

**“Meeting between Saddam and Senior Iraqi Officials
Discussing the Execution of British Journalist Farzad
Bazoft, Modifications to Iraq's Constitution, and an
Israeli Attack on Iraq's Nuclear Reactor”**



Document Date: Undated (sometime after 1989)

CRRC Record Number: SH-SHTP-A-000-910

Key: UM = Unidentified Male Speaker

Translator Comments, clarifications, and additions are italicized in brackets.

Saddam Hussein: [*This conversation was already in progress*] All of you must circulate the summary of this spy issue to our ambassadors immediately.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: You should deal with them [*British reporter Farzad Bazoft and British nurse Daphne Parish*] normally. In brief, he [*Bazoft*] is an Israeli spy; I mean he is an Israeli spy working for the British.

Hamid: Yes, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: He was originally recruited by the British and then by the Israelis, and he confessed to this. Therefore, the summary of this issue is what he said during the investigation and in the court, including his confessions.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: He is a spy. [*A sound of a camera shutter is heard*]

Tariq Aziz: Maybe Comrade Hamid can call the head of the court.

Hamid: Sir, I called the Intelligence Agency which wrote a summary and sent it to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: There are no differences between the confessions he made to the Intelligence Agency from those made in court.

Hamid: The same statement, Sir; he did not deny it in court.

Saddam Hussein: The same statement; he repeated the same thing he said in the investigation. He showed up on Baghdad television and confirmed in both, the court and on television, that he has not been tortured. He is originally an Iranian who has the citizenship of...

Tariq Aziz: He does not have citizenship.

Hamid: He does not have citizenship, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: He does not?

Hamid: He has a resident card and a British passport, but he is not a citizen.

Saddam Hussein: How stupid they are!

Tariq Aziz: From the legal point of view, he has no right -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: Ahmad, how long does it take a person to be executed?

Ahmad: One month, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: A whole month?

Ahmad: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: To be executed?

Ahmed: I mean one month is the maximum. *[The sound of a camera shutter is heard again]*

Saddam Hussein: We will execute him during Ramadan, in Ramadan, as punishment for Margaret Thatcher.

Tariq Aziz: She is the source of King Hussein *[Jordan's King Hussein's interest]* with regard to this issue.

Saddam Hussein: A mediator! Only God can mediate for him. I ask for God's forgiveness as he is the owner of the ultimate shelter. Anything beneath Him will not be successful. Are they underestimating us *[the British]*? After all the damages we've suffered and sacrifices that we have made over the last eight years, the British still do not know us well! Thatcher sent us a nice message, and we answered her with a nicer message, huh?

UM: *[Inaudible]*

Saddam Hussein: We will start with *[pauses]* what, a greeting? "Whoever greets you with a salutation, *[you should]* greet him with a better salutation or the same;" and we did greet them back with a better one and said we are ready. If you want your ambassador to attend the legal trial, we assure you that our trials are legal—a legal trial took place and the British ambassador attended the trial.

Tariq Aziz: The Counsel.

Saddam Hussein: The Counsel attended the trial, and they retained a lawyer of their choice.

Sa'doun Humadi: What's for *[inaudible]*?

Hamid: Sir, even during the investigation -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: Huh?

Hamid: I mean after the investigation was over, before the trial, they were visited in prison.

Saddam Hussein: Before the trial, they visited them in prison.

Hamid: Her mother and her daughter visited her [*Parish*].

Saddam Hussein: And they asked them while in prison, “Were you tortured?” The answer was no. [*They asked*], “Is this statement of yours correct?” and they answered it was correct. What should we do to a spy, caress him [*sarcasm*]?

Sa’doun Humadi: Just to get to the bottom of this issue, Sir, because they gradually had the impression that anyone that is detained in Iraq can be released by mediation on behalf of the President.

Saddam Hussein: After the dirty work this spy has done, now you [*referring to the British*] want to come and say we have good relations with Iraq and that we want to see you? If you raise this issue in a nice manner, the President of the country might consider using his authority in that case—maybe—but to declare that you condemn this [*court decision*]; what’s there to condemn? Is this a political decision to condemn it? This is a verdict issued by a judicial court in Iraq, and you know all the details, so what are you condemning? In addition, after condemning, you [*the British*] say that you want to come and see Saddam Hussein and [*request*] that this person will not get executed before I come. [*Pause*] No, do not come, I do not want you.

[*Time Stamp: 00:05:00*]

Ahmed: Yesterday, Sir, we had a meeting with our brothers at the Intelligence Agency and we completed all the required procedures which went smoothly and [*the report*] was publicized all over the world. He [*Bazofi*] visited [*Iraq*] many times before and we facilitated his travel and he was not previously detained. He came here to cover the Kurdistan legislative ruling [*elections*] and he went to an area that is 300 Kilometers away from the intended coverage area. Also, the lawyer attended the trial along with the Counsel and them [*the prisoners*], and so forth. We consider this interference in our internal affairs; we implemented the law in a fair manner. This [*report*] reached all media agencies.

Saddam Hussein: What we need is that our friends from the Arab press -- [*Interrupted*]

Ahmed: We informed all of them, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: They [*the Arab press*] need to write and attack this arrogance, which despises the interests of others, and nothing occurs in their minds [*the British*] except their [*own*] interests.

Ahmed: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: There are known laws all over the world with regard to spying.

Sa’doun Humadi: All over the world.

Saddam Hussein: The reason people are so tough towards spies, even when they comply with humanitarian law, is because they cause harm to the country—and what is a country? It is a group of

individuals' interests; this is the definition of a country. Therefore, when they cause damage to most of the individuals' interests through spying, including their personal safety, societies have every right to defend themselves in this case. We are dealing with a country that considers the war between us not to be over, with aggressive purposes, and this country applied this concept by attacking the Iraqi nuclear reactor [Osirek]. Therefore, the issue of dealing with a spy for this country or any other foreign country becomes more significant when he is a spy for Israel—a country with which we are still in a state of war.

[*The sound of glass cups is heard*]

Moreover, we do not have a truce with Israel, so what does this mean? It means that it is going to ease the mission for Israel to hit Iraq, as it was hit in 1981. So, isn't it the right of every citizen in this [weapons] factory, being a target of Israel, to hit him [*the spy*] and kill him inside the factory? Isn't this his right, as well as the right of neighboring villages or factories, to defend their selves from this [attack] according to the code of human rights? [Pause] Let them [*the Arab press*] launch a [media] campaign.

Ahmed: Understood Sir.

Saddam Hussein: You also need to attract the attention, especially in your media about the British themselves and in the British press. The Arabs who have influence on editors in the British newspapers must get into a dialogue with those editors, the Iraqis and Arabs. They will not ask those editors to publish an article, but just have a dialogue with them saying that Margaret Thatcher acted wrongly, because if she is putting efforts [*to release the prisoners*], she is not supposed to use these efforts in the theme of campaign propaganda. She thought that Iraq is a piece of cake; that it is easy to interfere in our affairs and get a result that serves her electoral goals. So, what Thatcher has done is against British interests. I mean, her and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but it is all about her personal electoral interests. Or else, if she had [*made*] an effort and the President of Iraq was able to use his authorities that the constitution gave to him, this would not happen this way.

Sa'doun Humadi: It could be in the form of asking for mercy.

Saddam Hussein: It will not happen under these conditions; condemnation, campaign, etc... and I do not know what. Is it possible that Thatcher and her Minister of Foreign Affairs are not familiar with Iraq? I mean to this point? Like any other country, Iraq has self respect, and when a decision is made, Iraq also respects the courts and makes sure that these court decisions will be sound and accurate. After all this happened, all of this happened with you [*Britain*], so why did you launch such a campaign? You actually even wasted the chance for the Iraqi President to use his authorities if he wanted to do so.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: You have tried this, and the media, such as the British media covered small issues. You also tried through other means where the President of Iraq used his authorities, and so did such and such person. I am talking about two or three individuals, and maybe this made them greedy, [*inaudible, all talk at the same time*] more than one [*individual*].

[*Time Stamp: 00:10:12*]

Sa'doun Humadi: No, there are two.

Tariq Aziz: No, no, the British had one and the German had one [*individual pardoned*].

Saddam Hussein: No, there was one before; yeah, the German.

Tariq Aziz: The German person and the British person. When Miller came, one was released.

Saddam Hussein: Miller acted in a very nice and polite manner.

Ahmed: We told them Sir, we said, "This behavior will harm you more than it would be useful to you," so that they can understand that this method [*of behavior*] is leading this man closer to death.

Sa'doun Humadi: But we are finished.

Ahmed: Yes, we are done. Miller responded... what's his name, David Hurd or Miller, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs?

[*Someone is stirring tea*]

Tariq Aziz: Douglas Hurd.

Ahmed: Douglas Hurd. He says, despite the statement of the Minister of Information, we are not threatening; we are just requesting [*inaudible, a lot of noise in the background*].

'Izzat al-Duri: [*Inaudible*]

Ahmed: Huh?

'Izzat al-Duri: [*Inaudible*]

Ahmed: It's not interference, pardon me, this is not interference in our internal affairs. We told them that the British Counsel, who attended the trial and saw this spy more than once, should have informed British public opinion about the situation.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, that's right.

Ahmed: Why all this secrecy about the subject?!

Saddam Hussein: May God damn them.

Tariq Aziz: They are trying to strengthen a feeling throughout the whole world, which contends that the Western world is a civilized world and everything they do is always right. While everything that the Third World's countries do is suspicious.

Saddam Hussein: [*It*] is not right.

Tariq Aziz: [*It*] is suspicious. If they approved it, it's fine, and if they didn't, it is not.

Ahmed: Sir, it has been twelve years [*inaudible*] the British media.

Saddam Hussein: This never happened. [*The sound of stirring*]

Ahmed: And I told them I have been following-up on the media for the last twelve years and not one letter or one good word has appeared about the Iraqi victory. I told them, "OK, we could be wrong; we are no different than others."

Saddam Hussein: Fine, what about the other Westerners?

Ahmed: Do other Westerners or Arabs not do anything wrong?

Saddam Hussein: Sometimes they criticize us, and sometimes [*pauses*]

Ahmed: Is there anything positive at all?

Saddam Hussein: [*Continuing*] they recognize our rights in full.

Ahmed: I told them [*the British media*] once; I told them this war has been going on for eight years; it has some defeats and some victories. Do you not think that we achieved victory even one time? As if they were told by the British [*government to be critical of Iraq*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: They were told by Khomeini.

Hamid: Yes, they were told!

Ahmed: [*Inaudible*]

Saddam Hussein: Huh?

Ahmed: The British media just wants to find something to talk about; the chemicals, the Kurds, and so forth.

Hamid: Not only the [*inaudible*], even the simple ones they [*inaudible*]. Once the BBC reported in their main news broadcast about an Iraqi woman who was caught stealing in one of the stores; this was broadcast in the main newscast [*inaudible*]. The news is right just because it is broadcast by a British station [*sarcasm*].

Saddam Hussein: This civilized country, one of their ambassadors [*inaudible*] here; one of the ambassadors of the powerful countries is looting. He steals from us so the [*inaudible*] and the Intelligence

Agency goes and gets it all back [by] stealing from him. We have had this heated argument with him for the last two or three years, and he is an ambassador for a powerful country.

[Sound of sipping a drink, plates, and flatware is heard]

This is the civilized world. The news had spread out in one form or another that, after giving this statement, the Prime Minister of Britain asked to come to Iraq, but the Iraqis didn't welcome his request and they were not willing to receive him *[inaudible]* their apology for this reason.

Hamid: Allow me Sir, please; we need to take advantage of the time regarding this issue.

Saddam Hussein: For whom?

Hamid: For the media -- *[Interrupted]*

[Voices overlap]

Saddam Hussein: No, this statement of the Minister of Information -- *[Interrupted]*

Hamid: The leak of information, they leaked the news to the outer media.

Tariq Aziz: No, we have not officially informed the Ambassador. Sir, let's inform him this evening.

Saddam Hussein: Call and inform the Ambassador.

Tariq Aziz: I wanted to ask you if I can call him from here.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, you can.

Tariq Aziz: We can even catch up with the Undersecretary -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: They won't be fast enough for them to come to us here *[Saddam is joking, he means trace the call]*. They need a plan.

Tariq Aziz: Huh?

Saddam Hussein: The Israelis need a plan *[to prepare]* to come here; we can call them from this big turban *[the meaning is unclear]*.

[Time Stamp: 00:15:09]

Ahmed: They started to disseminate the news.

[Inaudible, individuals talking]

Saddam Hussein: [*Inaudible, someone is sipping on tea*] We are building palaces in order to receive Israel's friends [*Saddam is joking, they all laugh*], but we are afraid to call from them [*still laughing*].

Hamid: Openly.

Saddam Hussein: To the big turban.

[*The sound of footsteps*]

Saddam Hussein: Abu-Ziyad [*a nickname for Tariq Aziz*], there is a phone here!

Tariq Aziz: Sir, I do not know which one, because [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Wait, I will, I will get it.

Tariq Aziz: Is it the white one?

Saddam Hussein: It is written on them, Abu-Ziyad; one of them says "Internal" and another says "Palace."

Tariq Aziz: I do not see "Palace" written anywhere.

Saddam Hussein: Does this one say "personal?"

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: [*Inaudible*]

Tariq Aziz: [*Talking on the phone*] May peace be upon you. Can you connect me to the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs? This is Tariq Aziz.

[*The sound of footsteps*]

Saddam Hussein: [*Sipping sound*] The Arabs aren't the ones making us look weak; the weakness of Arabs. Have you heard about the incident where Hussein Sayyed Jasim told Muhesin al-Sha'lan, "I will kill you," then what happened?

UM: Yes, Abu-Dalaf drew a pistol upon Muhesin al-Sha'lan and said to him, "Listen Muhesin, Abu-Dalaf didn't tell me to kill you but I will [*or am going to*]." Muhesin asked why? He answers, "The people of Kufa eat dates, and after that [*inaudible*]. [*The UM is recounting an old story about the Kufa people. While he is telling the story, the phone rings and Tariq Aziz answers. The call was not clear due to the voices overlapping*]"

Saddam Hussein: So, the weakness of the Arabs is a disaster; a huge disaster. They are afraid, and I truly do not understand why they are afraid. There is no reason to be afraid because they are 22 countries, and

the interests of the most powerful country will be crushed with any simple solidarity between the Arabs. So, what's [*the reason*] for their fear?

UM: Their interests, Sir.

[*A phone ringing is heard and Tariq Aziz answers it*]

Saddam Hussein: Why this fear? Once in the war, our Jordanian brothers... people were aware of risks and dangers but the Arabs were saying things here and there about Iran and the dangers and the Americans -- [*Interrupted*]

UM: The Americans spread fear in the Gulf.

Saddam Hussein: I was courteous with them [*the Arabs*] and did not want them to feel bad. I said, "We need our brother Arabs to tell us why they are scared. Maybe, we should also have fears!"

UM: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: They are going to teach us how to fear, but they need to convince us first, because we do not see a reason for fear.

[*Time Stamp: 00:20:15*]

UM: They took advantage -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Let us get scared, I said, let them convince us in order to be scared... just convince us.

UM: In 1986.

Saddam Hussein: They laughed about what I said and they let it go. Afterwards, they became stronger.

UM: Yes, during the decisive year where the Americans were forced to -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The decisive year and others.

UM: They came to the region.

Saddam Hussein: Oh God, when we were in the decisive year. The decisive year will not pass through fear [*sarcastic light laughter*], one must be willing to die.

UM: Exactly.

Saddam Hussein: The Ba'ath Party does not fear anyone but God and the people.

UM: Yes, people.

Saddam Hussein: This is a fact, by God, when people are upset we do not sleep at night; I mean, when we realize that people are worried.

UM: Dissatisfied and worried.

Saddam Hussein: And if there is anything else, we would take it into account and we will not be afraid... what is there to fear [*Saddam laughs with sarcasm here*], why the fear?! One would fear the God who created him, and people out of an ethical commitment; a commitment that is ethical and not just based on principle [*actions, not just talk*]. When someone is in charge, ethically, he will be committed to satisfying the people, because what good is he if he cannot make them happy?!

Hamid: Sir, Iraqis are different than them. Although Arabs are of one nationality, Iraqis, however, are very different. Their vision and awareness is different.

Saddam Hussein: By God, they are not different; they might be different in a few things, but Arabs, I mean... who liberated us from the Persians 1400 years ago? The Arabs of the Peninsula came and liberated us. Who liberated our souls? Also the Arabs of the Peninsula.

[*Tariq Aziz's phone conversation is heard in the background*]

Tariq Aziz: [*On the phone*] Regarding the British Minister, tell the Ambassador that we apologize that we cannot receive him. And explain to him and say that if the Minister wants to come in a normal way, as a bilateral visit, through that and without the media involved, raising this issue or others, we would have welcomed him. If Miller had previously visited Iraq in a bilateral framework, and he raised the issue of the British detainee before Mr. President then he [*Saddam*] would have released him. But, coming for a visit in an atmosphere of threats and denunciation and statements of condemnation issued by the British Foreign Ministry, the Head of Government, and a media campaign, this will not be tolerated by Iraq. Tell him this the right way. Tell him this is a matter that concerns us, tell him that the carrying out the sentence concerns us in Iraq, we will not allow any other party to interfere and will not give promises to anyone. [*Tariq finishes his phone call there is the sound of his footsteps walking away from the phone*].

Saddam Hussein: OK, let us see.

Tariq Aziz: Here you have, Sir, what we did before, and our new work. The new one starts from page 46.

Saddam Hussein: Which page?

Tariq Aziz: 46.

Hamid: The first page is 46, the first page after [*inaudible*], right? The first chapter?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, [*inaudible, voices overlap*].

Saddam Hussein: The President of the Republic.

Hamid: The President of the Republic, yes.

Tariq Aziz: Yes. Mr. President, have it from the beginning.

Hamid: Is the new edited one for Mr. President?

Ahmed: Yes, a whole binder.

[The sound of papers, glasses, and flatware]

Saddam Hussein: This is one of the guys when *[inaudible]* from far... *[The noise continues]* I was happy to receive a letter from Abu-'Abdallah *[nickname for King Hussein of Jordan]*.

Hamid: Is it a new letter *[from King Hussein]*?

[Time Stamp: 00:25:27]

Saddam Hussein: Yes, you *[referring to King Hussein throughout this paragraph]* came and visited us, and you mentioned that you went to Kuwait and what you told the Kuwaitis. You approached the issue from something we said because of your insistence. We *[Iraq]* said, "Do you know that those people *[Kuwaitis]* still hold the war assistance *[debts from the war]* against us?" You said, "I am going to take a tour there, and I hope you *[Saddam]* do not mind if I take the initiative to raise my surprise *[about Kuwait holding Iraq's debt]* to them *[the Kuwaitis]*." So I told him, "I am not asking you to do so; I am not, but we will not get upset if you talk about it just for your information." So you *[King Hussein]* went there back and forth *[to and from Kuwait]* and talked to them *[the Kuwaitis]* and they understood you. They understood and you definitely told them that I *[King Hussein]* was getting back to our Iraqi brothers *[returning to Iraq from Kuwait to relay the message]*.

Why are you sending it in an official letter? *[Saddam is upset that King Hussein wrote him what he already told him in a face-to-face meeting]*

Tariq Aziz: After his return?

Saddam Hussein: Yes, after his return. Anyway, when he returned to Jordan, he wrote me a letter with everything he told me! You see, so that you know, he used to send letters about Hafiz al-Assad *[the President of Syria]* and respond in letters the same way.

Tariq Aziz: Hum.

Saddam Hussein: If you are going back and forth to discuss things with him *[any president]*, why are you writing again and talking about this and that and the Arab nation?

Tariq Aziz: There is no precedent, there is no precedent for this even with him. It has no precedent, I mean he used to send a letter before regarding an issue -- *[Interrupted]*

Sa'doun Humadi: *[Inaudible]* about something he does not know -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: The issue about Hafiz al-Assad, he used to document it and send letters about it.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but before he talks about it, I mean he sends a letter first and then -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: By God, sometimes he doesn't even talk; I mean he would talk, he would hear our opinion in such and such an issue, but he still sends a letter.

UM: [*Inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Huh?

UM: [*Inaudible*], what can we do? We have to be tolerant.

Saddam Hussein: No, we will tolerate them even though we are all tired.

Tariq Aziz: Answer him.

Saddam Hussein: We are really tired of letters. He shall wait until the Baghdad summit [*Saddam laughs with sarcasm*]. Isn't it getting hot? [*Saddam walks away from the microphone*]

How is the spring in Tikrit [*rhetorical question*]? Was it nice?

'Izzat al-Duri: It is green, by God.

Tariq Aziz: Even in the mountains.

Hamid: Until ten days ago, Sir, I just got back about ten days ago.

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Hamid: The resorts are all green.

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible*]. Yes.

[*Inaudible, Saddam seems to have went to open a door and almost hurt himself, everyone expresses concern*]

Saddam Hussein: Did you say we should start from page 46?

Tariq Aziz: Page 47.

Saddam Hussein: Read for us, Hamid.

Hamid: Yes, Sir. "Article 85: The President of the Republic is the Head of State, the image of the people and their leader, the Armed Forces Commander in Chief, and he [*in Arabic the masculine plural includes women as well*] is the one overseeing the implementation of and respect for the constitution, the sovereignty of the law, and the sound operation of the executive, legislative, and judicial institutions of the state, the protection of national independence, and safeguarding of the national unity and security of the country."

Saddam Hussein: Anyway, we shall interrupt you if we have any question.

[*Time Stamp: 00:30:24*]

Hamid: “Article 86: People shall elect the President of the Republic by direct and secret general vote, and the law shall define the procedures of electing the President of the Republic. Article 87: The procedures to elect the President of the Republic shall start 60 days prior to the expiration date of the current presidency, and the new president shall be elected” [*the audio is blank from 30:51-31:22*].

Tariq Aziz: [*Audio resumes, Tariq repeats what Hamid read*] “the President of the Republic shall start 60 days prior to the expiration date of the presidency, and the new president shall be elected at least 10 days before this period.” We should not look at our current situation, but as -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: In all cases.

Tariq Aziz: But as election procedures, the opening is very small. I mean, he should not have included this condition, “starting 60 days before the elections,” and “have to end in 10 days,” I mean -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: No, it has to end 10 days before.

Hamid: Before the end of the presidency.

Saddam Hussein: This means within 50 days; we have 50 days.

Tariq Aziz: “And the new president shall be elected at least 10 days before the end of this period.” This means in the last 10 days.

Saddam Hussein: This means not 10 days after the end of the 60 days.

Hamid: 50 days.

Saddam Hussein: This means within 50 days.

Ahmed: Yes, within 50 days.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, within 50 days, I mean a short period.

Saddam Hussein: It would be better for the state not to remain preoccupied in any other matters, whether it is related to the election of the President of the Republic, or the election of the National Council, or the Shura Council.

Sa’doun Humadi: The President of the Republic, in particular.

Saddam Hussein: So, by saying 50 days, this means there is hardly enough time for people to know they can nominate others.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: It is rather a specific period, and when it is over in seven years, which is the period that you suggested until today, once these seven years are over, before seven years people would know

that the presidency shall end one day at a certain date, which is the normal case, and so whoever wants to run for election must prepare himself. Yes.

Hamid: “Article 88: The individual elected to be the President of the Republic must be first, Iraqi by birth; with both parents being Iraqis by birth with no foreign roots. Second, he must be” -- *[Interrupted]*

Tariq Aziz: Sir, this paragraph means if his mother is an Arab, this will be unacceptable. As far as our constitution and jobs, such as ministers and council members, we considered the person whose mother is an Arab, with the nationality of one of the Arab countries, to be acceptable. This is for your information only; however, *[to be President]* both parents must be Iraqis.

Saddam Hussein: When there is a union *[between Arab nations]*, but this is fine for the region of Iraq.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, this is for your information only because there is another version *[of this article]*.

Hamid: Second, he must be -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: No, no, hold on for a minute. *[Pause]* Should we switch it *[versions]*?

Hamid: Well, it is up to you Sir.

Saddam Hussein: Huh?

Hamid: It is up to you.

Saddam Hussein: No.

Hamid: If you allow me, here is my personal opinion.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, why not, of course.

Sa’doun Humadi: *[Inaudible]* I mean the President of the Republic is supposed to be *[inaudible, voices overlap]*.

Hamid: By God, Sir, it is necessary to keep it as it is, not in a pan-Arab concept. And like you said, if there is an Arab step *[towards unification]* to...

Saddam Hussein: The... *[Pauses]*

Tariq Aziz: The previous versions stipulate that the president must be Iraqi by birth of both parents -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: We can come up with a Fatwa here *[figuratively, we can find a solution for this]*. We can say, “He must be Iraqi by birth, with both parents Iraqis by birth, and of no foreign roots except for a country within the *[Arab]* union.” Second, must be such and such, such and such, and such and such, like this, in case of union *[the success of pan-Arabism]*.

[Time Stamp: 00:35:37]

Tariq Aziz: In case of union, we cannot put this condition that the President of the Republic must be an Iraqi.

Saddam Hussein: No, it can mean Iraq along with another region which can nominate someone with these qualifications.

Tariq Aziz: It will be a different case then.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, it will be different.

Tariq Aziz: This means we have to put this condition [*inaudible*] the president must be Iraqi in case of union.

Saddam Hussein: Eh, no.

Hamid: Sir, and of no foreign roots, that includes the Arabs.

Tariq Aziz: No, there is [*inaudible, voices overlap*].

Hamid: [*Inaudible*].

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible*].

Hamid: But this is the concept [*inaudible*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Sa'doun Humadi: Yes, [*inaudible*].

Tariq Aziz: Yes, for the ministers and members of the Shura Council and National Council -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Anyway, do you have any remarks to amend this article?

Hamid: Well, Sir, we have no remarks.

Saddam Hussein: There is no need [*to amend it*].

Tariq Aziz: I just wanted to draw attention to the fact that there are two versions.

Saddam Hussein: True.

Tariq Aziz: One version [*of the text*] for the President of the Republic and another for other jobs.

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Hamid: "Second, he must be 40 years old, at least. Third, he must be known and distinguished for his great service to the country and the nation. Article 89: The nominations for President of the Republic shall

be submitted to the Shura Council who shall confirm that the nominee meets the required conditions. The names of nominees shall be announced 30 days prior to the voting date.”

Tariq Aziz: This is the amendment, Sir, from the Constitution Committee about the Shura Council.

Saddam Hussein: The third article?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, the nominations shall be submitted to the Shura Council.

Sa’doun Humadi: Instead of the [*inaudible*] staff.

Saddam Hussein: No, Article 3: “he must be known and distinguished for his great services” -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: And distinguished.

Saddam Hussein: To the country.

Hamid: And the nation.

Saddam Hussein: And the nation.

Tariq Aziz: We added “distinguished.”

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Tariq Aziz: In our last discussion.

Saddam Hussein: With regard to the Shura Council and the National Council, we did not specify in it that he must be born on such a date. People born on such a date must have a distinguished role in Al-Qadisiyyah.

Hamid: In Al-Qadisiyyah.

Tariq Aziz: It is mentioned, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: Is it also mentioned with regard to the President of the Republic?

Tariq Aziz: No.

Saddam Hussein: Well, if we impose the condition of “distinguished” upon the Shura Council member, it would be with greater reason to impose it upon the President of the Republic! Take a note of this point.

Tariq Aziz: The same condition.

Saddam Hussein: The same conditions for the Shura Council member that are not mentioned here must be repeated with regard to the President of the Republic.

Hamid: It was probably amended.

Saddam Hussein: Huh?

Hamid: Sir, we need to send the formula that we approved with regard to the Shura Council to Mr. Tariq.

Tariq Aziz: We implemented it.

Hamid: We sent it.

Tariq Aziz: We implemented it, but regarding the Shura Council there is, of course, whatever is related to Al-Qadisiyyah only.

Hamid: They [*the candidate*] must believe that Qadisiyyat Saddam has significantly strengthened the people and so forth; this way.

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Tariq Aziz: Because there are other conditions -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Yes, the basic conditions.

Tariq Aziz: Basic?

Saddam Hussein: I mean the significant ones.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, yes.

Saddam Hussein: To be implemented here.

Tariq Aziz: Yes. "He must believe in the principles and goals of the glorious 17-30 July revolution, and his contributions to the holy battle against Iranian aggression – whether it is by joining or volunteering in the work or production [*manual labor*] or with intellectual and literary works that are effective, distinguished and match his capabilities and potential at the time. He must also believe that Qadisiyyat Saddam has strengthened with glory the head of Iraq, and that it is the only way to preserve the land, waters, and skies of Iraq, and to keep Iraq holy, having faith in Socialism and socialist behavior."

Saddam Hussein: That is it.

Tariq Aziz: Also socialist; as for the other issues, such as military service or [*inaudible*], they should not be imposed upon the President of the Republic.

Saddam Hussein: No, only the basic conditions.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, these two conditions, paragraph 3 & 4 of Article 116.

Saddam Hussein: [*Clearing his throat, inaudible*].

[00:40:07- 00:41:03 no conversation, just the sound of tea cups, papers, and flatware].

[Time Stamp: 00:41:03]

Saddam Hussein: Article 89?

Hamid: Yes Sir, [*inaudible*]. “The nominations for the position of the President of the Republic shall be submitted to the Shura Council, which shall confirm that the nominee meets the required conditions. The names of nominees shall be announced 30 days prior to the voting date. Article 90” -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The Council does not confirm, but rather verifies that the nominee meets the required conditions.

Tariq Aziz: And confirms it, Sir. The Council verifies it, of course.

Saddam Hussein: The Council verifies and confirms --

Tariq Aziz: It did not [*inaudible, voices overlap*]

Saddam Hussein: Because this does not mean new conditions.

Hamid: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: And the Council reviews and confirms -- [*Interrupted*]

Hamid: That the candidate meets the conditions.

Saddam Hussein: That the conditions are met.

Hamid: “Article 90: The candidate who gets an absolute majority of the number of voters shall be considered the elected president, and if no nominee gets this majority, voting shall be redone two weeks following the announcement of the results of the election between the nominees” -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: Between the two nominees.

Hamid: Between the two nominees who got the most number of votes during the first voting, and the candidate who got -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Linguistically, if the word has no diacritic [*vocalization*] or if the vocalization is not mentioned in writing, the word “nominees” can be read with reference to plural.

Tariq Aziz: But the word that followed refers to something in the dual.

Saddam Hussein: I did not pay attention to that. [*Saddam, Tariq, and Hamid discuss Arabic grammar with regard to some words used in article 90, whether it is in plural or dual*] Okay, fine.

Hamid: “Article 91: The Shura Council shall oversee the integrity of the procedures for electing the President of the Republic, announce the results of election, and resolve any contestation of the integrity of the election.”

Tariq Aziz: Sir, if you allow me please. We need to find here a mechanism for the Shura Council as to how to perform this task, because the Constitutional Oversight Authority used to [*inaudible*] before. Now, the Shura Council has 50.

Saddam Hussein: It has to choose.

Sa’doun Humadi: By law -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: So that we can find some guidance -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: According to the Shura Council’s law -- [*Interrupted*]

Sa’doun Humadi: Among its main tasks is reviewing and so on, and [*inaudible, voices overlap*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: And the mechanism should be mentioned?

Sa’doun Humadi: Yes.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Sa’doun Humadi: In the Shura Council’s law.

Tariq Aziz: Establishing a mechanism in the Shura Council’s law.

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Tariq Aziz: Or, in the law for electing the President of the Republic?

Saddam Hussein: Both cases should be mentioned.

Hamid: Sir, if you allow me, please. This part where it says “oversee,” how can the Constitutional Committee oversee, even if it tries? There must be a sort of mechanism in this case!

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Hamid: And [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Of course, yes.

Hamid: It makes efforts to oversee, for what? Iraq is not that big! Therefore, there is a mechanism.

Saddam Hussein: There is a mechanism.

Hamid: Here [*inaudible*]. “Article 92: The President of the Republic shall” -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: It will be stronger when it is implemented [*linked*] to the mechanism for electing the President of the Republic.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, this is right.

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Hamid: “Article 92: The President of the Republic shall take the following oath before the Shura Council and the National Council, jointly in a conference: ‘I swear to God Almighty, my honor, and faith, that I shall preserve the Republican regime, and abide by the principles of the 17-30 July Great Revolution, its constitution, and laws.’”

Tariq Aziz: Sir, here -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Its laws.

Tariq Aziz: The Revolution of 17-30 July is described as “great” sometimes and “glorious” at other times. Just be aware of this.

Hamid: Yes, “Glorious.”

Saddam Hussein: “Glorious.”

Sa’doun Humadi: “Glorious” is used.

Hamid: “Glorious” is the one used.

Tariq Aziz: So, shall we use “Glorious” at all times?

Saddam Hussein: That is fine.

Hamid: Because we say, “Iraq the Great.”

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Hamid: So the revolution is “Glorious.” [*Hamid continues reading Article 92*] “the principles of the 17-30 July Glorious Revolution, its constitution, and laws, to protect the interests of people, and preserve the independence of Iraq, its safety, and the unity of its territories, and that I shall act with extreme devotion and integrity to safeguard the people’s dignity, honor and happiness, and achieve the goals of the Arab Nation represented in unity, liberty, and socialism.”

Saddam Hussein: Here, by God, with reference to what comes after “Glorious,” “its constitution, and laws,” do we mean this constitution by saying “constitution?” We should say, then, “this constitution.”

[*Time Stamp: 00:46:06*]

Sa'doun Humadi: Yes, because -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: And when we say "its laws," we mean the general law of the revolution; meaning the main tenets of the revolution.

Tariq Aziz: It means the laws of the country.

Saddam Hussein: If it means the laws of the country, he has the right, then, to amend these laws.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but he must comply with these laws and *[inaudible, voices overlap]*.

Saddam Hussein: He must comply. So, when he amends the laws, they will no longer be the laws of the 17 July Revolution, but rather different laws.

Sa'doun Humadi: Yes, the constitutional and judicial ones.

Saddam Hussein: The constitutional and judicial ones?

Tariq Aziz: And the laws of the country.

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Tariq Aziz: It is supposed to be the laws of the country; this is an old version, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: Old, but I meant the future constitution by saying "constitution?"

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: And I meant its general tenets saying "its laws." I mean the laws of the Revolution.

Tariq Aziz: We should say, "He shall comply with the principles of the 17-30 July Glorious Revolution and the constitution 'and the laws of the country.'"

[Time Stamp: 00:47:10]

Saddam Hussein: Yes, comrade.

Hamid: Sir, if we say "and its laws" in the constitution; laws are subject to change.

Saddam Hussein: That is why I said we need to modify them.

Hamid: Therefore, I believe we should use another better word than "laws" here. The "laws" are subject to change where someone might say in five years, "This law that you enacted for the Socialist sector, you changed it on July 17 [1969]." So it is -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: *[Inaudible, voices overlap]*.

Tariq Aziz: Complying with a law does not mean not changing it, but -- *[Interrupted]*

Sa'doun Humadi: Complying with the law in effect will be changed [*inaudible*].

Tariq Aziz: Change it, but do not comply with it.

Hamid: [*Inaudible*].

Tariq Aziz: I mean complying with this issue is a principle.

Saddam Hussein: I did not mean the laws in effect with regard to this issue; I meant the -- [*Interrupted*]

Hamid: The principles.

Saddam Hussein: I meant the Revolution's laws, meaning the general tenets of the Revolution, the main pillars of the Revolution and their general tenets.

Hamid: Then we must change it.

'Izzat al-Duri: Yes Sir, if you allow me please, I get what you want to say; we must change this.

Saddam Hussein: Put whatever you are convinced is correct.

'Izzat al-Duri: We can either say its basic principles or say -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Principles.

'Izzat al-Duri: "Principles and the constitution" and stop there.

Saddam Hussein: "Glorious [*Revolution*], and the constitution" in this case.

Hamid: Yes, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: "And the constitution."

Hamid: "And within the constitution."

Tariq Aziz: "And the constitution."

[*Voices overlap, several people talk at the same time*].

Saddam Hussein: "And to take care of it," no?

[*Voices overlap, several people talk at the same time*].

Saddam Hussein: "And to safeguard the Republican system and comply with the principles of the 17-30 July Glorious Revolution."

Hamid: "And the constitution and to take care of" -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: “And the constitution.”

Hamid: Yes, Sir, “and take care of.”

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Sa’doun Humadi: [*Inaudible*], “I swear to Mighty God that I will safeguard the Republican system, comply with the principles of the 17-30 July Glorious Revolution,” this in addition to -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: This one is now coupled with “comply.”

Tariq Aziz: “With the constitution,” yes, it is supposed to be a compliance with the constitution.

UM: “With the constitution,” then a comma followed by “take care of.”

Saddam Hussein: “With the constitution.”

Sa’doun Humadi: “With the constitution and the laws of the country.”

Saddam Hussein: Should we stop or should we add “and the laws of the country?”

Tariq Aziz: Well, Sir, there is nothing wrong with adding “and the laws of the country.”

Saddam Hussein: No, there is nothing wrong.

Tariq Aziz: Complying with the law is a key principle.

Sa’doun Humadi: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: “And the laws,” [*or*] “and the laws of the country” or “and laws?”

Sa’doun Humadi: “and laws.”

Tariq Aziz: “And the laws” and even “the law,” if it is a singular noun.

Saddam Hussein: Singular means something comprehensive, “and the laws” or “the law.” Yes?

Hamid: “And to watch over the interests of my people, safeguard the independence of Iraq, its safety, and the integrity of its territories, and to work with devotion and integrity to preserve the dignity, honor, and happiness of its people, and to achieve the goals of the Arab nation represented in unity, freedom, and socialism.”

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

[*Time Stamp: 00:50:07*]

Hamid: “Article 93: The term of presidency is seven years, renewable, and starts from the time the elected President of the Republic takes the constitutional oath. Article 94:” I wrote down a remark here, if you allow me, Sir, please.

Saddam Hussein: Hum?

Hamid: Regarding the [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Yes, comrade [*inaudible*].

Hamid: It is the same as my previous remarks. Even psychologically, Your Excellency prefers the idea that Iraqis must have stability, so that we revive some of our modern history, and the establishment of the Iraqi State. Stability of the central leadership is among the factors of Iraqi stability. Seven years is quite a long period of time that makes [*one*] go over and over what the constitution says once we approach the five year period. However, if we think about it and have it consist of two periods, I mean two development phases it will have a broader scope. We are aware that it is a long journey, but it shall give the Iraqi citizen a psychological stability if it [*the constitution*] had a longer term [*for the presidency*]. You barely finish the seven years, and here you need to start working on the next term, so 10 years would be better. The psychological aspect of Iraqis is that they want stability, truly. I mean with regard to the journey, life, and other stability elements such as reconstruction. This is a remark that I noted last time, and I believe in it to the point of obsession.

Saddam Hussein: Does anyone have an opinion to add to the comrade’s comment?

Tariq Aziz: Well, in my opinion, seven years is enough. I am not talking about the present, but the future. 10 years, I mean, people have a leader now, and there is a difference between the present and the future. At the present, people want stability especially [*now*] that they have leadership. However, when people are in a situation where they do not have a leader, but rather many people aspiring to the leadership, and aspiring to prove their leadership capability, and then you come and say 10 years and if whoever is elected does not have all the qualifications they would remain the President of the Iraqi Republic for 10 years, this would be too long and we will be blamed.

Saddam Hussein: What is the longest term [*of presidency*] in the world?

Tariq Aziz: The terms of presidency range between four, five, six, and seven.

Saddam Hussein: Seven for the French.

Tariq Aziz: Seven for the French. And non-renewable six for other countries like Mexico. Five years renewable in Egypt, and the seven years of France are openly renewable. Four years for America that is renewable one time.

Saddam Hussein: America, the presidency there is like the head of a board of directors [*CEO*].

Tariq Aziz: Yes, the French presidency is a leadership position, seven years. [*Presidency*] in Mexico is also a leadership position because it is a presidential system. Egypt -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Let's engage a larger number of comrades to discuss this issue, I mean opinions will be presented before the Command [RCC]. In this regard, we should not focus on the current but the future situation.

Tariq Aziz: It is supposed to be discussed from the long-term point of view.

Saddam Hussein: If we can find guarantees in case of abuse that an entity can shorten the time [*for the presidency*].

Tariq Aziz: There is not. This is the constitution -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Then the longer period would be preferable.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, this constitution grants the right of amendment only to the President of the Republic. Let's look at the future, say in 50 years.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, of course.

Tariq Aziz: I mean the President of the Republic will be elected based on this constitution. No one has the right to amend it [*the constitution*] and the term of the President of the Republic is 10 years, which will be his tenure and no one has the right to amend it. So why should he shorten the term? Take into account, I mean, some presidents come -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: I did not mean to shorten it, but to stop it.

Tariq Aziz: No one -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Stop it and new elections shall start, I mean they [*the Shura Council*] have to stop it.

[*Time Stamp: 00:55:25*]

Tariq Aziz: There is no -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The Shura Council, for example -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: No, the Council has no such authority.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, I mean we must think.

Tariq Aziz: We took away the authority to amend the constitution from the jurisdiction of the Shura Council and the National Council. They are no longer allowed to -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Yes, we have not discussed this point. We did not discuss the case where the President of the Republic defers his responsibilities of -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: No, there is a section [of the constitution] about it, there is a section. This would be impeachment. [*Tariq reads here, probably Article 94*] "The President of the Republic shall not be questioned about the carrying out of his position's tasks, except in case of violating the constitution,

breaking the constitutional oath. The President can only be accused [*of wrongdoing*] by the Shura Council or the National Council jointly in a conference headed by the President of the Council of Ministers, and the decision will be issued after being signed by the majority of the conference members, and he cannot be prosecuted." These are rare issues, I mean -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: These are useless issues.

Tariq Aziz: No, these [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: A revolution [*coup d'état*] will occur.

Tariq Aziz: The President of the Republic does not have to break the oath, but he could still be unqualified to keep running the country for 10 years.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, we shall discuss it more thoroughly with the comrades.

Hamid: "Article 94" -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: We are now dealing with two versions of the constitution; our current situation on one side, and how we can secure the future on the other hand. These are the two, because the current one has guarantees within itself.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: I mean the current one has guarantees itself in addition to the constitution. As for the future, the constitution is its main guarantor.

Tariq Aziz: This means [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: Yes, this is what it is going to face. In Third World countries, I am convinced, of course, that a term of less than 10 years is not enough for a president to do a good job and offer great service to people. I mean, in order for this president to offer something big, he needs 10 years.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, practically, now in countries led by parties or that have a majority party there is no president who would serve one term and then leave. This has never happened. Let us look at Egypt -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: No, what I mean here is being preoccupied. It is not a simple matter to elect a president. All organs of the government would be engaged, the parties and the people. There will be two columns [*pros and cons*], such issues always have two columns; one positive and another negative. The negative column, for a case different than ours, is known – where the extended period of time allows corruption to last for a long time.

[*Very loud noise in the background*]

Tariq Aziz: We should give people and their representatives the chance to change any irrational case [*of poor leadership*] on a good level.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, they will try other means.

Tariq Aziz: In Third World countries; look at India, for example, [*inaudible, voices overlap*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Lock that, Ahmed [*there seems to be an open window or door causing the loud noise*].

Ahmed: Yes, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: So we are relieved of it [*the noise*].

Tariq Aziz: From the time it acquired independence, India has had a parliamentary system. This is a big country with 700 million [*people*] of different of nationalities and -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Indians are now one billion and fifty.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, with one party ruling and one family. I mean the grandfather, the daughter, and the son during this period.

Changes only happen after a coup or assassination in Pakistan.

The president was re-elected in Egypt. The same president remains in Algeria.

With some exceptional circumstances, I mean people lean toward stability.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, people lean toward the person they know.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: If that person has half of the qualifications or even 60% of them [*voices overlap*].

Tariq Aziz: Yes, they will accept him and will not replace him.

Saddam Hussein: They will only replace him if he has less than 30% of the qualifications.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, even in the countries -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: In general.

Tariq Aziz: Even in the Western democratic countries, I mean, for example the election of George Bush is quite an important phenomenon in America. The Americans have not previously renewed two terms [*for the same party*] and [*subsequently*] elected the same party again when eight years were up, they never have. They had not previously elected a Vice President to be the President. Yet because they were economically satisfied during the time of Reagan, they elected his deputy [*George Bush*] as the President with a good majority. This supports the idea of stability. They [*Americans*] would say: we knew him, George Bush; he was the Vice-President. Now we have someone named Mondale talking about change and develop, and I do not know what. Not Mondale, but [*Michael*] Dukakis [*Tariq Aziz correcting himself*].

Saddam Hussein: Hum, it is not a problem.

Hamid: I have a question please. What does “renewable” mean, twice or more?

Tariq Aziz: More, it is open.

Saddam Hussein: Open.

Tariq Aziz: It will be mentioned if it is restricted, “renewable for one time”, for example, or twice.

Hamid: Hum.

Tariq Aziz: Open for renewal.

Hamid: This is easier than every five years working again [*on reelection*], I mean in practically speaking.

Tariq Aziz: It also has benefits. It has pros and cons. People will be held accountable

Saddam Hussein: American [*inaudible*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: One must renew his relation with the people and... [*Recording is cut off*]