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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Iraq

DATE 12 May 1947

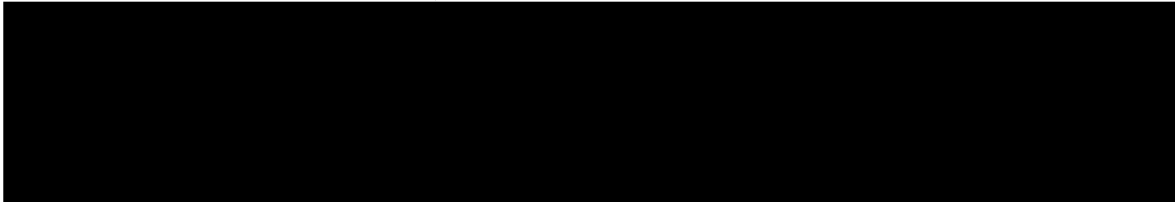
SUBJECT Elections: Labor Conditions

PAGES

SUPPLEMENT

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1. [redacted] the parliamentary election held in Iraq, the results of which were announced on 10 March, was a distinct step forward, in that it was the first election ever held in that country for which a variety of candidates were permitted to offer themselves as candidates. The fact that the election was not exactly "free" in the American meaning of the word is not of such importance as the fact that in that election the idea was advanced that the governmental slate might be opposed, and that it is not beneath the dignity of an Iraqi "gentleman" to offer himself to the people as a candidate.

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- 2. There is rising discontent with wages and the general condition of the workman in Iraq, although in Kirkuk, since the strike in the oilfields and the announcement of a company housing project, the general run of labor seems fairly well satisfied. However, there is still a dissident element that is fomenting trouble, with no very clear program except "equal pay for all."
- 3. The distribution of Communist literature in Kirkuk has recently ceased (apparently the stock which was for use during the strike has run out), but other agitation continues along the lines of racial disturbances, caused chiefly by starting rumors concerning Kurds, Assyrians, Jews or Armenians. These, as well as several minor bombings, are looked upon by the populace as the work of hoodlums, and no organized movement has been started.
- 4. In Basra the possibility of labor troubles appears more threatening, and there is a definite feeling of unrest among Basra labor which, in source's opinion, will break out in some undesirable form in the future, if conditions are not bettered. Although at present the discontent is not the result of trained or subsidized agitators, it could easily have serious consequences if such agitators were put to work among the laborers.

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