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Tariq AZIZ
(Phonetic: ahZEEZ)

IRAQ

*Deputy Prime Minister (since 1979);
Member, Revolutionary Command Council
(since 1977)*

A143D

Addressed as: Mr. Minister



Tariq Aziz is one of the three most important counselors of President Saddam Husayn, advising him on foreign and political questions. Aziz remains de facto Foreign Minister (he held the job during 1983-91), although he lost the portfolio in April 1991 when Saddam shuffled his cabinet.

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as a member of Iraq's miniscule Christian community, he could not take power in Muslim-dominated Iraq if he wanted to. Posing no threat to Saddam, he retains a position of trust in the President's cabinet.

A Diplomat's Diplomat

in November 1992 when he went to the UN in New York to plead Iraq's case against the renewal of sanctions. his mastery of English and diplomatic demeanor should not be construed as pro-Western sentiment. and he is as committed to Saddam's policies as the rest of his colleagues in government.

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Game Strategist

Most of Aziz's recent efforts have been toward undermining international will to enforce the UN embargo of Iraq and wearing down opposition to Saddam among the Arab countries that opposed the invasion of Kuwait. Aziz has taken the lead in the fight against UN resolutions, maintaining that the

Closet Moderate?

Before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, Aziz was viewed as having generally advocated a moderate foreign policy. For example, he led the Iraqi delegation to the Iraq-Iran peace talks and is the official most closely associated with Iraq's attempt to improve its standing with the international community during 1988-90. Aziz consistently worked to improve relations with the United States before their official reestablishment in 1984, and he was a chief advocate of Egypt's reintegration into the Arab fold in the late 1980s. During that time, he supported a negotiated settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict and urged the PLO to adopt moderate positions.

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While we believe Aziz probably still tries occasionally to present moderate views to the President, he never pushes them more than the traffic will bear and will support whatever decision Saddam makes.

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air exclusion zones have no legal basis. He was the highest level Iraqi official to take part in the standoff in the summer of 1992 with UN inspectors who wished to enter the Agriculture Ministry building in Baghdad. During those negotiations, he rejected the authority of the UN Special Committee and claimed its wish to enter the building was a violation of Iraqi sovereignty. He has also played on Arab fears of Iran's ambitions, arguing publicly that time is on Iraq's side because other Arabs—and even the United States—will come to recognize Iran as the greater threat to regional stability. [Redacted]

Aziz is considered to be one of Iraq's most ardent Baath Party ideologues; his party credentials are impeccable. He participated in the 1968 coup that brought the Baathists to power. Aziz, while serving

as Minister of Information during 1974-77 and then as a member of the Revolutionary Command Council and the party's Regional Command, helped Saddam undermine then President Ahmad al-Bakr, [Redacted] Saddam made Aziz Deputy Prime Minister after Bakr's ouster in 1979. [Redacted]

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Personal Data

Aziz was born in 1936. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] He speaks eloquent English

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[Redacted] Aziz and his wife, Violette, have at least two children. [Redacted]

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26 January 1993

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