

“Saddam and Ba'ath Party Members Discussing the Status of the Party in the Arab World and Potential Cooperation with the Muslim Brotherhood”



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Key: UM = Unidentified Male Speaker

Translator Comments, clarifications, and additions are italicized in brackets

Saddam Hussein: [*Speaker appears to continue a conversation that has already started*] Is he then an apostate or a believer? We answer them that he is a believer and he raised a counterforce against us, every republican who is a believer and more capable of leadership is a better candidate than your party. They are relying now on the stage prior to the fall [*of the regime*]. Once they start talking about specifics after the fall, you notice them becoming isolated from the masses. So, we have to seize their strong position about the stage prior to the fall, which they are using against the [*Ba'ath*] Party, and we will open discussions about the stage after the fall [*of the regime*] publicly. We will also provide an opportunity for open criticism; criticism is different than hostility, dialogue is different than defamation, and dialogue is different than attack. I mean these are all idioms that are clear in Arabic, as well as in political behavior.

They [*Islamists*] can now consider any state as a non-Islamic state in an unaware [*uneducated*] community, including our current state in Iraq, because they are talking about a case from their perspective. They can take out a part of the general Islamic situation and this part [*of Islam*] would apply to the unaware people. They will ask these people, "Would you see any female dancer on TV in an Islamic state?" and the answer will be "No." "Are there bars in Abu Nawas [*Abu Nawas is a street in Baghdad that is famous for having bars and night clubs*] in an Islamic state?" and the answer will be "No." "Is there short clothing, uncovered heads, and low cut tops in an Islamic state?" and the answer will be "No." "Do you see the girls leaving the house to go sit in a classroom desk next to a guy?" and some of them would answer "No," while others would answer that it is possible. This and that...This and that...This and that, but they [*Islamists*] do not say what their agenda is. So, they can say that about any state in the modern age, according to traditional standards, which will deceive the faithful audience who lacks awareness or the audience that intends to use these [*religious*] matters to blow them up in the face of a ruler in order to overthrow him. It is possible that they will win some people over. Well, then why not trick them [*the people*] when there is a chance to do that? We interact with them in a way that won't enable them to say to our faces that we are apostates.

This should be enough for us to gain the support of the public, by dialoguing with them. Because the public is modern, it does not lean towards backwardness and it wants to know about the other stages [*of progress*] once we enlighten it, of course. I mean they do not want to just reach this stage [*the fall of the regime*] with ambiguity [*without knowing what will come after*] and that's it. Although there are people in the Arab world who are fed up to the point where they just want to get to this stage [*the fall of the regime*] and then say, "may God ease it on us; let's wait and whatever is going to happen let it happen!" But in the end, I do not believe it would be wise to engage in a clash with the religious current in the Arab homeland when it is possible to avoid it.

On the other hand, we would launch a large scale attack on them if they are close to taking over power. One of the issues I understood from Comrade Badr is that a truce would help them come to power. The reason I raised the issue now is because through the developments in Sudan, this issue no longer represents a permanent threat [*danger*], a

possible, not permanent threat. So, until it becomes a permanent danger, let us make them go through this stage; and after that we will be much stronger before we open fire on them. At that time, it will become permissible in the political context for us to open fire on them; meaning to expose them, to attack them and so forth due to the fact that they are taking over power is strategically against our Party in the Arab homeland. But weakening the ruler is not against our Party. Many rulers in the Arab homeland, whether they are from the religious current or others, if they [*Islamists*] want to weaken them [*rulers*], this will not be against our Party, I mean, directly. So, why should we be in conflict with this?

The danger of Khomeini [*Ayatollah Khomeini, the Supreme Leader of Iran*] taking advantage of the religious current in the Arab world is that in general we seem to be politically with the regimes [*as opposed to Islamists*] since we have a regime and a state. It is the same for Khomeini in general because he doesn't have another choice and he doesn't have [*allied*] regimes. I mean it is obvious for us that he is not against Syria and Libya [*the regimes*] even though Muslims are mistreated in both places. There are religious, political, and Islamist movements mistreated in both places too yet he is the rulers' friend. It is true that we recognize this situation, but we have to understand that when a religious current emerges in Saudi Arabia with whom we are friends, it [*the religious current*] is psychologically closer to Iran than to Iraq. So what would happen if we additionally engaged with them [*Islamists*] in conflict? It will be a case for Iran against Iraq, regardless of the other issues. [*Saddam is saying that despite their ideological differences, Islamic movements would be closer to each other than to any other type of regime*]

[*Time Stamp: 06:54*]

Badr: Like in Morocco and in Tunisia.

Saddam Hussein: In all these places. Therefore, there is an additional factor that requires us to handle these religious currents with flexibility so that our strategic enemy will not win them over, which will as a result build the future of [*foundation of*] one of us [*Iraq or Iran*]. Or let's not say the future of one of us, since his [*Khomeini's*] future is certain as well as the future of anyone who would follow his footsteps. But it affects the future of our Party strategically and not tactically. Let us put it this way. So, why don't we act with flexibility towards the political religious movements whenever possible without isolating or paving the way for it to become a permanent danger trying to take over power. On the other hand, criticism will always be allowed, but criticism in a way... I mean, it is known that criticism from two non-contradictory political sides is one thing and the criticism from two opposing sides, I mean, as two political adversaries is known as well. It is enough for us to say that we believe the state would be useful for Sudan in this way, and we believe that the religious state is not useful to the Sudan for these reasons.

Taha Yassin: They will consider this a declaration of war. [*Sarcastic laughter*]

Saddam Hussein: No, that is why we can initiate a dialogue with them stating that war is one thing, while expressing our doctrine is something completely different. We can also tell them, "You are our brothers and your talk about the religious state is an attack against us." When they ask, "Why is that," we reply, "We establish a state not through religion,

we establish a state for living; one that believes in religion as rituals and a road for its associates, but does not interpret religion as a formula for the state. If you stop talking about the religious state, we will stop criticizing the religious state. If you continue to talk about the religious state, we will criticize the religious state but not the Muslim Brotherhood. We will remove any mention of the Muslim Brotherhood. [*Inaudible, 9:24-9:35*] Previously, Khomeini... Khomeini, it has all become Khomeini [*it seems that he has a slip of the tongue and mentions Khomeini and then he sarcastically says "it has all become about Khomeini"*]. Nimeiry [*Gaffar Nimeiry, the President of Sudan*] was recently overthrown. His shortcomings are known. Then the people elected 28 members from the Muslim Brotherhood as Members of Parliament.

[*Inaudible; background conversation about the number of members, 9:52*]

Saddam Hussein: Fine, 53; this means they have popular weight, otherwise they would not have been elected.

Badr: It could have been much more than this, Mr. President.

Saddam Hussein: True [pause]true, comrade Badr -- [Interrupted]

Badr: If it was not for -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: Of course, there are other factors. Alright, then they are not currently in a head of state [*leadership*] position so that we may target them, nor are those in power now our target. And their [the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood] opportunistic political situation became a part of Nimeiry's situation so why don't we conclude a truce with them? Their technical danger is distinguishable from the others by the fact that they came to power—I mean they were in power more recently than the others. So, there are people in the army who know them and some of them belong to the previous era. Therefore, the Muslim Brotherhood are the closest people to them because the Muslim Brotherhood was a part of previous era, in one way or another, and the newest case that is close to them is the Muslim Brotherhood. So it is possible for the Muslim Brotherhood to enter alliances with the military, however these alliances will not be strengthened by our truce line [*plan*]. But our decision to not open the door for criticism may facilitate things for the Muslim Brotherhood—or let us not say facilitate for them, but remove an obstacle out of their way by not warning other people that the religious agenda is not suitable in politics. I do not believe a collapse will take place within the Sadiq group [*the Sudanese political party of Sadiq al-Mahdi*] if we create a hostile situation between the Brotherhood and us.

Badr: [*Inaudible, 12:17*]

Saddam Hussein: I can go to the Unionists [*Democratic Unionist Party*]. Yes, they might accept some Unionists and so do we. I mean there is nothing called "us entirely winning" in a political situation of this type. I mean there are partial losses for something bigger [*a greater cause*], or larger benefits for us and for them. I mean for both parties. But as far as how to act, you [*the Sudanese Ba'athists*] are, for sure, the more capable than any of us in this regard since you live the situation with all its human, social, and political details on a daily basis. [*Time Stamp: 13:00*]

So, I mean, pardon me, take your time, Abu Hassan [*he gives someone permission to do something*]. The religious currents, as far as the result, we know that once Khomeini is toppled, these currents are going to be very much affected. The enemies of religious currents, other than us, even the rulers, after Khomeini is toppled and the religious current starts to [*inaudible, 13:40*], even the investigators and the executioners are going to say, “Where are you going, come and see what Khomeini did to Iran?” I mean they are going to benefit from this situation. But in our daily behavior, we should not let the religious political currents feel that the collapse of Khomeini means their collapse. So, one of the factors that will alleviate this feeling is our good relations with them, because this connected fate [*with Khomeini*] is not a good situation. It is not good for us as a Nationalist Socialist Party considering the nature of conflict between Khomeini and us. This is brief synopsis with regard to this subject.

[*Time Stamp: 14:38*]

Taha Yassin: I have two comments; one of them I consider simple while the other one is a very important addition to what comrade Abu Uday [*Saddam Hussein*] mentioned. As far as the first point, I believe now that although the Ummah Party [*a local Sudanese party*] is going to face the ummah [*Arab nation*] and the Unionists are going to face the Brothers, yet the [*Ummah*] Party has taken a hard line and winning is going to be on behalf of the ummah and Unionists. And the [*Ummah*] Party, in this case, regardless of the harm afflicted to the Brothers, [*the ummah will not incur any divisions*]. Likely, if the regime collapses now in Syria, the regime’s power apparatus that wants to stay in politics will come to us and not to the Muslim Brotherhood or to the Communist Party. Likewise, the triple attack [*unclear*] when the Party is at the front of one direction while the other direction will be aimed towards atheism and disbelief, based on jurisprudence – [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Therefore they take on [*fight*] each other more than us.

Taha Yassin: Therefore they take on each other but not us. I hope the comrades in Sudan do not believe that the collapse or the weakening of the Brothers is...and therefore, we do not believe that at the end, we would be permanent allies of the Ummah Party. The Ummah Party is Islamic with a small sectarian component. I mean it is such a disaster; I mean it is with a sect. This is one point. The other point, Sir, is that the Brotherhood organization, not the religious current, but the organized one, is the one that guides and affects [*change*]; it is also like a National [*pan-Arab*] Command [*similar to the Ba’ath Party’s structure*].

Badr: International.

Taha Yassin: International. We have a bit of information that can be useful. I mean it can be useful if the [*Ba’athist*] National Command sets up a general framework. It is easier to create differences in positions within the international framework than creating differences in positions within a smaller framework as a result of the distance [*between the international positions*] and specific circumstances. The consistency of positions -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Hello, welcome [*Saddam greets someone, 17:15*].

Taha Yassin: The persistence of the consistency of positions and tendency of the Brothers' command in Egypt and Sudan is dangerous, sir, and we have to be a little bit flexible, even if we lose a little bit -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: I need to walk a little bit because of my back; is this Okay?

UM1: Please, go ahead.

Taha Yassin: Even if it is worth some flexibility and compromise on the part of our comrades in Sudan, I believe we should create some distance between the Brothers' commands in both Egypt and Sudan. This is possible. I do not want to say it is 90% possible, but maybe with a percentage, and any percentage is good because the unity of positions between the Muslim Brothers in both Egypt and Sudan—two neighboring countries and the strongest movements historically—I am afraid they might control one of the countries and once they control one, they will control the second one, too because they are strong in both places and they have audiences between both places, and both places have Islam and Sunnis which is a disaster. It is not just a matter of Khomeini being ousted or not, it is a historic matter in Sudan and Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood is led by the Egyptians on the ummah level. The Muslim Brotherhood is equivalent to the National Ba'athist Command. They are thirteen; eight of them are Egyptians. Sometimes, some of the decisions are regarding the Syrian Brotherhood, yet only the Egyptian [*Brotherhood*] would meet to form a majority and issue a decision against the existing enlightened current. They [*inaudible, 19:00*] and issued it. I mean, the General Guide and his First Deputy are Egyptians, as well as six of the Command Members are Egyptians. This is a historic fact and they do not decrease. I mean they continue like this. Tilmisani [*Umar al-Tilmisani, the third General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood*] died and the International Command did not meet to choose who the best [*replacement*] would be; the Egyptians met while others were waiting to decide whom to choose from, [*among*] the Egyptians, it is a monopoly, because Egypt -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: This is new, I did not know.

Taha Yassin: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: I did not know that.

Taha Yassin: One time I referred to it. So al-Turabi [*Hassan al-Turabi, Sudanese Islamist leader*]...in addition to the union, Sudan does not wish to become a follower. There is unity and nationalistic spirit in Sudan. People here have been feeling for eight years there is a possibility or even a little of dissatisfaction among some Sudanese Brothers, [*individuals in the Muslim Brotherhood*] regarding the control and arrogance of Egyptian Brothers who carried all the hatred from the fifties on. The people who spent twenty years in jail, they are going to vent their hatred towards Abdel Nasser on us. If it [*was*] just the Nasserites, they are over; they want to vent it on anything called nationalistic [*pan-Arab*]. These individuals now control the International [*Muslim*

Brotherhood] Command. Al-Turabi, of course, is a member of the National Command; let's make things simple. Sudan has only this representative, which means Sudan has one member in the National Command and that is al-Turabi. But Egypt has eight --
[*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: If this tape is released in 50 years they will think there was someone called al-Turabi in the National Command [*Saddam is joking, referring to the National Command of the Ba'ath Party*].

Taha Yassin: [*They laugh*] In the International Command. So, working in Sudan, he [*al-Turabi*] is only one person not four [*is incapable of being politically active without support*]. Any imbalance or lack of trust between him [*al-Turabi*] and the Egyptians is going to create a gap, and this is possible. I mean, al-Turabi is not entirely cooperative or a one hundred percent follower of the Egyptians. This is a fact because he is proud of himself, has his history and prestige, and is not someone with a low position and follower of Tilmisani or others; he respects them, but also considers himself international. Al-Turabi, I mean, he has his own personality and independence. This helps us alter the situation, especially when there are independent opinions and disagreement about the situation emerging between them while we are working on another track, so the process is going to be beneficial. We should take advantage of this because what encourages us, Sir, is the percentage of educated people; when the Muslim Brotherhood gains the vote of all college graduates or ninety percent of college graduates' votes, this would make us believe that our Syrian brothers, who side with us, have some influence on some segments of the society – and the proof of this is the election results. Indeed, because this new Syrian current definitely affects the educated class more than it affects the illiterate people. So, the percentage of educated people in Sudan -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: By the Syrian current he [*Taha Yassin*] means the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood current.

Taha Yassin: Yes, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood current.

Saddam Hussein: It practically mingles religion, politics, and pan-Arabism.

Taha Yassin: Pan-Arabism. Those, of course, reached a better situation than the al-Ummah Party, which we consider excellent. I mean, not Islam first and pan-Arabism second [*criticizing the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood*]. No, they [*the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood*] agreed to strive for unity first, Arab unity which is a goal itself. They have a different aspect, I mean, striving for Arab unity in this stage and for positive Islamic relations. Of course, it will be something different in the next stage. So, the issue has developed easily; it happened over the years and by gaining confidence, I mean after a long time. When the [*Syrian*] Brothers experienced challenging circumstances, they could not find anyone to help them but us, and the same circumstances could happen in Sudan. On the contrary now, when the Ba'ath Party is in control in better circumstance than the Nimeiry period, this will give the Ba'ath Party some flexibility toward the Brothers who will accept dialogue that they did not accept then. That's why, in my opinion, it is going to psychologically affect many; I mean, had we dealt with the Muslim Brotherhood prior to the pressure and pursuit [*from their governments*], we might not have received anything. I

mean, we opened this [*dialogue*] with them even in bad conditions, when people did not welcome them. They were in danger and we offered them our houses [*shelter*]. This played a big role, Sir, and facilitated the subject of dialogue and what we said in a way that they are even starting to believe in it more than they did before this current human [*personal*] relationship. What I meant is to go back briefly and say there is another cause inside Sudan, as well as an Arab cause. And the issue of untying this strong and sincere relation between both Commands of the Sudanese and Egyptian Brothers, I consider it within this stage [*to be*] a national mission. Both blocs are big and both can blend and achieve something in one of these countries, and if it does, would Sudan's regime be able to face this situation? Can our brother Mubarak, who is lost in a disastrous situation? Every day male students at universities force some girl who wants to talk with the professor and tears her clothes and send her home and tells her she cannot attend classes unless she covers up completely while no one in the Egyptian Security or the Intelligence Agency can do anything for her. This happens in front of everyone. Sir, all the university demonstrations happened because one professor was talking with his wife, who is a student at the same university, and a Jihad [*Islamic Jihad, the Egyptian Islamist movement*] member came and argued with him [*the professor*] and said, "How could you talk with a girl in the middle of the day and among us?" The professor said she was his wife, but the Jihad member said, no. It caused a lot of chaos, and what did Mubarak do? He arrested 13 people who were released two weeks later after a controversy ensued. This will not get any result. So, for us, and despite the invulnerability of people, we still have to be preventive. I find it extremely necessary, that we side with all the concerns that our brothers in Sudan have. Now I want to say and I hope Comrade Badr looks at what I am going to say from this perspective—their concerns are in the right place. But it is possible to find a way where this sharp talk between the two parties stops. Sometime, in fact, they bring us the *Hadaf* [*possibly a Sudanese Ba'athist publication*] which has five or six lines that even upset our people. I mean it does not have any justification. The dialogue is something. Once Adnan brought me two issues and he said I am embarrassed of this talk. Is there different wording, another language? Talking about the religion is so and so; I mean it is not right for it now.

Badr: No, by God, we do not talk this way, comrade.

Taha Yassin: There are copies where it is mentioned. I mean, not all the time.

Adnan: Yes.

Taha Yassin: So, when we say first a member of Al-Ummah Party, second us, and then the unionist, practically the concept means us first. Does this operation in Sudan serve our Party and increase its popularity? Practically, they are a lot. The whole world... because they are considered to be on Nimeiry's side like Mr. President said. The whole world was against them, but they still received 53 votes [*seats*]. I mean they exist; God is great [*speaker does not use this as a religious expressions, but as an idiom to emphasize a point*]! They were considered collaborators [*who*] helped the Jews crossing [*into Israel*]; I mean, they received additional accusations and still got 53 seats. Well, if they did not ally with Al-Nimeiry—I mean to our fortune, they allied with Al-Nimeiry in the last year—otherwise it would not have been easy. So, I think their alliance with Al-Nimeiry is a blessing. Yes, we put a burden on them and we hold them responsible, but it was not

something bad. Fifty-three seats, Sir, and of whom? Twenty-three out of 28 seats were the educated ones. Well, does not the educated person understand who al-Nimeiry is and what he did? And, on top of that, he [*the educated person*] would vote for him [*al-Nimeiry*] despite the fact that there was another nominee; if there were not, we would have said he was uncontested. In one place, there were ten candidates, so why did he [*the educated person*] vote for him [*al-Nimeiry*]? This is a fact whether it [*his election*] was wrong, [*due to*] lack of awareness, or money that was distributed [*bribery*]; that's fine, but he [*al-Nimeiry*] was organized [*as opposed to the Ba'athists*].

Adnan: [*Inaudible, 28:15*] before the elections.

Taha Yassin: Yes, several factors. But in the end, there is a reality that we need to take into consideration. I am really concerned, sir, about the situation deteriorating in Egypt. I mean the situation is going to deteriorate so badly in Egypt, on top of the political vacuum; and we as Ba'athists, in Egypt let's say for the first time, we do not have the same capability as the Ba'athists in Sudan in opening paths to the Brothers in Egypt. We are trying through Iraq, which is facing great difficulty. But there is a possibility in Sudan where the Sudanese Ba'athists communicate with the Sudanese Brothers, whereas I do not see the Egyptian Ba'athists communicating with the Sudanese Ba'athists. The Egyptian [*Ba'ath*] is not at this level, and therefore the Iraqi [*Ba'ath*] is sensitive to this since the Iraqi is engaged in a war against Iran, Islamic issues, and their writings. So, in fact, they [*the Sudanese Ba'athists*] help us to alleviate the pressure in Egypt, if someone says our brothers in Sudan live in peace with the Brotherhood in Sudan, this will affect Egypt and start many other things. And our people in Syria might go there [*to the Brotherhood*] and have a social gathering. Once they have a social gathering, we can change things within this period.

UM1: Even on their [*the Muslim Brotherhood*] part, it is not easy.

Taha Yassin: What?

UM1: I mean if we compromise, they [*the Muslim Brotherhood*] are not going to comprise this much.

Taha Yassin: As far as the Egyptians are concerned, right?

UM1: The meeting with the Ba'athists.

Taha Yassin: Yes. I'm talking about getting to the principle—if we are convinced of the principle, we can make common effort; we are a pan-Arab Command, Sir. I, Mr. Shebli, and all of us cooperate in this regard since this is a pan-Arab work. I can say that I am optimistic that we can achieve something within the framework of what Mr. President mentioned so that it will not hurt us. But I am sure it will be beneficial and I look at it from a broader perspective than the Sudan arena; I mean the connectivity between the Sudan and Egypt, the deterioration of the situation in Egypt, and the expansion of a religious current in Egypt. If there is a green light now from America that accepts changes, there will not be any party which can take advantage of the fact except for the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. But I do not think there is an indication yet [*that America*]

would approve any changes] because it involves danger since there is nothing to prevent this issue [*the Muslim Brotherhood coming to power*]. Thank you, Sir.

Badr: If you allow me, Sir, I have a small thing to add. These discussions are rich, of course, and I will bring them up thoroughly in Sudan although [*they have an*] obvious point of view regarding the [*Sudanese*] issue. I just have two questions so that I can answer them [*the questions*] when they are raised [*back in Sudan*]. The framework that does not hurt us in our relation with the Brothers is a framework of our imagination since the Brothers do not have such a framework. There is no framework they can accept where we criticize the religious state, [*and*] explain to them its danger. What are the results of the introduction of religious politics in Lebanon? What's going on in Iran, and places like these where they may accept [*our perspective*] without looking at this battle as if it was against them; because it is impossible for them to abandon raising the religious state issue. The first thing they objected to, and what Mr. Adnan Saad al-Din [*a senior leader in the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood*] himself [*objected to*] the first time I raised the issue clearly was this: is it a religious state, or a democratic nationalistic state where Islam is well sponsored and considered as the key source of legislation? I also talked about the religious state that cannot be but a sectarian or denominational state that separates from, instead of gathering in, the Arab world and so forth. The Brothers do not give up on that. This was when Saad al-Din objected and said, "I wish people would not talk about the religious state."

Adnan: They are not required to give up this conviction or doctrine -- [*Interrupted*]

Badr: No, no, they are not required to give it up, but we should bring up this issue, which constitutes criticism of their ideology, as it is a good reason for them to start a conflict with us. We either have to engage in it or not. As far as Egypt, if I am to discuss it, of course, they are not going to raise it according to our logic; they are going to say this is an anti-Islamic position because, "Whoso judgeth not by that which God hath revealed: such are disbelievers," [*Surat al-Maeda, verse 44*]. [*Inaudible, background talk*] No, the Brothers near us [*in Sudan*]; I am talking about al-Turabi and the Islamic Front. There is, of course, a big difference between the Brothers in Sudan and the Brothers in Syria. Besides, what is giving strength to the Brothers in Egypt is the issue of whether the Brothers in Sudan should become weak or strong, and whether our dialogue with the Brothers in Sudan strengthens them or weakens them since it strengthens the Party. Some of the comrades said, "We are not going to benefit, but Sadiq or the Unionists will." This is likely, but the Brothers are going to lose, for sure. So, for them to lose is to possibly weaken them in Egypt—or we can commend them through dialogue because we -- [*Interrupted*]

Taha Yassin: I have a question.

Badr: Yes, please.

Saddam Hussein: The last question.

Taha Yassin: I think it is going to be useful to us in the Egyptian arena, for an important reason that is the direct organized part of the Muslim Brotherhood organization is the

minority while the majority is the sympathizing popular current that has prominent figures. For instance, now you find a contradiction between the position of Abu Ismael, the renowned religious figure, and the renowned Brotherhood—[whose] background with regard to Iraq includes the Brothers' leaders writing for the *An Nour* newspaper praising Iran, and insulting Iraq and Iraq's standing. There is also a contradiction between the organized Brothers' command or the organized Muslim Brotherhood and the dissident branches, such as al Jihad and Muhammad's Youth, who want to deal with the details of the current issues of Islamic practice and everything with the old mentality. This situation does not exist in Sudan, but instead there is a different situation. When there is a kind of peace treaty between our party and the Islamic current led by the Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan, doors will open for us and for that group close to the organized command first. Those are many and, therefore, they are still considered as personnel within the Muslim Brotherhood, such as Ibn al-Banna and others. This is such a large group that will have a positive effect, to our benefit, in the Egyptian arena, and there will be a possibility for a big transformation that prevents the Sudanese from becoming superior to them. The old mentality currently leading the Brothers in Egypt, we do not know how long it is going to last—ten or twenty years—but there are segments [of the Muslim Brotherhood] that can become active and mature, affect and form a large percentage if we alleviate this pressure. This will lead to cooperation between the Syrian and Sudanese Brothers that will alleviate the negative pressure the Brothers' command is going to put on the entire Islamic current in Egypt. So, it [weakening the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood] is in our favor from this perspective. I mean if Adnan, or Sheikh Said Hawwa goes to Egypt and talks with Saif al-Banna and Abu Ismael, and other influential figures [who will be informed] that the Ba'ath Party is not atheist as so and so said. They will bring up examples—such as Mr. Michel [Michel Aflaq, official founder and theoretician of the Ba'ath Party] or Saddam Hussein and so forth and they witnessed practices of this type. At the same time, when the Sudanese, al-Turabi or whoever is with him, would also say, "This situation is not as it appears." This will affect our brothers. But when Adnan or Sheikh Said goes and talks to them, they would say, "Brother, go see in Sudan," since they hear more about Sudan than Iraq and listen to what the Ba'athists say about religion, the religious state, and so forth. So, their discourse affects the Egyptians more than the Syrian discourse, as far as the religious situation. But from the pan-Arab perspective, Syrian impact on the Egyptians is different than the Sudanese impact, yet it is connected in the religious aspect and the ideology connects for many reasons. So, it affects us, and as a result, we are not proposing an alliance, Comrade Badr, because an alliance is not permissible in the first place. So, we are not putting this [alliance] up as our goal but rather just as a place to start in order to find a way for everyone to express their opinion without the other party sensing that it is the target [feeling threatened]. That is it. They should express their opinion and comply with the way they expresses their opinion, if we are able to succeed. If we do not [succeed] then they are under the impression there is a veto; [that] there is a permanent hostility and reconciliation is impossible. This is dangerous and will make them cooperate with Satan [anyone even the devil] against us.

Badr: This is possible. I mean we can modify the way of bringing up the Party's point of view in the Brothers' dissertations without saying or without mentioning the Brothers' explicitly about the religious state, and so forth, with an objective and scientific tone. This is possible. What is happening in the *Hadaf* now is that there are no altercations and so forth; I mean we are handling things in a well composed manner.

[Time Stamp: 39:22]

UM1: We are supposedly getting close to setting up a strategy for decades. From this perspective, we have to set up the basic lines that the religious current is not our enemy; not our enemy, but we are different. We want to dialogue with it and support those who are not so bad or wrong. The particularity of each country should be reviewed where this strategy will be implemented—realistic and transitional implementation. And it will be natural for our comrades in Sudan not to be able to jump from one situation to another. It requires an appropriate amount of time. But when we understand the strategic lines, we will have no other choice but to proceed along these lines, even for the long run. Go ahead, comrade Abu Ziyad [*nickname for Tariq Aziz.*].

[Time Stamp: 41:07]

Tariq Aziz: Although I did not hear the discussion from the beginning, there are few points that were raised about which I would like to express my opinion. The issue of discussing the religious ideology and religious state depends on the circumstances and is not a general discussion. We discussed it in general. I mean, as a Party we specified our position in that regard, but it is governed by circumstance. It appears to me that the religious current in Sudan introduced itself as an alternative. I mean, the religious current in Sudan introduced itself as an alternative ideological and political form of government. And when it was given a chance, it made its way through the window and not the door; during the time of al-Nimeiry, it struck; [*it*] wanted to control the country and implemented the Shari'ah the way it deemed suitable. So, the discussion regarding the religious state and religious ideology in Sudan is different than the way it is in Syria or in Iraq, although any discussion brought up regarding any matter of this nature in any Arab country has its Nationalistic consequences. But in Sudan, there is a battle. Either this religious current wins ideologically and politically—whether through the elections or jumping into power—or it will fail. I believe it is normal for parties that do not want the religious state in Sudan, including our party in the front, to have to engage in an ideological and political war against this current. As for the tactical and political adaptation, this is another issue, another issue.

The Syrian situation that we are facing regarding the Muslim Brotherhood, I believe, is a unique case and it is hard to generalize it to the other Islamic movements, or the other Muslim Brotherhood branches in other Arab countries. Syria is ruled by a sectarian regime, Alawi, and it is non-Islamic; any Muslim knows the Alawis are not Muslims and are considered atheists, meaning that the regime's laws and procedures are atheistic. But as a sect, it is considered as a splinter sect of Islam that overpowered the regime, not to mention its political acts, as well as other acts disapproved of by the religious current. It is a coincidence, I believe, or a good coincidence that it started with the Muslim Brotherhood current in Syria. I mean, [*it was a good coincidence that*] enlightened personalities, like Adnan Saad al-Din, were able to understand the Party. I also believe that objective circumstances played a big role, as well as the personal relations that developed between them. But this phenomenon cannot be generalized according to size and depth [*is not generalizable*]. The religious current in Egypt now is not going to fight an atheist government like the Alawis; it is going to fight a civilian and regular regime. It

wants to oust it and control the country. Not surprisingly, even the Shah's regime was against religion. We are talking about Mubarak, and his government consists of Muslim people; he fasts, prays, believes in Islam, and his social behavior is good, but because it is a civilian government, they want to topple it. They have the chance and they want to take advantage of it to the utmost.

Well, if we were a big party now in Egypt, would we not engage in the political and ideological battle? You know people are engaged in Egypt. I mean, there are writers and politicians, some of them from the Wafd [*traditional Egyptian political party*] and some from the ruling party, and other figures who are engaged in the battle thus far. I mean not against religion, but against the religious groups' concept, or the Islamic groups' concept, of the state—whether they are Brothers or others [*blank audio 45:34-47:31*]. I believe we must engage in this battle. We cannot do anything in Egypt but to engage in it and participate in it one way or the other. We engaged in it in Iraq. I mean, what did Comrade Saddam say in the 1970s regarding our position towards religion? Because we had it before; we had a strong religious movement that struck us with bullets. I mean we had armed demonstrators that launched bombs at us. Therefore, we had to face them with an ideological position, in addition to the grassroots [approach], and even the repressive measures that were necessary. So, comrade Saddam talked clearly and said, "We do not accept the religious state, but we are Muslims and believers." So, it depends on the situation we are facing. If we stop the ideological struggle against the Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan, are they going to stop their ideological struggle against the pan-Arab concept?

Taha Yassin: We reach an agreement.

[*Time Stamp: 48:31*]

Tariq Aziz: How can we reach an agreement, Comrade Abu-Nadia [*nickname for Taha Yassin*]? Comrade Badr did not create for himself an agenda in Sudan to take over power; he may compromise tactically, but al-Turabi will not. Instead, he wants to take over power in Sudan, and he has the right [*to do so*]. I would have thought the same thing if I were in his place. Is he going to abandon his ideological struggle and ideological mobilization for a plan so that we can abandon our struggle? In this case, we would leave the arena in Sudan for them or for the weak people from the Ummah Party and the Unionists who do not have the appropriate ideological weapons to face this current. We should take this into account as well. We cannot say the other party is willing to give concessions so that we can do the same. Yes, if we can reach a compromise that guarantees they are not going to attack the pan-Arab ideology or the pan-Arab concept of state while we [*agree not to*] attack their concepts. Politics accepts this, but for us to leave the ideological struggle while they stay and keep mobilizing the young men and the public with [*ideas of*] the religious state, this means we are going to at least willingly give up Sudan and even Egypt. It is true we are not in control of everything, but we will be out of this struggle.

As for the position towards Iran, the Islamist groups' position towards Iran is internally contradictory and understood by us. From one side, all Islamic groups, with few exceptions, look at the regime in Iran as a source of power and an idol to follow. At least what happened in Iran makes whoever believes that establishing a religious state has

become a possibility, even in the 20th century. Because, as you know, and as we estimate in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s those people used to say, "Yes, we are believers and we want to establish a religious state, but maybe the era does not allow us." But once the Islamic state was established in Iran, this experience may be repeated, in this case similar to Communism. When Communism was established in the Soviet Union, the Communists around the world were encouraged and said, "In this case, communism is possible." The issue they are going to experience is that Iran is a Shiite [*country*] first and, therefore, they did not wish for the first experience to be Shiite. They wanted the first experience to be Sunni, instead. This is a fact from the sectarian point of view. They wished for this to happen in Egypt, Pakistan, or somewhere else. I mean somewhere they can better blend with it ideologically. The other thing is that what happened in Iran clashed with Iraq and pan-Arabism which is a power and essence within Islam, in addition to Iranian acts that are hard to defend. All of this makes some of them [*Islamists*] hesitant to rush toward Iran. But inside their hearts – I believe within their hearts, with some exceptions, no one can believe in establishing a religious state unless he considers the Iranian experience as an allying experience in one way or another. Not a true ally; not the ally wanted from the heart or the one he wishes for, but objectively it is an ally and we are witnessing it. This is a fact.

The Muslim brotherhood in Syria would be crazy to ally with the Iranian Revolution because the Iranian Revolution is their adversary and not their ally. I mean Hafez Al-Assad is Khomeini's ally. The Alawi is the Shiite's ally, and therefore it is normal for them to have a different position. But the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan is not in the same situation. The one in Egypt is not in the same situation. Their [*referring to the Egyptian and Jordanian Muslim Brotherhoods*] ruler is Sunni; their ruler is not an ally or adversary to Iran in the meaning of engaging in a battle, a slaughtering battle. Yet, they are with Iran. There are few enlightened groups; the way it is in any political movement. Enlightened groups, groups that have the pan-Arab spirit and have more prominent people; yes, these are not rushing [*to ally*] with Iran. So, do we have to gain them? Yes; work with them? Yes. But in my opinion, this should not mean that we stop striving wherever it is imposed on us. We cannot go and provoke people, but wherever it is imposed on us in any Arab arena [*we should not*] stop striving against the concept of a religious state. Otherwise, we would leave the arena to those who could control it ideologically and then politically.

[*Time Stamp: 53:53*]

UM1: I just would like to add a couple of sentences to what Comrade Tariq said. Does this historic stage really put us in conflict with the religious current? This is the question. Or not, even though we will clash in many other stages for instance during this long journey. But we are not the movement that was established historically to fight the religious current. We go back to our principles—Unity, Freedom, and Socialism—to realize that we need to unify the Arab world, get rid of Colonialism; we want a democratic government and we want socialism. The religious current agrees with us regarding many things. The religious current is also not directed towards the Ba'ath. It is directed towards the prevalent circumstances in the Arab homeland, which no one is satisfied with. When the Ba'ath [*Party*] becomes unique, it would be normal for them to attack it because they will see it as easy. They are not required to be deeply aware of and have great knowledge

of the Ba'ath ideology. They look at some superficial aspects and see it as easy to fight, if it [*the Ba'ath*] places itself in their way. Khomeini intentionally says, "I am against the Ba'ath State in Iraq. I am not against the pan-Arabism or against Iraq, but against this Ba'athist regime."

Saddam Hussein: At the beginning, he, of course, said he was against pan-Arabism, in official speeches, but he withdrew that approximately two years ago.

UM1: But then he corrected [*himself*].

Badr: Pan-Arabism and Ba'athism is the same thing.

UM1: It [*Khomeini's correction*] is a reaction to these slogans that they [*the Iranians*] raised at the beginning [*of the war*] when they said that pan-Arabism is like Zionism.

Saddam Hussein: He wanted to decrease the scope [*of his criticism*].

UM1: In his point of view, and in order to make this battle easier on him, he chose to fight the Ba'ath Party in Iraq. But in Egypt, the religious current is not bringing up the issue of being against the Ba'ath Party, and maybe it is not aware of the Party or a part of it [*inaudible, background talk*]. Yes, not even in the Arab Maghreb [*Northwest Africa, excluding Egypt*]. So, what we are saying is that we should give the impression that our message and historic mission is to confront [*the religious current*]. But we announce our thoughts regarding the religious state issue, socialism issue, democracy issue, and regarding all issues. If the Muslim Brotherhood is about to come to power, this becomes a national battle and we ally with anyone who prevents this danger.

[*Time Stamp: 59:13*]

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Tariq came late, so we agree with all the concepts he mentioned as a general principle. We wanted to talk about the stages in addition to the ideological and historical backgrounds mentioned by the gentleman [*referring to the last speaker*]. The religious current in the Arab world is politicized. It strives against the Arab governments. We also have Ba'athists striving against the Arab governments, and their policies. So, do we launch the battle against the religious current or do we launch the battle against the religious current when it has certain characteristics? The answer is we launch the battle against the religious current with certain political or behavioral characteristics. If it launches a battle against us, we will launch a battle against it. And if it reaches power and gets close to it, we would launch a battle against it. And if it gets closer to power alone, we would be forced to advance; we [*would*] try to advance through criticism and get closer to expose them.

If it reaches power, it will launch a battle against us, for sure; wherever we are, whether as a Party or a State. This is certain whether this was the Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan or in Egypt or anywhere else. If exceptions happen, it would be a different story. Because we are from the people and so are they. We are not satisfied with preaching our theory at the national level that we reach through power, but we make a model out of it that helps, one way or another, our comrades' striving in the other regions of the country [*world*]. They

are the same, they are the same. They want to reach Egypt and aspire to reach the Islamic world after the Arab world. Even the talk about Arab unity is not contradictory because the Prophet did not go to Ethiopia to establish Islam and leave Iraq with his army. The army of his Caliphates headed towards Iraq and then Syria and did not head towards Ethiopia, although it is an international religion. However, it is a religion which has one thousand – let us not say one thousand, let's say many undoubted verses in which the Arabs were assigned to deliver the message since they are capable of doing so; not because they were corrupt and it [*Islam*] wanted to reform them. If it were the religion of Arabs only, it would have been possible to correct this issue, but being a humanistic religion means it assigned the Arabs with tasks broader than the Arabs. Therefore, let it first build the personnel that are going to carry out this mission and then carry it out. Those who talk about Arab unity are the people who do not understand those who do not talk about Arab unity in first place. They do not understand the Islamic religion. Otherwise, they would build a base in the Arab world first, to be able afterward to spread Islam in other Islamic countries, [*to build*] the religious state. They are private, and we are private too. We want to build a state, and they want to build a state. Therefore, clashing is inevitable over this subject and over the issue of building the state, whichever one is right; a national socialist state or an Islamic state. This is expected. We do not wish for it [*the clash*], and they may not wish for it, but there is a strong possibility of this situation [*outcome*]. But, when they are in the stage of struggle, we can prevent clashing with them should the chance to avoid clashing be available. This [*avoiding the clash*] did not happen in Sudan.

Badr: It has already happened in Sudan.

Saddam Hussein: We are talking about Sudan. We talk about Sudan and that is why this issue is open for interpretations since it is an existing political situation and a situation with different circumstances than Iraq's situation or Syria's situation. Therefore, it provides an opportunity for interpretations in order to create a general framework. So, is it required, in any case, to stop our ideological struggle? The answer is, no. Not in any case. Because when we stop our ideological struggle, we stop attracting others towards our thought. And we stop the awakening process of our members and our capability to influence our surroundings. But the process of ideological struggle surely always expresses itself in forms related to its circumstance. When it changes from general ideology to specific ideology, the circumstance is going to play a role here. When they talk, when they raise slogans that insinuate their exclusive possession of power in Sudan, we have no other choice but to face them. But to raise slogans to develop power within the framework of a coalition, this would be a normal issue for them, for us, and for others.

Badr: But what is happening -- [*Interrupted*]

[*Time Stamp: 1:06:00*]

Saddam Hussein: I do not want to go into details, Comrade Badr. I am going to discuss at the end how we are going to act, I mean the National Command of Sudan in light of this talk. If there is any chance for the mutual attacks between us and them to stop, we would need to reduce the [*number of*] places that accuse us of atheism when engaging in a conflict where our enemy wears a religious cover while confronting us. There is an

audience affected by the talk of religious figures. Religious figures are revitalized now in terms of their influential power on the audience. They have become even more valuable for the sultans and for the presidents of the republics – they have also become more valuable than before. We talked before Comrade Tariq started and asked why did the religious current revive? I mean, with regard to one aspect and not all of them, because there are many aspects [*for why the religious current is experiencing a revival*]. We talked about this in two previous meetings of the National Command, including that pan-Arabism was against a foreign state persecuting Arabs. Pan-Arabism was placed face-to-face against the foreign religious state that was persecuting the Arabs.

UMI: The Ottomans?

Saddam Hussein: The Ottomans, yes. Against the Ottoman state that used a religious cover, but wanted to persecute the Arabs and carried out the process of ethnic persecution against the Arabs. Therefore, the slogan of Arab Nationalism is a political weapon, in addition to all its ideological and historical background, in the face of the occupying foreign invader. I mean under different covers. So what is the place of the religious figures position and religious ideology? It did not have the stature to reach politics and, therefore, that was the end of the current and then the nationalist state emerged. This is one of the main reasons that made Abdel Nasser emerged as the Arab leader. If Abdel Nasser emerged now, he would have had a different fate than the one he had before, when he had the chance [*to raise*] the important slogan of the Nationalistic Arab State as something in the face of the people that the British brought in [*colonialism*] and the Ottoman Empire which persecuted the Arab nationalists and the Arabs and even Muslims. They persecuted Muslims in the name of Islam and persecuted the nationalist state in the name of the Islamic state. If they want to clash with us, we will clash with them. If they get close to power, we will expose them [*attack their ideology*]. If they are in power and open fire on us, we will open four times as much fire on them. But if there is a chance of avoiding placing ourselves in a position of a direct clash with them during the period of struggle, would this be not beneficial? Yes.

In light of this general strategic framework like he [*UMI*] talked about, I say that although we are strivers, we do not forget our struggle and we still write about our underground work and its role in the revolutionary movement. But since we have been in control of power for the last 18 years with its practical keys and its practical circumstances, I tend to talk about the framework without pressuring the National Commands and their organizations. I mean as a general tendency and you hear me always repeat [*inaudible, 1:10:13*]. We should allow the National Commands to join the general framework without specifying to them the way to act in the field so that we do not kill initiative. This is the general guideline. So this is understood and known now. The only thing left for the comrades there is the circumstantial and applicable condition; the step, its type, range, and timing. I mean, there are other cases outside of this general guideline [*framework*] which will remain specific. There are specifics that I believe they [*the National Commands*] have sufficient knowledge to look at the pan-Arab Command's analysis, they can act the way where they won't let the Party lose neither on a national nor pan-Arab level because we do not want the country to lose either. I mean, we do not support the idea that the country should lose for other countries especially when it comes to serious issues. No, we will try instead to -- [Interrupted]

UM1: There is a point that is important, in my opinion. This is an occasion to focus on it based on what comrade Abu Uday [*Saddam Hussein*] said about the emergence of the Nationalistic current to face the -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The revival of the nationalist current; the period of strength and revival.

UM1: Yes, I mean, its emergence in a new form.

Saddam Hussein: Political.

UM1: Political, in the face of the Ottoman domination. So, it is normal for the nationalist current not to be able to use Islam for support.

Saddam Hussein: For political support.

UM1: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: It cannot be done. It cannot be done because the other party [*Islamists*] used it [*Islam*].

UM1: The other party is using it.

Saddam Hussein: Of course.

UM1: Using it as a cover.

Saddam Hussein: Yes and they [*the Islamists*] have a long history of reasoning with it [*Islam*]. [*They have superior knowledge of Islam*]. So, we [*the Ba'ath*] have to be against using it [*Islamic reasoning*].

UM1: Four hundred years, the Caliphate collapsed, the Arab countries were liberated from the Ottoman state and the Western imperialist states came. The nationalist form that started with facing the Ottomans and continued for a while in facing -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The state.

UM1: In facing the Western, French, and British colonialism. Then there was a flaw and the Ba'ath Party became the hope for this historic correction. This is the point I want to emphasize and I did mention it in my April 7th, 1984 speech [*April 7th is the anniversary of the Ba'ath Party's founding*]. Because I myself realized recently why the Ba'ath Party made Islam the most important thing in its platform. This was inspired from the historic stage. I mean we expressed the popular, nationalistic, and historic need without having the intention to do it. Without being aware that -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Of its reasons.

UM1: We were correcting a deviation. Or, it is not a deviation, but a flaw since it was not

possible in facing the Ottoman state.

Saddam Hussein: Except with Arab Nationalism.

UM1: Except with Arab Nationalism.

Saddam Hussein: Without giving preference to Islam.

UM1: Yes. So, this correction is something historic, important, and Nationalistic. The Ba'ath Party was put in this position to carry out this role; placing Islam at the center of the ideology of Arab Nationalism. That's what I consider something -- *[Interrupted]*

[Time Stamp: 1:15:55]

Taha Yassin: This is among the speeches, which we printed out a lot on April 7th and January 6th *[January 6th is the anniversary of the Iraqi Army's founding]*.

Tariq Aziz: I have a clarification, in fact; I may not have been able to express myself accurately. I do not consider our main mission previously, and at the present, as striving against the religious current at all, *[especially]* at the expense of other core missions. I agree with what our Comrade President said about dealing with this issue within the tangible circumstances; if there is danger, then we resist it, and if there is not, then we do not engage in an unnecessary ideological or political confrontation. But let us study our experience in Iraq with more depth and see whether this religious current is easy and consequently, if we can reach an agreement with it? For us since the second half of the 1970s, our main agenda in Iraq was against the religious current, and for six years we have been fighting against the religious current and not against foreign state. If it was a true foreign state like Turkey, not Muslim and with no religious orientation, the matter would have been different. People who carried out the revolution and some of them still resist us, while the others are a generation of the revolution itself. I mean we have been in power for 18 years, and the age of anyone who is resisting us is 24, 26, 28 and 30, even 36 years old, they grew up during the revolutionary era. We are not the Shah of Iran, but a National, pan-Arab, anti-imperial, socialist regime. We achieved social justice, and like Mr. President said, we even secured a living for the mentally ill. We eliminated unemployment during our era. During our era, the worker whose wages were 300 Fils *[Iraqi currency that is equivalent to the penny]* a day, became 8 Dinars a day. Our rule is not corrupt, we are not thieves, and we are people with good morals as individuals, unlike the Shah of Iran and his sisters, and the women of people in power who were prostituting themselves in Paris, London, and Switzerland. Yet people surfaced who want to slaughter us, *[cut us]* from vein to vein, *[numbering]* in the tens of thousands. We slaughtered tens of thousands of them *[referring to "people who resisted" the Iraqi regime]* here in Iraq. In the history of the national struggle of Iraq, no reactionaries were slaughtered.

Saddam Hussein: No, not tens of thousands; in the thousands.

Tariq Aziz: In the thousands. In the history of national struggle, in the history of national struggle, no reactionaries, no communists, and no others were slaughtered, compared to those *[who resisted]* because of the way they acted reached the highest level of national

treason. When they [*those who resisted*] sabotaged aircraft and missiles at the beginning of the war, they would kill the Iraqi Arab Muslim who was their colleague at the air base on Iran's behalf, even though they were Iraqi. Some of them might be of Persian origins, but the others were Iraqi. They did it because this ideology is not something simple. I mean, let us think about it. It is true that this is not our main task since striving against imperialism and Zionism is still ongoing, as well as the struggle for unity and socialism. True, but is this a simple ideology for us to deal with it carefully? Let us see what the reason is for the monster that is emerging in the Arab world. One of the main reasons [*for its emergence*] could be our lack of concern with its ideology [*not taking it seriously*]. [*We are*] being more courteous than resistant to it [*the ideology of Islamists*]. By being more courteous than resistant to it we are helping the emergence of the monster [*religious currents*] in Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, and everywhere. But we are ideologically very strong; very strong as a regime, leader, and command. So, we should not underestimate this current and think it is easy to deal with. The Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan, when we study the situation in Sudan, they have not assumed power. They have not. They are like the communists during the era of Karim Qassem [*Abed Al-Karim Qassem was the Prime Minister of Iraq from 1958-1963*]. I mean they have a court that they control, a police station, a newspaper and look what they did to the people. Did we not discuss here at the Command what we are supposed to do regarding the trial of Ba'athist comrades? He wants to cut their heads off. You know that one, what was his name [*inaudible, someone in the room provides the speaker with the name of the ruler*], what? Yes, that ruler with the strange name, Makashfi [*Makashfi Taha al-Kabbashi, a Sudanese judge*]. He wanted to execute the Ba'athists as atheists when he had not assumed power yet. I mean, the power was not his.

Badr: Al-Nimeiry interfered and saved the Ba'athists at the beginning.

[*Inaudible, 1:21:52*]

Tariq Aziz: So, the confrontation they have in Sudan against the Party and others is not normal or a matter of limited scope where we can be tolerant towards it. It is a very dangerous confrontation.

Taha Yassin: If we continue the discussion – everyone is saying similar things. If there is nothing new we should continue talking about this some other time.

Saddam Hussein: Well, this is something good.

Taha Yassin: We can talk about the Maghreb.

UM1: The issue of the Maghreb.

Taha Yassin: Let's hurry up.

[*Time Stamp: 1:22:33*]

Saddam Hussein: It is just the... I mean we authorized our comrades in Sudan to act. Because if the strategy is only localized [*to the Sudan*] it will fail as far as implementation

is concerned. I remember the analysis of the pan-Arab Command that we should prevent clashing with the Communists in the same manner. But when it was time to implement it; had we implemented it prior to 1974 it would not have had a chance to succeed, I mean prior to 1972. It would not have had a chance to succeed, but we led the operation at that time until we established a relationship [*with the Communists*], though it was not successful. So, we should leave specificity to the field command and give them the freedom to act in this regard, so we do not lose strategically or tactically at this stage.

Yes, they [*Islamists*] are not easy. I mean the religious current finds its people [*supporters*] everywhere. Before Comrade Tariq came, we talked a lot about this issue, talked a lot. But one of the things that one should know, in addition to the factors he mentioned, [*one should*] know the direction of their intentions is that thousands of them [*those who resisted*] were killed, but people acted as if we had not killed anyone. So this means the direction of the people is different [*than the Islamists*]. However, had there been tolerance towards them [*the Islamists*], they would have accepted things. Life is not always balanced by thought, because sometimes the possible changes are not possible and it plays a role and brings this person or that person to their ranks. When people see that they [*Islamists*] are catching women who walk uncovered in Egypt, and they catch her at night and tell her, "We will tear apart your clothes if you do not wear a headscarf." When they find that no one confronts them and all of Egypt's girls will wear the headscarf, then the situation will probably become tradition instead of compulsion, at least temporarily.

[*Inaudible, voices in the background*]

So they know about us. Yet they do not tell the people that the Ba'athists allocated a salary to the mentally ill when Islam wants the mentally ill to have a salary, in order for them [*the people*] to say the mentally ill are being taken care of by the Ba'athists and they are providing a salary for the poor. No, they tell them [*the people*] that the number of unveiled women increased during the time of Ba'athists. That is true, the number of unveiled women increased in our time. This is because a number of women who wear veils either passed away or returned to school after the Revolution. [*The number of women attending schools*] is greater than the number before us because schools did not exist. Also, the number of women who were starving before but now go to work to increase the purchasing power of the family has increased. So the veil is no longer suitable for school, college, or factory. So, it is true that the number of unveiled women here in Iraq increased after the Revolution more than it was prior to the Revolution. They [*Islamists*] talk about this case when only a few of the average people understand these background facts. So, you can find these small issues used for the purpose of mobilization against rulers everywhere. But they cannot find them in Iraq, of course, the way they can somewhere else. The proof is that they are supposed to have the strongest position here, because the focus of all of these factors [*such as veiling*] is favorable for their purpose [*in Iraq*]. I mean the forces against pan-Arabism and the Nation and its fate, all cooperated with them so that they can achieve something in Iraq, but they could not achieve anything.

UM1: Our movement bets on the Nation's readiness for awakening.

Saddam Hussein: Of course.

UM1: While they [*Islamists*] are against awakening. No matter how much they veil, [*laughs*] I mean, they call and -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Even those against corruption, sir, are from the same group, I mean, the majority is against corruption.

UM1: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: I mean one way or another, of course. They have priorities that are different from our priorities. But they know that they are unable to be the alternative themselves and they are copycats. I mean they do not have any innovative method. Islam is in the Quran and anyone can read the Quran from the beginning to the end and say, "This is my doctrine." This is not innovation. They cannot add anything to humanity.

UM1: Comrade Abu Uday, you follow -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible, voices overlap*]

[*Time Stamp: 1:27:45*]

UM1: You follow, as much as I do, the Islamic writings in Egypt and elsewhere. I would love rather I would be very happy to see something enlightened, with value. The best people and the best brains among them are the ones who write something that the Party already approached -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Forty years ago.

UM1: Fifty or 40 years. These are the best. This means they do not have -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: There is no innovation.

UM1: No.

Badr: Maybe at the expense of others, but once they reach what they want -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: No, no, they are corrupt even before then [*obtaining power*]. We have seen them. [*Inaudible, background talk, 1:28:35*]

Tariq Aziz: The religious current in Egypt, and these samples that Comrade Taha mentioned in Egypt, started to put conditions on the girls in college before they reached power. They have not yet assumed power.

UM2: These are the Brothers in [*inaudible, 1:28:50*]; they are the organized and fanatic minority -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: I mean, they have not yet assumed power and they practice such terrorism. What would happen if they control the military, the police, and the intelligence agency?

Saddam Hussein: We agree. They are the most dictatorial people.

UM2: They would stop any car with a man and woman in the car because they think this is a right step.

Saddam Hussein: Really?!

UM2: Then they would ask them for their marriage certificate or identification confirming if it is your sister or something like that [*relative*]. Otherwise they would take you to the police. This is happening in some areas of Egypt.

Saddam Hussein: This is weak.

UM2: The power of presenting the principles of the Party -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: If they deem you weak they will devour you [*common saying in Arabic*].

UM2: All the Party's principles.

Saddam Hussein: This is life. It has its own rules.

UM2: [*Inaudible, 1:29:46*] abandoning the [*inaudible, 1:29:48*] and spreading the Party's principles. The way of dealing with [*inaudible, 1:29:53*] consists of give and take.

Saddam Hussein: Where we gain more than what we lose, we choose. But to lose more than we gain, we refrain.

[*Inaudible, background talk, 1:30:08-1:30:32*]

Saddam Hussein: El Hassan [*Hassan II, Morocco's King at that time*], let's discuss this briefly because we were supposed to discuss the issue earlier, but that is okay, we still have time. His behavior was at the same time surprising and not surprising. First, his history and the background of his relationship with the Israelis is not new. The current Arab situation can generate other cases similar to how this instance emerged; at a time where the Arab situation was not as bad and the weakness factors were less than they are now, I mean like in Sadat's time [*Anwar al-Sadat was the president of Egypt*] and El Hassan was with all... [*End of Recording*]