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BULLETIN DU CENTRE D'ÉTUDES KURDES

Le but des bulletins du Centre d'Études Kurdes est de faire connaître au monde le peuple kurde, le Kurdistan et tout ce qui les concerne.

Le dernier document politique de portée internationale concernant les Kurdes, est le Traité de Sèvres, du 10 août 1920.

Dans sa Section III, articles 62, 63, 64, les Grandes Puissances reconnaissent aux Kurdes le droit à l'unité et à l'indépendance.

Cependant, encore aujourd'hui, le peuple kurde, dont le nombre dépasse 9.000.000, et qui occupe un territoire historique de 500.000 km², allant de la mer Noire jusqu'au golfe Persique, et de la Méditerranée au Caucase, se trouve être partagé entre la Turquie, l'Iran et l'Irak.

En Turquie et en Iran, le Kurde est privé des droits humains les plus élémentaires; tels que de se dire Kurde, parler librement, lire et écrire ouvertement sa langue, et d'être gouverné par des gens de sa race et parlant le kurde.

En Irak, si certains droits élémentaires leur furent concédés, ces droits ne reçoivent qu'une application mitigée et, il n'en est pas moins vrai, qu'en fait, la liberté politique est inexistante.

Fort des droits naturels des peuples à la vie, la liberté et la justice; de la Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen; des lois internationales et des stipulations des traités existants; des quatorze points wilsoniens; de la Charte de l'Atlantique; des principes reconnus et établis par l'O.N.U. et ses institutions; et en faisant appel à la bonne volonté des peuples du Monde, le Centre d'Études Kurdes se propose de travailler en vue de faire reconnaître effectivement, à la Nation Kurde, la plénitude de ses droits.

Déclaration des Droits de l'homme et du citoyen (août 1789) :

Art. 1^{er}. — Les hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits.

Art. 2. — Le but de toute association politique est la conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'homme. Ces droits sont : la liberté, la propriété, la sûreté et la résistance à l'oppression.

Bulletin du Centre d'Etudes Kurdes

UNDERSTANDING

During this month I have had the opportunity of spending a fortnight in London enjoying British hospitality. I went there at the invitation of the Royal Institute of International Affairs — often described by the title of « Chatham House » — and also of the Royal Central Asian Society.

If I am not mistaken it was the first time that a Kurd has had the opportunity of talking about his country and its problems to such honorable societies and before such a distinguished public.

I took this wonderful opportunity to explain to my audience the Kurdish question — its geography, its history, its social, economical and cultural life. Its wealth, its resources and also the vicissitudes through which the country has passed during the last century. It was a great opportunity also to explain the different international principles, documents and treaties embracing the whole question.

I emphasised that the situation of today is an unbearable one for the Kurds — that eight million Kurds living in a large territory of about 250,000 square miles could not continue to be satisfied with such conditions. Kurdistan which is divided between Turkey, Iran and Irak is a geographical unity — political boundaries only are dividing it. The situation is similar to that which Poland suffered before the World War 1. In Turkey and in Iran the Kurds have not even the right to speak their language openly, to read or to write it. They have no schools, no newspapers, books or reviews, in fact the economical, social and cultural situation is a very dark one. They are not recognised as a national entity : they cannot express their nation-

nal feeling and political tendencies. In Irak, even if the situation is better as there they enjoy cultural liberty, political freedom does not exist.

I explained that the solution of the Kurdish question is intimately bound up with the security, wealth and improvement of the Middle East.

This part of the world cannot prosper as long as eight million Kurds are treated in defiance of the rights and justice and internationally admitted principles. The treatment reserved to the Kurds has no parallel in the whole world.

This question, which is an international one can be solved through the principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations Organisation — the only existing international body. In its Charter the case of people similar to that of the Kurds is provided for. Until now the Kurdish people have not profited from these conditions. The principles concerning the Kurds are found in Art. 73 and 74, and I should like to repeat the text of these most important articles.

Chapter XI

DECLARATION REGARDING NON-SELFGOVERNING TERRITORIES

Article 73

Members of the United Nations which have or assume responsibilities for the administration of territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of these territories are paramount, and accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost, within the system of international peace and security established by the present Charter, the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories, and, to this end :

a. to ensure, with due respect for the culture of the peoples concerned, their political, economic, social, and educational advancement, their just treatment, and their protection against abuses ;

b. to develop self-government, to take due account of the political aspirations of the peoples, and to assist them in the progressive development of their free political institutions, according to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and their varying stages of advancement ;

c. to further international peace and security ;

d. to promote constructive measures of development, to encourage research, and to co-operate with one another and, when and where appropriate, with specialized international bodies with a view to the practical achievement of the social, economic, and scientific purposes set forth in this Article ; and to transmit regularly to the Secretary-General for information purposes, subject to such limitation as security and constitutional considerations may require, statistical and other information of a technical nature relating to economic, social, and educational conditions in the territories for which they are respectively responsible other than those territories to which Chapters XII and XIII apply.

Article 74

Members of the United Nations also agree that their policy in respect of the territories to which this Chapter applies, no less than in respect of their metropolitan areas, must be based on the general principle of good-neighbourliness, due account being taken of the interests and well-being of the rest of the world, in social, economic, and commercial matters.

As I explained to the above mentioned gatherings, the idea of creating harm to the three interested states is quite out of our minds and entirely contrary to our views. Our sincere aim is UNDERSTANDING and COLLABORATION. Collaboration based on an accordance of minimum rights. We are asking Turkey, Iran and Irak to act towards us in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations which is signed by their governments.

We are asking :

- 1) To be respected in all these countries as Kurds ; not to be obliged to hide our nationality ; not to be obliged to be hypocrites pretending to be Turks or Persians.
- 2) We are asking that in the Kurdish territories there should be schools, and in these schools the Kurdish language, literature, geography, history, etc., should be taught.
- 3) We are asking that the publication of Kurdish books and newspapers should be free.
- 4) We are asking that the officials in the Administrations in the Kurdish territories should be Kurds.
- 5) We are asking that the Kurdish people should at least, in part, benefit from their own resources : that the country should have better sanitary, economical, social and cultural conditions : for improvement in roads and

agricultural conditions : industrial development, hydraulic power, etc., and exploitations of the mineral wealth.

There is no doubt that these rights are recognised all over the world for all peoples. It is known that even in the Colonies the people are enjoying these rights, which are not more than the natural rights corresponding to the natural aspirations of every community.

I am convinced that the recognition of these rights would open the door for a new future between the Kurds and the other nations of the Middle East. Such an attitude by the interested Governments towards the Kurds would surely raise the standard and the credit of the three governments. I should feel happy if this appeal should touch the spirit and heart of the Turkish, Iranian and Irakian Governments.

The dominating characteristic of this century is a tenancy towards FREEDOM, HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE and INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION. Two big wars have been fought to keep justice and right alive in the world — we can only repeat the immortal Word which says : « The truth shall set you free ».

KAMURAN AALI BÉDIR-KHAN.

As it is possible that some of our readers may not be au courant with the activities of CHATAM HOUSE we have the pleasure of publishing in our Bulletin an extract from the British Press which appeared on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of this Institute.

CHATAM HOUSE

THIRTY years ago, during the Versailles Peace Conference, a number of the British, Dominion and United States delegates came to the conclusion that international affairs merited a study less confidential than that carried on in the various Foreign Offices and more intensive and continuous than was possible in the public Press. Out of this was born in this country the remarkable organisation now known as the Royal Institute of International Affairs, but more often described by the title of its London headquarters, Chatham House.

This evening at Guildhall, in the presence of the Duke of EDINBURGH, a banquet to celebrate the three decades' growth of Chatham House will be held under the chairmanship of Lord CECIL; the principal speakers will be the present Prime Minister and Mr. EDEN. Chatham House makes no claim to official status. Governmental control of its work would indeed hamper its freedom as a forum for discussion and a centre of dispassionate research. Those who take part in its meetings (which are not publicly reported) or contribute to its many valuable publications have, no doubt, their individual bias. Chatham House itself, except for that war-time period when its resources for research were placed at the disposal of our own Foreign Office, has remained deliberately uncommitted to any political cause however worthy, or to any national viewpoint, however acceptable. Foreign affairs, unfortunately, are not always conducted upon the good-tempered basis which is the essence of a Chatham House meeting, but it is a fair guess that many negotiations go more smoothly because the subject matter has been surveyed beforehand by this unofficial gathering of experts.

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From the British Press

The following is an extract from « Illustrated » appearing in London, dated the 15th January 1949 by Nancy Jenkins.

THERE is a saying in the Middle East that as long as a single Kurde rides the rough, mountainous country between Iraq, Turkey and Iran a Kurdish problem will disturb the peace. Mark the saying. They have called the Kurds proud, fanatical, difficult, unruly, and so they are. They can well afford to be.

South of that wild country they call home lies one of the richest oilfields in the Middle East. Here, in a region where boundaries have never meant anything to the people on the spot, Russia's Iron Curtain begins to swing into position. Kurdistan might become what Belgium once was in Europe.

In Kurdistan talk today is of war. Not war between tribe and tribe or between tribe and Government, because

that has always been a topic and would not be worth a mention; but war between Russia and the West. It overshadows everything.

Everyone carries a gun. Agents are busy and political agitation could turn overnight into armed rebellion. The tribal leaders (known as Agas) can still summon at will hundreds of armed tribesmen who will loyally fight at their bidding. But though tribal law is the only system of justice, a European can travel with far greater safety there than in the modern state of Turkey.

The Kurds who live in Iraq—nearly a million, all told—have always been traditionally friendly towards Britain. But this year, anti-British Communist agitators began to turn on the heat and feeling mounted. In Sulaimaniya, national centre of the Iraqi Kurds almost daily demonstrations against the British reached a climax last spring with the burning of the British Reading Room.

Discontent with British policy is not limited to the Left. The Kurds still remember that the idea of an independent Kurdish State once had British support. But that was in the days before our oil interests under Arab control were worth so much. Since they grew so large, Britain has concentrated on encouraging Kurds to become good Iraqi subjects whilst trying to persuade the Iraq Government to improve conditions in Kurdistan.

I went to Sulaimaniya and, in the towns and villages of that remote region talked with the tribal leaders. These feudal Kurds, now sceptical of Britain's intentions, are, in spite of the past, for the most part outwardly loyal. They want to keep their lands and hope that our foreign policy will enable them to do it. They are also convinced that the West goes to war with Russia, they will come into their own again.

« You will need our help once more », was the remark made by more than one chieftain. In the past we came to terms with powerful feudal heads in control of enormous areas, but this is no longer possible. Today, the townsmen and students are by no means all Left Wing, but strongly resent any tendency on the part of England to « subsidize » the feudal system which they are so determined to overthrow—if necessary with Russia's help.

Sulaimaniya is the centre of historic dispute between feudal Agas and townspeople. The property of the townsfolk was never very safe from the tribes, which accounts for the present union between the Sulaimaniya capitalists and Left Wing demonstrators against feudal sheiks or religious leaders.

There are two Left Wing parties in Sulaimaniya, a subversive Communist organization and a Socialist party. The first urges that « all men are brothers, even Arabs and Kurds, who must unite to throw British imperialists out of the Middle East » and cannot therefore support Kurdish nationalism. The second encourages autonomy which rarely fails to stir the heart of every Kurdish patriot.

An absent but not forgotten figure connected with the Socialists is the Mullah Mustafa, a religious leader of the improverished Barzani tribe. As the organizer of three revolts since 1941, he was condemned to death by the Iraqi Government. Chased by Iraqi and Iranian armies, he made a remarkable retreat to Russia with many of his men.

Britain, Germany, and now Russia, have all in turn promised the Kurds an independent state. Whilst the older generation are cynical about such promises the young nationalists are susceptible. In the last year Communist-inspired propaganda has repeatedly claimed that the oilwells of Northern Iraq so vital to Britain's economy, should belong to an independent Kurdish State. As the existing pipelines are under Arab control, the Kurds would have to construct new pipelines, but these realities are always overlooked by the nationalists.

The Kurds in Iraq, who form one-quarter of the total Iraqi population, admit they are well treated compared with their countrymen in Turkey and Iran. But the nationalist ideal, based on racial pride, is still easily exploited. Kurdish nationalism has always been weakened by inter-tribal disputes. The strongest tribes are those like the Jaf, which has the rare quality of sorting out, without delay, quarrels among itself. The Jaf today is still politically influential ; it has a representative in the Baghdad Parliament.

Few small towns in the world can produce so many strong personalities as Sulaimaniya. There is the remarkable poet-editor of the Kurdish paper, *Life* — Pera-merd (« Old Man ») Haji Tawfik, now rising ninety but with the vitality and mental grasp of a young man. He is anti-Communist and once fought against Kemal Ataturk, Turkey's dictator. He is one of Britain's few remaining friends.

Another personality is Tawfik Quassas, a rich man with a modern house, who, with a sense of social responsibility so rare in the East, has set aside part of his own estate as public gardens. The feudal families have a representative in the pro-British and ruthless Latif. Protected only by a bodyguard of loyal tribesmen, he lives in Sulaimaniya, defying the hostility of the people. When angry mobs demanded his death last year he addressed them from his balcony brandishing his gun.

An hour's drive through a rugged overgrown valley will take you to Latif's father, Sheik Mahmud, the uncrowned King of Kurdistan, and one of the most enigmatic figures in Anglo-Iraqi relations. He has always been friendly to England except when his insatiable love of conquest made him overstep the mark.

« Tell the British Government », he said, « that I am ready to start a little revolution for them at any time », and his eyes twinkled at the thought.

Although of late he has mellowed, he recently occupied two villages by force; an incident which, infuriated Sulaimaniya concluded, had official British support because it took place shortly after the visit of an Englishman. Sheik Mahmud still has considerable hold over his people, who believe his life to be sacred since on one occasion a bullet went straight through him only to kill the man behind !

I left convinced that the intransigent Kurds are a forceful minority whose significance cannot be overlooked in the confused background of Middle East politics. Communist propaganda is increasing and can no longer go safely unchallenged. In Kurdistan, America cannot replace Britain's declining influence, but the gap may all too easily be filled by Russia. More than ever is the goodwill of the Kurdsih people vital to the defence of the West.

COMPREHENSION

Au début de ce mois, j'ai eu l'occasion de me rendre à Londres ce qui m'a permis tout d'abord d'apprécier l'hospitalité britannique. Cette occasion m'est venue à la suite de deux invitations qui m'ont été adressées par « The Royal Institute of international affaires », autrement dit par *Chatam House* et the *Royal Central Asian Society*.

Si je ne me trompe pas c'est la première fois qu'un Kurde a eu l'occasion de parler à Londres devant un public très distingué du Kurdistan et de la Question Kurde.

J'ai donc saisi cette exceptionnelle occasion qui se présentait à moi pour faire connaître à mes auditeurs la géographie, l'histoire, la vie sociale, économique et culturelle de mon peuple ainsi que sa richesse et ses ressources innombrables en même temps que ses vicissitudes durant le dernier siècle. Il était aussi opportun d'expliquer les différents principes internationaux, documents et traités touchant cette question. J'ai fait remarquer que la situation actuelle du pays était insoutenable et que 8 millions de Kurdes vivant sur un grand territoire de 500.000 km² ne pouvaient plus continuer d'accepter les conditions qui leur sont faites.

Le Kurdistan qui est divisé entre la Turquie, l'Iran et l'Irak, représente une entité géographique. Sa division n'est due qu'à un partage politique conventionnel. Sa situation est similaire à celle de la Pologne d'avant la première guerre mondiale. En Turquie et en Iran les Kurdes n'ont pas le droit de parler publiquement leur langue, encore moins de l'écrire ou de la lire. Ils n'ont pas d'écoles, pas de journaux, pas de livres ni de revues. La situation économique, sociale et culturelle du pays est, en effet, très sombre. Ces deux Etats refusent de reconnaître les Kurdes comme entité nationale. Dans ces pays placés sous l'autorité des Etats turc et iranien ils sont privés de la possibilité d'extérioriser leurs sentiments nationaux et leur tendance politique. En Irak, du fait qu'ils jouissent de la liberté culturelle, leur situation morale est déjà moins pénible. Mais leur liberté politique est inexistante.

J'ai fait ressortir que la solution juste et équitable de la question Kurde est intimement liée à la sécu-

rité, à la prospérité, et au progrès des pays du Proche-Orient. Cette partie du monde ne peut pas prospérer tant qu'on continuera de traiter 8 millions de Kurdes d'une manière et avec des méthodes qui sont un défi au droit, à la justice et aux principes admis internationalement.

Le traitement imposé aux Kurdes n'a pas de parallèle dans le monde actuel.

La question kurde qui n'est qu'une question internationale ne peut être résolue que conformément aux principes de la Charte des Nations Unies, et dans le cadre de cette organisation.

Dans la charte des Nations Unies le cas des peuples similaires à celui du peuple Kurde est prévu. Mais jusqu'à aujourd'hui les Etats qui se partagent le kurdistan ne leur ont pas fait bénéficier des principes de la Charte des Nations Unies les concernant.

Voici les articles 73 et 74 de la Charte :

Chapitre XI

DECLARATION RELATIVE AUX TERRITOIRES NON-AUTONOMES

Article 73

Les Membres des Nations Unies qui ont ou qui assument la responsabilité d'administrer des territoires dont les populations ne s'administrent pas encore complètement elles-mêmes, reconnaissent le principe de la primauté des intérêts des habitants de ces territoires. Ils acceptent comme une mission sacrée l'obligation de favoriser dans toute la mesure du possible leur prospérité, dans le cadre du système de paix et de sécurité internationales établi par la présente Charte et, à cette fin :

a. d'assurer, en respectant la culture des populations en question, leur progrès politique, économique et social, ainsi que le développement de leur instruction, de les traiter avec équité et de les protéger contre les abus ;

b. de développer leur capacité de s'administrer elles-mêmes, de tenir compte des aspirations politiques des populations et de les aider dans le développement progressif de leurs libres institutions politiques, dans la mesure appropriée aux conditions particulières de chaque territoire et de ses populations et à leurs degrés variables de développement ;

c. d'affermir la paix et la sécurité internationales ;

d. de favoriser des mesures constructives de développement, d'encourager des travaux de recherche, de coopérer entre eux et, quand les circonstances s'y prêteront, avec les organismes internationaux spécialisés, en vue d'atteindre effectivement les buts sociaux, économiques et scientifiques énoncés au présent article ;

e. de communiquer régulièrement au Secrétaire Général, à titre d'information, sous réserve des exigences de la sécurité et de considérations d'ordre constitutionnel, des renseignements statistiques et autres de nature technique relatifs aux conditions économiques, sociales et de l'instruction dans les territoires dont ils sont respectivement responsables, autres que ceux auxquels s'appliquent les chapitres XII et XIII.

Article 74

Les Membres de l'Organisation reconnaissent aussi que leur politique doit être fondée, autant dans les territoires auxquels s'applique le présent chapitre que dans leurs territoires métropolitains, sur le principe général du bon voisinage dans le domaine social, économique et commercial, compte tenu des intérêts et de la prospérité du reste du monde.

J'ai tenu à expliquer à mes auditeurs qu'il était loin de notre esprit de faire du tort aux gouvernements intéressés et qu'il était contraire à notre point de vue de leur créer des difficultés. Notre désir sincère est de s'entendre et de collaborer. Collaboration ayant pour base la reconnaissance de nos droits les plus élémentaires. Nous demandons que la Turquie, l'Iran et l'Irak agissent en conformité de la Charte des Nations Unies dont la Signature de leur gouvernement est apposée au pied de la Charte.

Nous demandons :

- 1° - d'être respectés dans tous ces pays en tant que Kurdes et de ne pas être obligés de cacher notre nationalité ; de ne pas être obligés d'user d'hypocrisie en nous prétendant Turcs ou Persans.
- 2° - Nous demandons qu'en territoire Kurde, les Ecoles doivent être ouvertes et que dans ces écoles, on doit enseigner la langue, la littérature, la géographie, l'histoire Kurdes.
- 3° - Nous demandons d'avoir le droit de publier des journaux, des livres et des revues en langue Kurde.
- 4° - Nous demandons que les fonctionnaires de l'Administration de nos territoires doivent être des Kurdes.
- 5° - Nous demandons que le peuple Kurde, jusque dans une certaine mesure, doit profiter des revenus de ses ressources. Que le pays doit avoir des organisations économiques et sanitaires sociales et culturelles ; un réseau routier, que l'industrie doit être développée, les forces hydrauliques et les richesses minières exploitées.

Il n'y a aucun doute que ces droits sont reconnus à tous les peuples du monde. Il est connu que même dans les colonies, les peuples jouissent de ces droits. Ces revendications font partie du droit naturel correspondant aux aspirations de toutes les communautés.

Je suis convaincu que la reconnaissance de ces droits ouvrira la porte à un nouvel avenir entre les Kurdes et les peuples du Moyen Orient. Les gouvernements intéressés, en adoptant une attitude conforme à la Charte des Nations Unies rehausseront leur prestige et donneront une preuve de leur sagesse.

Je serai heureux que cet appel puisse toucher le cœur et l'esprit des dirigeants turcs, iraniens et iraquiens. La tendance dominante de ce siècle est sans discussion, la liberté, les droits de l'homme, la justice et la collaboration internationale.

Deux grandes guerres n'ont pas été faites en vain si ce n'est que pour sauvegarder le droit et la justice. Nous n'avons qu'à répéter le mot immortel qui dit que la vérité nous rendra libres.

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Le correspondant du journal « Vatan » à la frontière soviétique annonce que la constitution d'un gouvernement kurde, en Azerbeïdjan soviétique, est imminente.

On choisirait actuellement les ministres ainsi que le drapeau, qui comporterait trois étoiles symbolisant les groupes kurdes de Turquie, d'Iran et d'Irak.

Cette information semble confirmée par de récentes émissions de la radio soviétique en langue kurde qui annonçaient que « le jour du passage à l'action était proche ».

La Voix du Kurdistan

Nous venons de recevoir le premier numéro (Juillet 1949), du périodique, la *Voix du Kurdistan*, organe de la jeunesse kurde en Europe.

Directeur : EMIR Dr. KAMURAN AALI BÉDIR-KHAN

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