Thomas have registered without producing his passport?

7. He claimed that in the next morning the guide had taken him to Basra, from there he went to his office.

o. If the guide helped Thomas escape back over the border from Abadan by taking him by the same roundabout route by walking, Thomas would have required some 9 hours to arrive at the Iranian shore. How could Thomas have returned without a passport to the Iraqi one without being duly arrested by the Iraqi authorities? And how could Thomas have returned to his office in the morning?

8. He claimed that when having conveyed the second message, he followed the same procedure, but went from and returned to Basra on the same day.

Going to and returning from Abadan on foot by a roundabout way would require some 18 hours. How could Thomas have gone from and returned to Basra on the same day?

The aforecited documentary and logical points clearly show that Thomas's story of having gone to and returned from Abadan to convey 2 messages, in 2 intervals, was absolutely fabricated.

Ezra Naji Zion Zilkha

1. According to the broadcast of the proceedings of the first trial, while the Military Prosecutor was reading the confession which Zilkha had made before the Investigating Committee, Zilkha said two words in a low voice, not clear, and the Military Prosecutor interrupted him.

o. It is evident that the Military Prosecutor by interrupting Zilkha was afraid lest Zilkha would disclose that he had not written the confession himself, and that he had been threatened by the Investigating Committee to sign or write a confession as dictated to him.

2. Zilkha claimed in his confession that at the end of 1964, at the request of the Israeli agent, he had asked Thomas to find someone who could enter the military Al Maqil area, take photographs of the Russian weapons supplied to Iraq, and submit reports about their kinds and numbers. Thomas brought Al-Hawi to carry out this operation.

o. From this, it is clearly evident that Al-Hawi was especially engaged in the ring on the strict condition to carry out such operation. Al-Hawi claimed in his confession over the Baghdad television that he had joined the ring in June 1967. Whereas Zilkha claimed in his confession that Al-Hawi had joined the ring at the end of 1964. As the date given by Al-Hawi differs from that given by Zilkha, showing that Al-Hawi's and Zilkha's confessions were false.

3. Zilkha claimed in his confession that Al-Hawi had submitted his first report.

o. Zilkha's allegation proves that Al-Hawi entered the military Al Maqil area, took photographs of the Russian weapons supplied to Iraq, and submitted his report. How could Al-Hawi have done so without being duly arrested for spying? If Zilkha's confession were correct, Al-Hawi should have mentioned in his confession that Zilkha had asked him to get such information, and that he did what was expected of him. As Al-Hawi did not mention it, proving that Zilkha's confession was utterly false.

4. Zilkha claimed that the Israeli Agent had testified that Al-Hawi's first report contained good information. Al-Hawi submitted several other reports. He also claimed that the responsible men in Israel and Iran had been very satisfied with the information they received from Al-Hawi and the other members of the ring.

o. This is in flat contradiction to Al-Hawi's claim that the army officers from whom he obtained the reports submitted by him had given him false information. Al-Hawi also claimed that Zilkha had doubted the information and asked him to strengthen his relations with the army officers concerned for the sake of getting correct information.

5. Zilkha said that, while he was in Baghdad, Al-Hawi who was informed by Fuad Gabbay that Zilkha was in Baghdad had brought him a message which Thomas received from outside Iraq. Zilkha opened the message and found that it had come from the Israeli agents in Holland who were inquiring about the Soviet rockets supplied to Iraq.

o. If Zilkha's confession were correct, Al-Hawi should have mentioned in his confession such information. As Al-Hawi did not mention it, it shows that Zilkha's confession was false.

6. During the proceedings of his trial Zilkha said: "I have written this confession according to the evidence given against me by the witnesses!"

o. Whereas neither Al-Hawi nor any other witness gave evidence according to Zilkha's confession. This shows that Zilkha was threatened by the Investigating Committee

either to write his confession as dictated to him or sign one already written, otherwise, he would be tortured to death as Jack Atrakchi had been.

7. At the end of his trial Zilkha said in a trembling voice: "By God, I do not know all these men! I do not know either Al-Hawi or Thomas! I have never spoken to them in my life! By God, I am innocent! By God, I am innocent! By God, I am innocent! By God, I never worked with them! I do not know them!"

o. All the aforegoing points prove that Zilkha's confession was utterly false. Zilkha's emotional and emphatic utterance from the depth of his heart clearly shows his real innocence. If Zilkha were really a spy, he could not have spoken those words at all.

8. The Military Prosecutor said there was one investigating judge in the Investigating Committee in Qasr Al-Nahaya.

o. From Zilkha's confession, it is clearly apparent that the members of the Investigating Committee were inexperienced and inexpert in judicial matters, as they did not know how to co-ordinate Zilkha's confession with Al-Hawi's and with the confessions of the other members of the ring. This proves that they were only torturers. If there were one investigating judge in the Investigating Committee, he would have co-ordinated Zilkha's confession with Al- Hawi's.

19. Proof of Victims' Innocence

All the points mentioned in chapter "Proof of Premeditated Executions" attest the facts. They are unchallengeable proof of the innocence of the Iraqi martyrs among them 9 Jews who were hanged, and also the innocence of the Jewish victims who were tortured to death in Iraq.

Iraqi Moslem merchants, particularly the wealthiest ones, especially engaged Jewish accountants and cashiers in their offices to ensure the safety of their money and property. This is because they were sure of the straightforwardness, trustworthiness, devotion and loyalty of the Jews.

In 1894, when one Jew Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935) an officer in the French army was falsely condemned on charges of divulging military secrets to Germany, all Jews in the world were falsely condemned as traitors. In 1896 evidence of his innocence was found, but a vehement anti-Semitic press campaign prevented the reopening of his case. As the Dreyfus case harmed the reputation of all Jews in the world, it became most essential to prove his innocence. After ten years of arduous endeavours, truth triumphed over the anti-Semitic campaign. In 1906 Dreyfus was officially exonerated and consequently the innocence of all Jews.

This is the same thing as the 9 innocent Jews who were hanged in Iraq. It has become indispensable to prove their innocence to the world for proving the innocence of all Jews. Hence chapter "Proof of Premeditated Executions" is of paramount importance to achieve this precious goal. In view of this, a day will come when the Iraqi people will exonerate the names of those martyrs as the French did for Dreyfus.

20. Proof of Violations of the International Human Rights

Since the dawn of human history, a brother maltreated and killed his brother. Cain, the eldest son of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, killed his brother Abel. Genesis IV 1-16.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam and other religious beliefs commanded human rights.

It was the Old Testament of the Bible which initiated the first divine command of human rights and social justice. Four of the ten commandments protected one's neighbour's rights. "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor anything that is thy neighbour's." Exodus XX 1-17.

The New Testament and the sacred Koran and other religious books followed with similar commandments.

During the centuries, humanitarian rulers, kings and emperors, governments, organizations and international eminent personalities considered the protection and respect of human rights most vital for the welfare and dignity of mankind.

Cyrus the Great, founder of the Persian Empire, King of Kings of Persia (about 558-28 B.C.), initiated the first charter of human rights.

Omar Ibn Al-Khattab (581-644), Caliph of the Arab Kingdom and Islam (634-44), made another call for the freedom of man.

In 1689 England enacted the Bill of Rights declaring the rights and liberties of England.

In 1776 the United States proclaimed the Declaration of Independence by which they were to be free.

In 1789, 1791 and 1793 France enacted the Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen: Equality, liberty, security and property.

Abraham Lincoln (1809-65), 16th President of the United States, enacted the Emancipation Proclamation by which he gave freedom to the slave. By giving freedom to the slave, he assured freedom to the free.

In 1909 Mohammed V (1844-1918), Reshad, Ottoman Sultan (1909-18), upon his accession to the throne as Emperor of the Ottoman Empire,made a call: Liberty, justice, equality and fraternity. Baghdad which was at the time under the Ottoman domination celebrated the occasion by all night illuminated festivities and by day with military parades.

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was a legal charter formally signed by more than 130 countries. Human rights were to be protected, and persecution of innocent minorities could no more be considered "an internal affair."

Unfortunately, the implementation of this solemn Declaration still remains in dreamland. Various forms of discrimination were actually committed which deprived man of the least human rights he is entitled to enjoy. The Governments of Syria, Egypt and Iraq, which are signatories to the Declaration, violated the provisions of the Declaration.

The various relevant chapters prove that the innocent Jewish community in Iraq was persecuted by the Iraqi Government on purely religious discriminatory grounds. This condition aroused an indignant uproar by international humanitarian eminent personalities. They recognized that such persecutions constituted atrocious violation of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

If the United Nations would just take the stiffest measures to ensure that governments signatories to the Declaration strictly adhere to its provisions, violations of human rights would be considerably avoided, persecutions would be greatly minimized, human sufferings would much be alleviated, and fairness and justice would somewhat be ensured for the advancement of the welfare of human life and dignity.

Otherwise, if no drastic measures are promptly taken by the United Nations against any government signatory to the Declaration violating its provisions, what is the use of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when it is ineffective to serve the purpose for which it was adopted. Is it to be only a name?

The onus lies upon the United Nations to make the best possible use of the Declaration in order to fulfil the most sacred humanitarian duty.

The United Nations should take immediate action to extinguish the first sparks of persecution before such persecution can develop into terrible catastrophes.

Herein is an example of one act of discrimination which was committed in Iraq and which is vehemently condemned by the world conscience.

The Iraqi Revolutionary Court neither allowed any Jewish victim to appoint a lawyer to defend him nor was any lawyer allowed to defend anyone, in contradiction to the provisions of article 6 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

In free countries of the world, the situation is entirely different. Fairness and justice to human rights are protected according to the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

On June 5, 1968 Sirhan B. Sirhan, originally a Palestinian Moslem, shot before the eyes of a million Americans Robert F. Kennedy, the U.S. Senator from New York and presidential candidate while he was attending a primary election victory celebration in Los Angeles. Although Kennedy died the next day, Sirhan was not immediately sentenced. He had the right to appoint lawyers to defend him, and his trial lasted several years. He was at last sentenced to death. But his lawyers appealed for clemency, and his capital punishment was commuted to imprisonment for life.

In Israel, too, innocent Arab citizens enjoy civil, educational, social, commercial and religious freedom. They are neither maltreated nor imprisoned for no reason. When an Arab citizen is accused of a crime, he has the right to appoint lawyers to defend him. After the court's verdict, he would either be acquitted if found innocent, or sentenced according to the magnitude of his crime if found guilty.

Even those saboteurs arrested while actually committing sabotage activities against the country of Israel and its people such as bombing raids, massacres, the accused always have the right to appoint lawyers to defend them at their trials.

"Woe unto the world because of offences! Woe unto those criminals by whom the offences cometh!" (Biblical). Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray that human rights be protected!

The United Nations should efficiently intervene to combat discrimination of all forms and strive to harness violation of all injustice, to realize the most noble aspirations of mankind.

21. The Unbearable Shock

The various inhuman persecutions inflicted by the Iraqi governments on the innocent Jews in Iraq after the Six-Day War were beyond description and imagination. They made the life of the Jews increasingly unbearable. The Jews were suffering under a crushing yoke. They saw death with their own eyes. They actually tasted death.

As a consequence, the Jews beset with dangers to their own entity became sick. Many Jews suffered from high blood pressure, thrombosis, diabetes, vertigo, nervous break-down, eye diseases, loss of hair, vitiligo (a skin disease characterised by milk-white patches on various parts of one's body especially on one's face, neck, and head). They cried out at night during their sleep. Their lips trembled. In short, they suffered from many other allied ailments.

Most Jews took sedatives even most of the Jewish doctors themselves. They carried librium, or valium, or equanil, or triptizol in their pockets like candies. Many non-Jewish pharmacies made huge profits by selling enormous quantities of such sedatives to Jews.

Many Jews died from shock or fear. Others attempted suicide as they could not stand the unbearable shock.

Among the Jews from Baghdad who died from shock were the following:

1. Yusuf Sa'ati. (His own story continued from "Executions"). He died from shock as a result of the threats of the prison guards and the Security police while reading prayers for the 9 Jews before and after their executions, and of his ordeal with those victims.

2. Khedouri Al-Iny. (His own story continued from "Imprisonments"). About ten days before the Yom Kippur War, the Security police made a general search of all houses in Baghdad for hidden arms. When the police rang the bell of his house's door, presuming that he was to be arrested again, he instantly died from shock.

Among the Jews from Baghdad who became sick from shock and died abroad after leaving Iraq were the following:

1. Marcelle Choua Soffer. (Her own story continued from "Imprisonments"). She died as a consequence of the tortures to death of her husband in Qasr Al-Nahaya.

2. Yeheskel Shohet. (His own story continued from "Escape"). He died as a result of savage tortures inflicted on him in Qasr Al-Nahaya, because of his attempt to escape out of Iraq in search of freedom.

22. French Friendship

Following the tragic hanging in Iraq of innocent martyrs among them 9 Jews, the world conscience was aroused. The distressing shock caused repercussion throughout the whole world. The conscience of international humanitarian eminent personalities who defend the respect and dignity of human rights and of their governments was awakened. Holland and other countries declared that they were prepared to receive all the Iraqi Jews if they were allowed to leave Iraq.



Mr. Alain Poher



U. Thant



His Holiness Pope Paul VI

Various French high personalities particularly moved and shocked by the public rejoicing at the hanging decided to create a Committee: Amitiés Françaises pour la Délivrance des Juifs au Moyen-Orient (French Friendship for the Deliverance of the Jews in the Middle East).

The Committee was initiated by Mr. Alain Poher, President of the French Senate, Master Jacques Mercier (1920-83), advocate at the Court of Appeal in Paris and Deputy of Essonne, and the Reverend Father Riquet, ecclesiastic, Chronicler of Figaro and member of the Society of Men of Letters.

In an official statement to the Press, the founders of this Committee expressed their horror that twenty-five years after the Nuremberg trial, religious discrimination exists in certain Arab countries of the Middle East. The founders asked for humanitarian reasons that the Jews in Iraq, Egypt and Syria be allowed to leave these countries freely.

This first initiative was encouraged by the receipt of various messages from many classes of the French public. The public expressed their dissatisfaction at such violations of the international human rights, and manifested their encouragement of this initiative, in per-

fect conformity with the tradition of France the country of the Declaration of Human Rights.

The Committee made a solemn protest and addressed to U. Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, to request his Holiness Pope Paul VI (1897-1978) to intervene to the Iraqi regime to allow the Jews in Iraq, who were being persecuted, to leave that country. His Holiness graciously did so for humanitarian reasons.[1]

It is not surprising that the eminent personalities of the country which has high traditional humanitarian culture and profound democratic belief could not tolerate the existence of persecutions of innocent minorities on religious discrimination. They thus vigorously struggled on humanitarian aim to fight such persecutions in defence of human rights.

Similar national Committees were also newly created with the same purpose in Argentine, United States, France, Great Britain, Italy, Norway and Holland. They were followed by other Committees in many countries of the world. They were composed of eminent personalities known to have struggled everywhere without any discrimination for the respect of human rights.

They were ex-Vice-President of the United States, ex-Under-Secretaries of State, ex-Prime Ministers, ex-Ministers, ex-Justice of the Supreme Court and Ambassador of the United States to the United Nations, Senators, President of the National Assembly of Norway and President of the Nobel Prize Committee, Members of Parliaments and Party Leaders, Mayors, Religious Leaders, University Presidents and Professors, President of the Italian Academy of Sciences, President of the American League of Human Rights, Nobel Prize Winners, Journalists, Sociologists, Writers, Poets, Lawyers, Industrialists and Actresses.

* * *

After the world reaction to the hanging in Iraq, the Iraqi Government relaxed the following anti-Iraqi Jews discriminatory measures:

1. The malicious hostile campaigns against the Jews in Iraq over the radio, television, newspapers and religious preachers in Mosques were stopped.

2. Jews were released from detention in Iraqi prisons in 3 parts, each 2 days 1 part, each detainee on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars.

3. No other Jews in Baghdad were arrested from their homes at midnight by the secret Security police.

4. Many Jews and Jewesses were gradually released from major and minor torture prisons in Iraq.

* * *

On August 25, 1969, following new hanging of Jews in Baghdad, the Committee made another solemn protest and addressed to U. Thant. U. Thant requested again His Holiness Pope Paul VI to intervene once more, and His Holiness graciously did so.

After the world's reaction to the new hanging in Iraq, the Iraqi Government relaxed some further discriminatory measures against the Jews as follows:

1 Conference

1. Jews in Baghdad were allowed to move a little distance beyond their residential quarter, and thus they were able to visit relatives and friends.

2. Few Jewish students, both boys and girls, were admitted to the universities in Baghdad again.

23. Deputations

The French Friendship Committee requested that U. Thant send a deputation to Baghdad to conduct inquiries on the Jewish situation, as the United Nations had sent a deputation to Israel to conduct inquiries on the Arab situation. But the reply was highly evasive.[1]

Prince Sadr Al-Din Agha Khan, Commissary of the United Nations for Refugees, offered on humanitarian reasons to intervene himself to the Iraqi Government[2] The Prince visited Baghdad discreetly on several occasions and was given a courteous reception by the Iraqi regime and promises.

Some days after the first hanging in Iraq, deputations of newspaper reporters from European countries visited Baghdad for fact finding investigations.

The deputations visited the Chief Rabbi Sassoon Khedhouri in his office, the Jewish Frank Iny School and Meir Tweg Synagogue. They were escorted by Security police officers in civilian clothes and with photographers and Iraqi News Agency men.

The Chief Rabbi and the other Jews concerned were compelled to give verbal declarations that the hanging of the 9 Jews was justified, and that the Jews in Iraq were enjoying full civil and religious freedom similar to the other citizens without any discrimination.

The deputations' three visits were photographed, filmed and televised.[3]

Nevertheless, the deputations were secretly able to obtain genuine information from other sources. Some Jewish students taking advantage of a few minutes of the Security police officers' inatentiveness dropped small notes into the pockets of some members of the deputations while they were visiting their school. They described the true plight of the Jews in Iraq, and appealed to the world not to forget them. They implored that humanitarian governments and international eminent personalities to exert persistent pressure on the Iraqi Government, so that they might be delivered by being allowed to emigrate.

At the same time, the Security Police Department asked the Chief Rabbi to broadcast a similar declaration to his verbal one on television, and he did so.[4] His broadcast was filmed.

After that, the above Department deputed Iraqi News Agency men with photographers to visit many Jews in their homes and photograph them. The Jews were told to smile when photographed. Similar written declarations were taken from them. This Department collected such declarations from many Jews of all classes with their smiling photographs and made them into booklets. The booklets were distributed to the United Nations, the UN Commission for Human Rights, and other commissions and international organizations.[5]

1 Conference. p. 25.
2 Conference. p. 18.
3 As confirmed by ElKabir.
4 As confirmed by ElKabir.
5 As confirmed by ElKabir.

Many Iraqi Jews who gave written declarations to the Iraqi News Agency men were the first to escape across the Kurdish mountains to the Iranian frontier. They left all their movable and immovable property and businesses in Iraq for the sake of saving their lives which were endangered in that country. Their escape was a proof that their declarations with their smiling photographs were contrary to the actual facts.

The Security Police Department also collected all the films relating to the Jews in Iraq and made them into one complete film and showed it several times on Baghdad television and abroad.[6]

* * *

The Chief Rabbi, Sassoon Khedhouri (1886), died on May 24, 1971 at the age of 85. He was elected President of the Jewish Community in 1928 following the resignation of Rabbi Ezra Dangoor from the presidency. He resigned on April 1, 1930. He was re-elected on February 12, 1933, and resigned again on October 1949. He was re-elected acting President of the Jewish Community in 1952, following the resignation of Yeheskel David Shemtov from the acting presidency, which position he held until his death.

The acting presidency of the Jewish Community was entrusted to Meer S. Basri in June 1971, in addition to his function as Chairman of the Administrative Committee of Iraqi Jews since February 1967 and Chairman of the Jewish Schools Committee in 1958-74. The three communal positions he held in honorary capacity until he left Iraq in October 1974. (His biography continued from the Kingdom). Naji Chachak remained the Secretary.

The Chief Rabbi's outer robe, turban and stick were taken by the Iraqi Government and exposed in the Dress Museum in Baghdad.[7]

6 As confirmed by ElKabir.
7 As confirmed by ElKabir.

24. Nature's Havocs and Wars' Disasters

Many devastating violent storms, torrential floods, intense earthquakes, active volcanoes and other natural havocs and ravaging wars normally occur from time to time in the world that instantly take heavy tolls of many thousands of human lives. The only reaction of the world is that food, medicines, clothes, blankets and tents are rushed to the survivors. The misfortune is pursued no farther, because such tolls are manifestations of the devastating phenomenal forces of nature's havocs and are characteristic features of the ravaging disasters of wars.

But the tragic hanging of 9 innocent Jews in Baghdad and Basra on religious discrimination highly moved, shocked and convulsed the world, because they were flagrant violation of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which the Iraqi Government is a member.

The world aimed to fight persecution and protect human rights. A very important example of such aim was the maxim of John F. Kennedy (1917-63), 35th President of the United States, "When the right of one individual is violated, this is the affair of all people". This maxim was formulated in perfect harmony with the noblest doctrine of the world.

Chapter "International Conference" clearly demonstrates that there is conscience in many countries in our present world. There are governments and international eminent personalities who struggle strictly on humanitarian aim to fight persecution and protect human rights in every region of the globe, without any discrimination of religion, creed or race, for alleviating the miseries and sufferings of mankind.

25. Hurricane

When a major hurricane suddenly hits a certain region, it causes sudden, scattered, catastrophic disastrous devastation and havoc. Trees are broken, while others are completely deracinated, and others stand unharmed. Ships are broken, others are sunk, yet others are unharmed. Some buildings are damaged, some are completely demolished, other buildings are unharmed. This is the law of the phenomenon of unchangeable nature. As we are nature's creatures, we are subject to this phenomenon. War like a hurricane causes sudden, scattered, catastrophic disastrous calamities and miseries to mankind.

After the Six-Day War, the Jews in Iraq were persecuted by the successive Iraqi governments. Some innocent Jews were detained and released. Other Jews were tortured and released. Whereas others were tortured to death, and others were hanged. Other Jews died from the unbearable shock, and others were unharmed. Other Jews were partly financially harmed, while others lost their entire colossal wealth.

The catastrophic tragedies of those Jews who lost all their wealth were more grave than those who were hanged. The sufferings of those Jews who were hanged ended with their hanging, but the sufferings of those who lost all their wealth were endless and unbearable.

Some of those Jews suffered a further emotional catastrophe when their rich close relatives, refused to help them, left them, did not see them, did not hear them, or reply to them. Their rich friends deserted them. Millionaires turned a deaf ear to them. Everyone fled from them, and they remained suffering from complete despair, hopelessness, misery and loneliness.

26. International Conference[1]

The new hanging in Iraq of innocent Jews on August 25, 1969 gave fresh stimulus to the French Committee to take the most effective measures. It invited all Committees that had been created in the world for the same purpose to hold an International Conference in Paris for saving the Jews in Iraq, Egypt and Syria by allowing them to leave these countries.

The French Committee took the responsibility of organizing this International conference, which was finally held on January 27, 1970 in the Hilton Hotel in Paris. Delegates of more than 25 countries from Europe, America and Asia participated. The number of participants, their qualifications, and their international positions assured the Conference great success. The participants were especially animated to ensure the fundamental principles of the human rights.

The Conference was opened by Mr. Alain Poher, President of the French Committee. Poher welcomed the French and foreign eminent delegates and thanked them for participating in the Conference, especially those who made a long journey to come from distant countries. He expressed the gratitude of the French Committee for their effort.

The morning session was presided over by Madam Aase Lionaes, President of the Norwegian National Assembly and President of the Nobel Prize Committee, and then by Mr. René Cassin (1887-1976), member of the Constitutional Council, member of the Institute (Assembly of the 5 Academies), and Nobel prize winner.

Among the witnesses was Mr. Ruben Horesh, the brother of Charles Raphael Horesh one of the 9 Jews hanged in Baghdad. He gave evidence about what had happened in Iraq.

Master Jacques Mercier, advocate at the Court of Appeal and Deputy of Essonne and one of the founder members of the French Committee, dealt with the problem of the Jewish minorities in Iraq, Syria and Egypt from the legal point of view.

He analysed one of the discriminatory laws promulgated in Iraq. He enumerated the various discriminatory measures imposed on the Jewish minority in that country.

He said that the discrimination against the Jewish minorities in the Middle East constitutes a violation by those countries of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948, to which those countries are signatories. He said that those Jewish minorities had been practically deprived of all their fundamental rights.

Each of the member States of the UN Organization is fully responsible "to ensure" the universal and effective respect of the human rights.

He emphasized that the Conference should appeal for the Jewish minorities right of emigration, in accordance with the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of article 13 which stipulates that everyone has the right to leave any country including his own, and of article 14 which stipulates that everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

He said that in ancient history, Socrates (469-399 B.C.) the Greek philosopher, had advocated that any Athenian citizen, by virtue

1 Conference.

of liberty, could go wherever he wished, and in modern history, a law enacted by the Congress of the United States in 1868 declared: "The right of leaving one's own country is a natural right inherent in all individuals". He added that the United Nations should intervene by all means to ensuring the respect of these 2 articles.

He invited all delegates to search for a means of concerted action in order that the United Nations, and the governments of the respective delegates ensure justice to those Jewish minorities in the Middle East, who seemed abandoned from the whole world. He was followed by other delegates.

The afternoon session was presided over by Mr. Arthur J. Goldberg, ex-Justice of the Supreme Court and Ambassador of the United States to the United Nations. He said that the Conference inspiring the unshakeable will for ensuring the respect of human rights in every region and particularly in the Near East animated every delegate. He proposed that the Charter of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations should be effectively applied in this region.

He said that the intolerable situation of the Jewish victims in those Arab countries engaged the minds of the different Committees in the world, and it was indispensable to every delegate to act promptly to improve it. He said: "This is the duty of all of us! Our action is solely a humanitarian motive".

Madam Barbara Westerway, Australian delegate, declared that Australian eminent personalities signed a petition addressed to the United Nations by the Prime Minister, the ex-Prime Minister, the leaders of the opposition, the members of the Labour Party, and other eminent personalities, and submitted it to the International Conference, in which they declared:

"We the undersigned, citizens of Australia, by applying to you and to the United Nations, by expressing the conscience of humanity, we request you to take all steps for alleviating the misery of those Jews, and ask the Arab government to stop their oppressive activities, and allow the emigration of the Jewish citizens to the countries which declared their preparedness to receive them."

The solemn session at nine o'clock at night was presided over by Mr. Alain Poher, in which resolutions were adopted and approved by the delegates with applause.

During this conference, the participating delegates decided to address urgent cables to the governments concerned, and advise U. Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, of their actions.

The delegates ascertained, through the resolution passed, without participating in the Middle East conflict, after hearing the witnesses and reading the documents, that individuals have been deprived of their lives, liberty, property, and constitutional rights for no other reason than they were Jews.The delegates decided to create an International Committee under the name of: Conférence Internationale pour la Déliverance des Juifs au Moyen-Orient (International Conference for the Deliverance of the Jews in the Middle East) under the presidency of Mr. Alain Poher.

They underlined the will of all the participants to ask their respective governments to undertake all appropriate action through their Diplomatic Missions within the countries concerned.

After this Conference, the participants and those responsible for the newly created Committees in the world were requested by the Secretariat of the International Conference to intervene through their respective delegates to the UN Commission for Human Rights, whose session was to be held at the end of February 1970 in New York.

It goes without saying that the action of all the delegates within the framework of their Committees made the Iraqi Government to admit in an official communiqué the existence of discriminatory measures against the Jewish

minority in that country and to promise the softening of these measures.

It is undeniable that following the constant and persevering action of the International Conference, the echo awakened many countries. Those countries became perfectly conscious that such situations constitute a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Human Rights.

The participating delegates were from the following countries: **AMERICA** — Argentine, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela. **ASIA** — Ceylon, India, Israel, Japan. **EUROPE** — Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Great Britain, Italy, Norway, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland. **AUSTRALIA.**

* * *

The secretariat of the International Conference received supporting messages. Herein under is an English translation from French text of some of them by the author.

MR. G. ANTOINE, Rector of the Academy of Orleans, France.

The defence of so a noble cause will not in fact let me remain indifferent. We must redouble the efforts for attempting to put an end to all measures of racial or social discrimination.

MR. EDMOND GISCARD D'ESTAING, Member of the Institute (Assembly of the 5 Academies), Inspector of Finance, France.

I think that one cannot be more sensitive towards the indefensible regime imposed on the Jews by countries which seem to have lost all sense of decency and were not ashamed to continue the abominable crimes which had spread gloom over all Europe.

It will be unfortunately impossible for me to assist in your session of January 2. However, I support, with every measure that I can, the efforts to secure that justice be rendered to individuals and to a country.

MR. HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (1912-78), Ex-Vice President of the United States.

An extract of his message: I share entirely with your deep humanitarian concern for the tribulations of the small and ancient Jewish minorities in Iraq, Syria and other Arab countries.

You can count on me to support your noble efforts for the sake of insuring a rapid liberation of the imprisoned Jews, for securing that the Jewish community will be accorded the rights of man, and for allowing those who desire to leave these countries.

This is probably a coincidental occurrence that the meeting consecrated for the liberation of the Jews in the Middle East coincides nearly day by day with the 25th anniversary of the liberation of the survivors of Auschwitz. This is in any case a coincidence of grave significance.

MR. PIERRE MENDES-FRANCE (1907-82), Ex-Prime Minister of France.

I wanted to assist you in your Conference and tell you by word of mouth my solidarity for the effort which you undertake for helping men and women who lost everything involuntarily. Of course I share their sentiments and their distress. I wish with all my heart the success of the effort undertaken by you with other organizations created in the world with the same purpose.

I hope that the voices of these organizations will be heard, and that the destiny of the Jews in the Middle East will be more secured tomorrow. It will be so only by the possibility of leaving the countries where security and human dignity are refused to them.

MR. ODD NANSEN, President of the Norwegian Committee of friendship for the Deliverance of the Jews in the Middle East.

In the name of the Norwegian Committee, I wish to convey to you our deepest desires that we shall be successful in our mutual efforts for the defence of human rights.

We have been informed with greatest distress of the persecutions and atrocities committed against the Jewish population and others in certain Arab countries. It is high time to awaken the conscience of the world, and to protest against these violations of the Convention of the Human Rights of the United Nations.

We must do this not only for the sake of the Jewish people who have certainly suffered very much more than others, but for the sake of the entire humanity. With regard to human dignity, we must say very high that we no

longer tolerate this lack of respect for the laws and this barbarity among us.

We want to be sure that the Charter of Human Rights is not only a wonderful document to be hung on the walls of our saloons, but as one of the most important documents of our epoch, its clauses are the basis of all our culture.

MR. MARCEL ROUSSELET, Honorary Premier President of the Court of Appeal in Paris, Member of the Institute.

I adhere entirely with the objectives of this Conference. I am in fact deeply moved by the legal discrimination against the Jewish minorities in Iraq, Syria and Egypt.

* * *

As a consequence of the humanitarian uproar raised by the International Conference against the persecution of Jews, the Iraqi Government gradually relaxed further important discriminatory measures against the Jews in Iraq as follows:

1. No further public or secret hanging of Jews were committed.

2. Jews were allowed to receive dividends of their stocks and shares, rentals, interests, etc.

3. Jews were allowed to work.

4. Jews were allowed to sell their cars.

5. Jews were allowed to sell their furniture.

6. Jews were allowed to sell their stocks and shares not nationalized.

7. At the end of 1970 Jews were allowed to sell their landed property.

8. The secret instruction freezing Jewish money in the nationalized banks was lifted. Jews were allowed to withdraw money from their bank accounts without restriction and cash drafts and cheques to their order.

9. The secret instruction restricting movement of Jews was lifted. Jews were allowed to move freely in all parts of Iraq. Many Jews afraid to remain in other cities, towns and villages moved to Baghdad.

10. Applications were accepted from Jewish pharmacists to reopen new pharmacies.[2]

11. Applications were accepted from Jewish pharmacists to reopen new pharmacies.[2]

12. In 1974 President Al-Bakr issued a special decree that the Daniel market and other Daniel property endowed by Ezra Menachem Daniel to the Jewish Community on trusteeship, which were sequestrated by Tahir Yahya after the Six-Day War, were to be administered by a special committee composed of representatives of the Jewish Community and the Ministries of Justice and Finance. The income was to be spent on the needs of the community.

Authentic circles testified that about half of the remaining Jews in Baghdad are now destitute, and are being granted monthly allotments by the Jewish Community for their livelihood.

The path was not strewn with roses. Continuous obstinate efforts were exerted to achieve these relaxations. No rose without a thorn. Because of the humanitarian energetic endeavors of the International Conference, of their distinguished members and collaborators, of other international eminent personalities, of their governments, the Jews in Iraq who had been under persecutions recovered some of their deprived human rights.

The lifting of the instruction freezing Jewish bank accounts was a blessing that gave substantial relief to the innocent Jews in Iraq. They now had money for their livelihood. They remain deeply grateful to all humanitarian international eminent personalities and governments who brought about this change.

2 As confirmed by Haim.

The Jews who were allowed to sell their landed property had to deposit the respective proceeds of sale in one of the nationalized banks. The banks gave them receipts to submit to the Security Police Department. These receipts were verified by the Police according to the sales statements which they received directly from the Tapu and Wakf Directorates.

Each Jewish depositor was allowed to withdraw 100 Iraqi Dinars monthly if unmarried, and 150-250 Iraqi Dinars if married according to the number of members of his family. He was allowed to withdraw more money if he were sick or in a hospital or for any accident or emergency. In case the depositor was in debt, he was allowed to give cheques to his creditors.

Although the Jews were allowed to sell their furniture, almost all Jews who escaped across the Kurdish mountains to the Iranian frontier never did so, to avoid arousing the suspicion of the secret Security Police. Otherwise, the police would have watched them day and night, making escape impossible.

27. Escape

After the Six-Day war, Iraq severed diplomatic relations with the United States. The American Embassy and Institute in Baghdad were closed down on the baseless suspicion that USA had helped Israel in the war.

A semi-official newspaper in Baghdad falsely accused a young Jew, Eddie Yitzhak Soffer (1943) who was working in the American Institute, of spying, and demanded his arrest and execution. Despite the stiffest measures taken at the time by the Iraqi Security authorities to strictly prevent any attempt by Jews to escape out of Iraq under the risk of death, the innocent Soffer was compelled to escape at any cost to avoid being arrested by the Iraqi secret Security police and hanged. As the usual escape route via Basra was definitely inaccessible, Soffer ventured to escape across the hazardous Kurdish mountains through the Iranian frontier to Teheran. From Teheran he sought refuge abroad. He was the first Jew who escaped out of Iraq straightway after the war.

About two months after the war, Dr. Gourji Raby's courageous wife decided under the risk of death to attempt escape, with her 2 sons, to join her husband abroad. She succeeded to escape across mountains to the Iranian frontier.

Another woman, Naima Suza a widow, also attempted to escape to join her sons abroad, but was arrested. At that time, the Minister of Interior was Dr. Shamil Al-Samarrayi. Al-Samarrayi declared that if the escapee had been a man, he would have immediately hanged him. But as the escapee was an old woman, she was imprisoned in the Women's Section of the Baghdad Jail, where she was grossly maltreated. After the world conscience had been aroused, she was released in the second quarter of 1970, denationalized and sent abroad. She had been imprisoned about three years before she was allowed to join her sons.

Other Jews also attempted at the time to escape out of Iraq from other places adjoining the Iranian frontier. But all their endeavours completely failed, as the Iraqi Security authorities took the stiffest measures along all frontiers to prevent any attempt by Jews to escape.

As a consequence of the uproar raised by the International Conference for the deliverance of the Jews in the Middle East on January 27, 1970, the Jews were allowed to move about freely in all parts of Iraq without restriction.

By fortunate incidental occurance, a declaration was announced on the 11th of March of that year for the cease-fire of the war flared up in September 1961 between Iraq and Mulla Mustafa Al-Barzani.[1] A great number of Jews went to the Kurdish mountains.

A brave Jew, Fuad Sawdayee (1939), courageously pushed himself, with his family, into the hazardous adventure of escape out of Iraq across the Kurdish mountains to the Iranian frontier. He encountered many hardships on the way, and succeeded at last to escape in June 1970. He was the pioneer to

1 As confirmed by Bengio.

open the door of escape. The second pioneers were the Shemtov family.

The Jews in Baghdad awaited with great interest the destinees of the two pioneer families. When they ascertained that these two families escaped to the Iranian frontier, they were at once encouraged to follow the same way.

Many Jewish families, old, invalids, sick, young men, girls, women with their babies and children, having left their movable and immovable property behind, immediately went to the Kurdish mountains to attempt escape. They did so, for the sake of saving themselves from persecutions and discriminations.

The escape across the Kurdish mountains to the Iranian frontier is very difficult. Many mountains are very high and are full of sharp detours and steep slopes mostly in natural and undeveloped state. In the middle levels of the mountains there are unpaved narrow sloping roads, crossed by cars, and in the higher levels there are pathes with same conditions, crossed by mules. If one's mule accidentally slanted, the adventurer's fall into the abyss was fatal. Some Jews climbed up the mountains by mules and suffered all the hardships and dangers of mountain climbing, to which they were unaccustomed.

During June 1970 the escape of the first group of Jews out of Iraq started. Some 250 Iraqi Jews mostly the richer ones escaped during June, July and August across the Kurdish mountains to the Iranian frontier.

In Teheran the Iraqi Jewish refugees were enthusiastically welcomed by a most prominent wealthy and influential Jewish business man of Iraqi origin, Saleh Shlomo Chitayat (- 1980). Chitayat sacrificed all his time in looking after the Iraqi Jewish refugees and in extending all necessary assistances to them.

From Iran the Iraqi Jewish refugees sought refuge in England, Canada, United States and in other countries in the world, where they could once more enjoy the blessings of peace, tranquility and freedom. "From sorrow to joy, and from darkness to a great light, and from subjection to redemption," Haggadah of Passover.



Iraqi Jewish refugees in Teheran

On September 8, 1970 the secret Security police rounded up and arrested 136 Jews and Jewesses and imprisoned them in Baghdad all together, Jews alone, in the extensive hall of Baha'i Temple, which was taken over by the Security Police Department and transformed into a minor torture prison. The police confiscated from those Jews 36,000 Iraqi Dinars in cash and Jewellery worth 30,000 Iraqi Dinars.[2]

By the intervention of the President of the International Conference, the Iraqi Government released all the Jews and Jewesses on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars each. They were imprisoned 19 to 20 days. Their money and jewellery were not refunded to them. After another intervention by the said President, the Iraqi Government refunded to them the money and jewellery after six months.[3]

During October, the escape of the second group of Jews out of Iraq through the Kurdish mountains to Iran began on a very large scale. Some 500 Jews and Jewesses escaped during October, November and December 1970 and January and February 1971, despite the fact that the Kurdish mountains in these months were covered with deep snow and escape was very dangerous.

This time, the secret police arrested 19 Jews and 13 Jewesses, a total of 32, either from the mountains or from their homes.

The Jews were imprisoned in minor torture prisons, where some of them were tortured and heavily maltreated.

The Jewesses were taken to the Za'afraniya Police Station minor torture prison in the southern suburb of the Russafa. In this station they were imprisoned in a room 6 x 6 metres containing about 40 Moslem women prisoners mostly prostitutes, criminals and drug-addicts, where they were grossly maltreated. As the room was small and insufficient to accommodate such a large number, the prisoners were so densely crowded that each one could have barely found a ground to sleep on.[4]

2 As confirmed by Shemtov who was among those who were imprisoned.
3 As confirmed by Shemtov who was among those who were imprisoned.
4 As confirmed by Shemtov who was among those who were imprisoned.



Muzli Yeheskel Shohet



Khatun Jamil Shemtov



Khatun Gourji Shina

Among the imprisoned Jewesses were:

1. Yeheskel Shohet's wife from her home.
2. Jamil Shemtov's wife and daughter from the mountains.
3. Gourji Shina's wife and daughter from the mountains.

The following three Jews were falsely charged with aiding the escape of the second group of Jews. They were imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya, where they were tortured and were about to be hanged.

1. Nadhem Katan, an employee, from his home.
2. Dr. Albert Raby from his home. (His own story continued from "Detentions").
3. Yeheskel Shohet (1905-73), steel commission agent, from his home. (His own story continued in "The Unbearable Shock").

All these victims were imprisoned and tortured for the only crime of being Jews. They were endeavoring to leave Iraq illegally to save themselves from persecutions, as no passports were granted to them.

By the humanitarian intervention of the President of the International Conference, the Iraqi Government released all those victims. The Jews and Jewesses in the minor torture prisons were imprisoned from 1 to 3 months, and those in Qasr Al-Nahaya about four months.

During June 1971 the escape of the third group of Jews out of Iraq to Iran began on an extremely larger scale. Some 750 Jews and Jewesses escaped through the Kurdish mountains during June, July and August.

Among the Jews who escaped were many who had been detained, and many who had been imprisoned in minor torture prisons. There were also many who had been imprisoned in major torture prisons, some relatives of those victims who had been hanged, and some of those who had been acquitted in the alleged ring of espionage network.

After the reissuing of passports to Jews in October 1971, all the latter three groups of Jews who were deprived of the grant of passports were compelled to escape in the summers of 1972-73.

* * *

On his departure from Iraq in 1970, the author left all his family in Baghdad, as they could not leave with him at the time.

After having lived a most luxurious life in a magnificent large villa with a vast garden, with fashionable furniture and all modern conveniences and equipment, with three private sleep-in maidservants, a private gardener and private chauffeur, and owning the latest model car, all the author's family were compelled by the exigencies of the circumstances to live in misery.

In order to keep up their courage, the author wrote to his wife secretly as per the following metaphorical extracts:

On May 8, 1971: "You have proved, my dear, that you are really a great woman. You have suffered considerable hardships and difficulties in the last seven months and overcame them all alone with highest wisdom. I request you, my dear, to have patience, as patience is the most precious hope in life. If one loses patience, he loses all hope in life. Patience is the key of deliverance, and deliverance is imminent by the will of God. If one lives in everlasting happiness in one monotonous way, he doesn't feel real happiness. But if one suffers great hardships and deliverance comes to him, he would then feel the delight of real happiness. Life isn't roses all the way. Man is nature's creature, and his life is changeable according to the seasons of the year, from winds, rains, snow, thorns and flowers. History teaches us that all great men, male and female, reached the summit of glory after sustaining great hardships and difficulties in their lives and overcoming them all."

On May 28: "My dear, the mood of man bears a resemblance to the evolution of a tree. In winter the tree is dry, hard, leafless, as if lifeless. In spring, following the winter, the tree is dressed in a lovely green mantle, and perfumes the breeze with the sweet scent of its blossoms, and dazzles the eyewitness with its beautiful scene. It is the same with man. In difficulties he is in low spirits and suffers painfully and hopelessly. But when deliverance comes, he would be in high spirits, and the traces of his sufferings and pains disappear. I wrote these lines when I was in a park in spring, and I remembered that I had been in the same park in winter. I compared the great difference between the scene of the trees in winter and that in spring. Now, my dear, you are in winter! Have patience! The spring is imminent!"

On August 3, all the author's family in Baghdad were able to escape out of Iraq across the Kurdish mountains to the Iranian frontier. They then went on to Teheran, and from there they joined the author.

The author, whose ancestors, himself and his family were born and grown up in Iraq, was innocent, loyal and loves his native country from all his heart. He was compelled to leave Iraq unwillingly because of persecutions and discriminatory measures imposed on him simply because he was a Jew. Otherwise, he would have never thought of leaving Iraq his beloved mother country.

28. Passports

After the Six-Day War, the Iraqi Jews considered as hostages were strictly forbidden to leave Iraq, in contradiction to the provisions of article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that everyone has the right to leave any country including his own.

Because of the humanitarian uproar raised by the French Friendship Committee following the first hanging, the Passport Department issued on May 31, 1969[1] an official announcement accepting applications for the grant of passports to Jews. Some 1800 to 2000 Jews immediately submitted applications during the first month following the official announcement. Each Jewish applicant filled up all application forms and gave all the necessary information as required by the Passport Department.

When the Iraqi Government saw that such an enormous number of Jews had submitted applications for passports within such a short time, it instructed the Passport Department to refuse acceptance of further applications. It was sure that if the Jews were still allowed to submit applications, all the Jews who were almost concentrated in Baghdad would do so. After three months' deliberation, the Iraqi Government decided not to grant any passport to Jews.

As many Jews were under the conviction that the Iraqi government was actually granting them passports, they took out the money they had hidden and spent it lavishly on the purchase of valises and clothes for their expected travel. Within a short time, all valises in Baghdad were purchased by such Jews, and there was shortage of luggage in the market.

The Jews also deposited some of their savings of money with some of their non-Jewish friends, whom they trusted, to transfer the money to their accounts abroad. But those friends betrayed them, as they were sure that the Jews could do nothing to recover their money.

By the official announcement of the Passport Department that passports were to be granted to Jews, but never were, many Jews were thus deprived of their savings for the upkeep of their families. The Jews implored their non-Jewish friends to have pity and mercy and refund them the money needed for the living expenses of their families. But their friends who had no conscience did not have pity and mercy on them and did not refund their money. Many Jews thus remained suffering from shortage of money needed for the daily living expenses of their families.

As a consequence of the humanitarian outcry raised by the International Conference following further hanging, the Iraqi Government instructed the Ministry of Interior to accord approval for the grant of passports to 6 old Jewish men and women whose ages ranging from 70 to 90 years on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars each, and the Ministry of Interior complied accordingly. The names of such Jews were selected from the list of the Jews who had submitted applications for passports on May 31, 1969, and the Passport Department started granting them from time to time the necessary passports.

1 Conference p. 18.

After the escape of the first group of large number of Jews during June, July and August 1970, the Iraqi Government continued granting from time to time passports to the Jewish aged group and few passports to special individual Jews on a bail of 500 Iraqi Dinars each.

After the escape of the second group of an enormous number of Jews during October, November and December 1970 and January and February 1971, the Iraqi Government increased the bail on passports granted to Jews from 500 Iraqi Dinars to 1,500 Iraqi Dinars each in hopes of putting obstacles in the way of the Jewish aged group's applications.

By the intervention of the President of the International Conference, the Iraqi Government removed the bail of 1,500 Iraqi Dinars on passports to all Jews.

On April 1971 the Passport Department started granting passports to twenty Jewish families on sponsorships from relatives in Canada.

This measure was concluded through the hard endeavours of Professor Heskel M. Haddad, M.D., President of the American Committee for Rescue and Resettlement of Iraqi Jews in New York. He was successful in tying that with the wheat deal between the Government of Canada and Iraq, through the humanitarian help of the American Ambassador Seymour Maxwell Finger.[2]

After the escape of the third group of an enormous number of Jews during June, July and August 1971, the Iraqi Government adopted a more lenient attitude towards granting passports to the remaining Jews.

During September 1971 many Jewish women and girls went successively to the Ministry of Interior and asked for permission to see the Minister Lieutenant-General Sa'dun Ghaidan. The Minister allowed them to enter his office. Some of them kissed his hand and implored him to grant them passports to leave the country. The Minister assured them that passports were shortly to be granted to Jews. They thanked him for his kind help.

As a consequence, the Passport Department started granting passports to the remaining Jews without restriction with effect from October 1971, and many Jews were able to leave Iraq.

But those Jews who had been imprisoned in major torture prisons, the relatives of those victims who had been hanged, and those who had been acquitted in the alleged ring of espionage were deprived of the grant of passports.

Victoria, the courageous wife of Meir Abda who had been imprisoned in Qasr Al-Nahaya, endeavoured to see the Minister of Interior, knelt at his feet, kissed his chest, and implored him to grant a passport to her husband. Although the Minister felt a sympathy for her case, all her strenuous efforts to obtain a passport for her husband failed.

* * *

Although passports granted by the Iraqi Government to Jews having a validity of two and three years successively, the Jews concerned have to sign a separate guaranty that they have to return to Iraq within three months' time from date of departure, otherwise, they are to be denationalized.

Trustworthy sources affirmed that the Iraqi Government made no change in the procedural system of the guaranty signed by Jews when granted passports.

2 Golim VI p. 125.

29. The Yom Kippur Fourth Arab-Israeli War



Anwar Al-Sadat



Hafiz Al-Asad

Shortly before two o'clock on Saturday afternoon of Yom Kippur the 6th of October 1973, the armies of Egypt and Syria made an offensive against Israel.[1] They launched a series of massive air, sea and land attacks in the Sinai and on the Golan Heights.

Anwar Al-Sadat (1918-81), Egypt's President, and Hafiz Al-Asad, Syria's President, hoped to capture Israel by surprise while its people were fasting and praying in the synagogues. They thought that on Yom Kippur Israel would not be prepared to confront them.

Israel immediately made a partial call-up of the reserves from the synagogues. Within few hours, the reserves were at the battle fronts. Israel Defence Forces under Chief of Staff, Rav-Aluf David Elazar (1925-76), hit back the attackers. The armies of Egypt and Syria suffered grave losses in armaments and manpower.

After few days, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Algeria, Morocco and Sudan sent military reinforcements to Syria and Egypt.

At half past six on Monday evening the 22nd of October 1973, the 17th day of the war, the Security Council adopted a resolution for the cease-fire in the Middle East,[2] initiated by the U.S. and Soviet Union, and it was agreed on by the three main belligerent nations.

On Friday afternoon the 21st of December 1973 a Peace Conference,[3] arranged by the U.S. and Soviet Union, was held at the UN Palais des Nations in Geneva for settlement of Arab-Israeli conflict.

Reliable sources certified that after this war, the Iraqi government did not issue passports to Jews. Those Jews already granted passports were allowed to leave Iraq. In the first week of November 1973 Iraqi Jews were not allowed to leave the country, and passports already granted to them were withheld.

As a consequence of favourable conditions between Egypt, Syria and Israel, the Iraqi Jews were not persecuted. In May 1974 Jews

1 Jerusalem Post No. 13911 d. 7.10.73.
2 Jerusalem Post No. 139223 d. 23.10.73.
3 Jerusalem Post No. 13975 d. 23.12.73.

were allowed to leave Iraq again, and passports were issued to them anew.

* * *

According to authentic estimate the Jews in Iraq numbered 320-330 at the end of 1980.

30. Proof That Jews Left Iraq Because of Persecutions

Since November 2, 1917, when the Balfour Declaration was issued, the Iraqi Government started to persecute the Iraqi Jews, culminating in the pogrom in 1941. Since November 29, 1947, when the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution for the creation of an independent Jewish State, the successive Iraqi governments took discriminatory measures against the Iraqi Jews. (With an exception of Abd Al-Karim Qassem's regime). After the Six-Day War on June 5, 1967, Prime Minister Tahir Yahya enacted anti-Jewish laws imposing severest discriminations and persecutions on the Jews in Iraq.

All the above-mentioned facts prove that many Jews were forced to leave Iraq either by escape or by the optional denationalization law or with passports because of persecutions.

Many of those Jews who were forced to leave by the optional denationalization law or with passports were not allowed to take their money. They were compelled to abandon all their possessions and businesses in Iraq and leave the country.

Many of those Jews who escaped out of Iraq were compelled to sustain similar sacrifices, and suffer moreover all the hardships and dangers of escape across the Shatt Al Arab river and the Kurdish mountains.

The extensiveness of the colossal sacrifices of those Jews who left Iraq because of persecutions is a proof of the intenseness of such persecutions.

31. World Organization of Jews From Arab Countries (WOJAC)

Since 1951 the Iraqi Government arbitrarily denationalized the Jews who left Iraq by escape. Since 1964 the Jews who left the country with passports were also arbitrarily denationalized. In both cases the law was in force from a retroactive indefinite period.

These discriminatory measures were in contradiction to the provisions of article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Since 1951 the Iraqi Government arbitrarily sequestrated all the property in Iraq of the Jews who left the country by escape or by the optional denationalization law. Since 1964 all the property in Iraq of the Jews who left the country with passports were also arbitrarily sequestrated. Since 1948 an arbitrary confiscation of the old large Jewish cemetery started until it was wholly confiscated. Since 1951 many Jewish schools, synagogues and social institutions were also arbitrarily confiscated. The cost of the sequestrated and confiscated Jewish property is estimated at many billions of US. Dollars.

These discriminatory measures were in contradiction to the provisions of article 17 of the afore-cited Declaration which stipulate that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Chapter "Proof that Jews left Iraq because of Persecutions" is a clear proof that many Jews were forced to abandon all their property in Iraq and leave the country because of persecutions.

As those Jews who left by escape or by the optional denationalization law had no passports, they naturally were refugees. Consequently, the former sought refuge in free foreign countries and the latter were offered such refuge in Israel.

In view of the justification of the afore-mentioned legal facts, the Jews concerned have legitimate rights for compensation for their property left in that country.



Mordechai Ben-Porat



Leon J. Tamman

A convention, initiated by Mordechai Ben-Porat, was held in Paris on November 24, 1975. At this convention the representatives of Jews from Arab countries from Israel, Europe and America established the World Organization of Jews from Arab countries (WOJAC), under the dynamic joint chairmanship of Mordechai Ben-Porat (Israel) and Leon J. Tamman (England). The convention has two-fold aims. The first, to represent the legitimate rights of the Jews concerned from eight Arab states against their respective governments. The second, to draw the attention of the world community to the problems of the Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

The Head Office of WOJAC was set up in Tel-Aviv and is headed by Mordechai Ben-Porat. The European Section was presided over by Leon Tamman. The American Section was also established.

The convention was opened by Mordechai Ben-Porat. In a cable to the opening session, Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel, said: "The Organization will represent the biggest wave of refugees which the Middle East has experienced in this generation". In another message, Yigal Allon, the Israeli Foreign Minister, said: "International opinion is not yet adequately informed of the problems of the Jewish refugees".[1]

1 Jerusalem Post No. 13560 d. 25.11.75.

32. President Al-Bakr on WOJAC's Reaction

Immediately after the establishment of the World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC), The embassies of the Republic of Iraq in the capitals of many countries published an announcement in the press under the heading: IRAQI JEWS INVITED TO RETURN HOME TO IRAQ. It reads:

The Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) in Iraq has adopted a resolution which entitles all Iraqi Jews who left Iraq since 1948 to return home to Iraq and enjoy equal rights with all Iraqi citizens. The resolution also stipulates that the Iraqi Government shall guarantee to the returning Jews full constitutional rights and a secure life free from any sort of discrimination.

This decision by the RCC stems from the adherence by the Iraqi Government to the principles of human rights, the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is a fact of history that Jews lived among the Arabs in harmony throughout the ages. History abounds with examples of Arab-Jewish co-operation which flourished in a prevailing atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam do not preach hate or propagate concepts of exclusivity. On the contrary, the three monotheistic religions, which base their moral teachings on the belief that all men are equal in the eyes of God, preach love and brotherhood. So long as these basic fundamental tenets were adhered to, there existed understanding, mutual respect and co-operation. As soon as these principles were abandoned, co-operation gave place to confrontation.

The Jews so long as they adhered to the true principles of Judaism lived in peace and harmony among Christians and Moslems. However, along came the Zionists and started propagating the myth of "A Chosen People". They converted Judaism into Zionism, a racist movement, and turned religion into a nationality. The first outcome of this was the expulsion of the Arab Palestinians from their homeland. The Zionists sinned against the very essence of Judaism, they excluded themselves through the erroneous belief that they belong to some mythical "Superior Race". This racist claim has rightly earned them universal condemnation.

The Arabs, it should be noted, have always made a very clear distinction between Judaism and Zionism. The former is a religion which the Arabs, like all others, respect. The latter, however, is a racist movement whose first victims have been the Palestinian Arabs and is, consequently, vehemently opposed by all Arabs and justice-loving peoples the world over.

The Arabs have no quarrel with the Jews as such. Their only quarrel is with Zionism. Hence, Iraq calls upon all Iraqi Jews who left the country since 1948 to return and enjoy all the rights accorded to Iraqi citizens.

The Iraqi Jews who left the country after 1948, it should be noted, left on their own. No one was expelled. Moreover, it is an established fact that the Iraqi Jews enjoyed a prosperous life in Iraq before they unilaterally decided to leave the country. Given the economic crises besetting the Jews in the Zionist entity, it goes without saying that the Iraqi Jews who would return home to Iraq will be assured of a much higher standard of living.

The resolution signed by President Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr in his capacity as RCC Chairman reads as follows: "Pursuant to the provisions of para a article 42 of the Interim Constitution, in keeping with the Iraqi government's belief in human rights and by virtue of Iraq's adherence to the principles and rights provided for in the UN Charter and the Declaration of Human Rights: The Revolutionary Command Council in its meeting of November 26, 1975 adopted the following resolution:

1. Iraqi Jews who left Iraq since 1948 are hereby entitled to return home.

2. All Iraqi Jews returning to Iraq under this resolution shall enjoy all lawful rights of Iraqi citizens under law.

3. The Iraqi Government shall guarantee to the returning Jews full constitutional rights enjoyed by Iraqi citizens. This will include equality and a secure life free from any sort of discrimination.

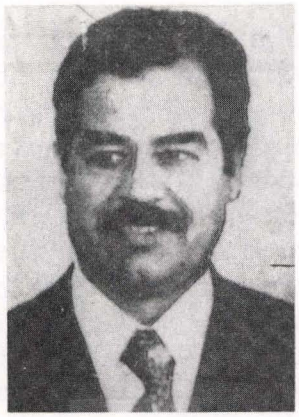
4. This resolution shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall be enforced by the Ministers concerned."

* * *

The above announcement clearly shows that President Al-Bakr has now ascertained that the Jews who left Iraq since 1948 were innocent and loyal to their native country, and for this reason, he invites them to return home to Iraq.

It also shows that the Iraqi Government shall guarantee to the returning Jews full constitutional rights and a secure life free from any sort of discrimination.

33. President Saddam Hussein



Saddam Hussein

On July 16, 1979 Saddam Hussein, Iraq's strong man who was actually running the affairs of the country, took over the presidency of the Republic. This event ended Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr's 11-year term of office.[1]

In a televised speech Al-Bakr (1912-82) claimed that he resigned from the presidency of the Republic and from all his functions in the government and the army because of ill-health, and that he handed over the administration of all his powers to Saddam Hussein.

Reliable sources testified that the conditions of the Jews in Iraq during Saddam Hussein's regime have been greatly ameliorated.

The Jews are enjoying commercial, social and religious freedom. They are allowed to sell their landed property, stocks and shares, cars, etc. They are permitted to receive dividents, rentals, interests, etc. without hindrance. They are allowed to withdraw any sum of money from their bank accounts.

1 Jerusalem Post No. 14669 d. 17.7.79.

34. Protection of the International Human Rights

The deliverance of the Jews in Iraq brought about as a result of the vigorous protests raised by the world conscience teaches a most meritorious and important lesson. Persecutions should be relentlessly and incessantly fought to ensure the protection and respect of human rights. The rigorous measures taken by the world against the persecutions of the Jewish minority in Iraq after the Six-Day War forced the Iraqi Government to relax such persecutions. As a consequence, most of the Jews could leave Iraq and seek refuge in other free countries of the world and live peacefully.

International humanitarian eminent personalities, who struggle for the defence and respect of human rights in every region of the world, fervently wish to realize a noble dream and aspiration. They await enthusiastically for the days when the United Nations will actually take the most rigorous measures, to ensure that government signatories to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights strictly enforce the provisions of that solemn Declaration, without discrimination of religion, creed or race, for the welfare and dignity of all humanity.

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Congress Bulletin - Published by the Canadian Jewish Congress, Montreal, Quebec.

Lamatkhil - Hebrew weekly magazine in Israel.

Jerusalem Post - Daily newspaper in Israel.

Abbreviation of Sources

GOLIM — **Golim Vé Gaolim** by Abraham Twena.

ALBUM — By Abraham Twena.

KITZUR — **Kitzur Toledot Yehudei Babel** by Abraham Ben-Jacob.

AVNEI — **Avnei Derekh** - Toledot Hayyehudim Be-Babel Ad Le-Aliya|Hahamonit by Ezra Haddad.

TRIAL —**Trial and Error** by Chaim Weizmann.

QASSEM — **Iraq Under Qassem** by Uriel Dann.

ARMY — **Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society** by Eliezer Be'eri.

MURAILLES — **Les Murailles D'Israel** by Jean Larteguy.

ESRIM — **Esrim Shana Lapraot Be-Yehudei Baghdad.**

ANDERTAT — **Andertat Hashnayim.**

FAITS — **Faits et Chiffres Israel 1971.**

JUIFS — **Les Juifs Dans Les Pays Arabes.**

CONFÉRENCE — **Conférence Internationale pour la Délivrance des Juifs au Moyen-Orient.**

ASSOCIATION — **Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association.**

KADOORIE — Sir Elly Kadoorie.

ESKELL — Sir Sassoon Eskell.

DANN — Prof. Dr. Uriel Dann of the Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel-Aviv University.

BENGIO — Mrs. Ofra Bengio of the same Center.

BEN-PORAT — Mr. Mordechai Ben-Porat.

PETEL — Mr. David Petel.

SAMRA — The late Farid Samra.

SHINA — The late Lawyer Salman Shina.

BASRI — Mr. Meer S. Basri.

ELKABIR — Mr. Yaakov Ezra Abdallah (Elkabir).

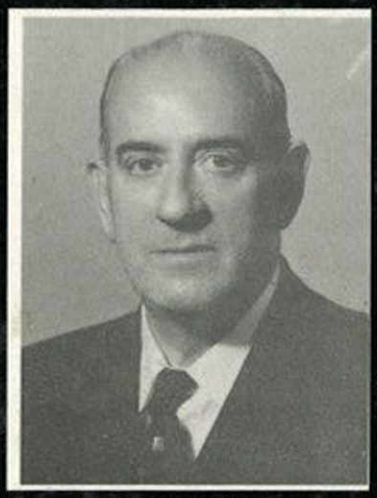
HAIM — Mr. Aboodi Haim.

YAMEN — The late Anwar Salman Yamen.

SHEMTOV — Mr. Jamil Shemtov.

HORESH — Mrs. Semha Horesh, Charles Raphael Horesh's widow

BABYLONIAN — **The Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center**



The author is a descendant of an honourable family for generations in the Jewish community in Baghdad. Born in Baghdad, Iraq, graduated from the Baghdad Alliance Secondary School, where he studied French, English, Arabic and Hebrew. He studied law in the evening.

After some time, he founded in Baghdad his own commercial office and made it most modern. His office flourished and progressed and consisted of a large staff.

After the Six-Day War, Tahir Yahya's Government persecuted the Jews on religious discriminatory grounds. As a consequence, the author lost all his huge fortune. After the world conscience had been aroused, he left Iraq empty-handed.

During the climax of persecutions, the author, following his paternal grandfather's example as a writer, promised His Maker and himself that, in case he would miraculously leave Iraq, he would devote his time to writing a book describing the conditions of the Jews of Iraq before and after the war, to bring the information to the world public opinion. The author, thank God, was able to realize his dream and ambition, and his efforts have been crowned with success.

* This comprehensive fully illustrated book is a chronological historical survey of the momentous story of the contemporay last chapter of the lives of the jews of Iraq.

* The book is of a profound philosophical significance, stemming from a strong impulse for the adherence to the fundamental principles of the international human rights.

* It is unique in its field.

Highly Recommended by:

* The Office of the President of the State of Israel.
* Shlomo Hillel, M.K., Ex-Minister and Ex-Speaker of the Knesset.
* Mordechai Ben-Porat, former Minister. Chairman of Babylonian Jewry Heritage Centre.