

## (U) Iraqi Commander Memoirs on Missiles (1)

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(U) During the first Gulf War, the daily Iraqi military communiqués contained repetitious terms, especially the one that says "our planes returned safely to base." This term was the subject of ridicule by some Western observers who said "you cannot win a war this way," meaning hitting targets from a high altitude.

(U) So when a Western journalist made this observation before President Saddam Husayn, he was told: "Give me any proof that the war will end tomorrow and I will thrust all my planes into the battle."

(U) Iraq knew that the war would take a long time. So, it exploited all available resources, including old Turkish guns, when its stockpile of weapons began to dwindle.

(U) But, the war revealed the effectiveness of those weapons which could hit deep into enemy territory. Thus, Iraq used its combat air force efficiently in hitting Iranian economic and military targets. But the air force alone was not sufficient to determine the battle, since Iraq had not intended to occupy Iranian territory.

(U) For this reason, Iraq developed long-range missiles. Although they carried only conventional warheads, their destructive and moral power played a decisive role in speeding up the end of the war, as was the case with the US atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, despite the big difference in aims and ethics.

(U) But, Iraq's endeavor to acquire expertise and technology in this field has brought upon it the vengeance of Israel and the Western camp, because long-range missiles mean cancellation of borders. They also mean an Arab country has begun to move in the direction of technological know-how, which Western states refuse to transfer, as proven by the long, futile dialogue between the states of the north and the south.

(U) To strike at Iraq's endeavor, just as 'Abd-al-Nasir's endeavor was struck in the days of German scientists, the crisis with Kuwait was fabricated. Hence Iraq's entry into Kuwait, the international and Arab military buildup against it, and finally the embargo, which has been imposed on its people for eight years, the extortion of the Arabian Gulf states, the peace agreements, and the present Arab fragmentation.

(U) As to how Iraq used its missile capabilities against NATO weapons, which were reserved for the former Soviet Union, these memoirs by the commander of the Iraqi Missile Corps relate the whole story. They are daily memoirs, which Staff Lieutenant General al-Ayyubi has released exclusively to al-'Arab al-Yawm. They are memoirs that evoke sorrow and sometimes hope.

(U) Chapter 1: After the Glorious Saddam's al-Qadisiyah Battle

(U) 3 September 1998

(U) Figures and dates are my hobby. I still recall the day we launched al-Husayn Missile after a series of initial tests. It was on 3 August 1987. What a glorious day it was! And what festivities that evening! It was a real feast for the faithful, who devoted themselves to the service of their homeland and took the nation's aspirations and future seriously.

(U) God bless!

(U) We moved away from the site. And then the missile rose with a blazing tail. It was like the eruption of a volcano.

(U) God is great. God is great.

(U) The missile shot into the heart of the sky. And the men in that desert spot began hugging one another. The missile had covered its new range and hit its target 650 kilometers away.

(U) God is great, God is great, the men shouted. And I thought: This is a victory for science in this ancient land, and a fulfillment of a long-awaited dream to deter our enemies. God has ordered us to prepare for them all the power we can. So, here we are doing exactly that and placing our trust in God.

(U) 17 October 1988

(U) This is unforgettable day. I wrote in my diary: On this day, which corresponds to 7 Rabi' al-Awwal 1409 Hegira, I completed my 24th year of service as officer in the Iraqi Army.

(U) Soon the memories overwhelmed me, like a flock of birds swooping on a water pool They are memories of a profession which I like very much. Or did I follow in the steps of my father, who was a brave officer; or my paternal grandfather, may God rest his soul in peace, who fought in World War 1 and died in action; or my own brothers, who followed the same path and trained as officers while repeating the song of Palestine. Where was that song, which we reported so often as young kids? (more) 25 oct

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(U) The telephone rang, waking me up from a deep reverie. The speaker on the end reminded me of a special meeting of the committee in charge of studying the Zionist campaign against Iraq.

(U) My information about this committee was that it was ordered by the president to study the possibility of deterring the Zionist entity if it carried out a military aggression against Iraq, as was

the case on 7 June 1981 when it attacked the peaceful Tammuz Reactor.

(U) Staff General 'Adnan Khayrallah, deputy commander in chief of the armed forces and defense minister who headed this committee, conveyed the commander-in-chief's directives that the task of the Missile Corps was to select military and industrial targets in the Zionist entity, if it attacked our military and industrial installations. We would also not reply with our strategic missiles until the Zionist aircraft had returned. This was on the assumption that they would be able to avoid our ground defenses. Our aircraft would then reply first. Then the missiles would play their role, depending of course on the time needed for preparation.

(U) I explained the facts about the technical and logistical requirements that were needed for an effective strike. I said that the time needed by each battery to carry out the strike is eight hours from the time of receiving orders. This was on the assumption that all the equipment needed was close to the launching site. But, if a decision was taken to pack the missiles in advance, the time would be shortened by two hours. It must be pointed out, however, that the missiles would be useless after one month. We had to decide on the number of missiles needed for each target when several targets were to be attacked at the same time so as to assign the firing crews. I explained that it was essential to insure direct communication between the general command and the launching sites for quick action. This was in addition to communication with the early warning systems. And, to protect our means of firing, I said that it was essential to establish fixed bases. Finally, I said that it was also essential to insure accurate and detailed maps of the targets, carry out firing tests from east to west to check accuracy, and to consider the means of camouflaging, concealing, and stockpiling missiles. My proposal concerning fixed bases was influenced by Military Industrialization Organization [MIO] plans. Therefore, I explained the need to coordinate with MIO for more flexibility. This was essential due to the difficulty of moving mobile Iraqi launchers in a very short time and the need to intensify the firing on enemy targets.

(U) It was proven later during the immortal Mother of Battles that the plan was useful in deluding the enemy and thwarting the danger to our mobile force. Nevertheless a big part of the force was destroyed by enemy bombing.

(U) MIO was able to make new launchers. However, they were not, from the aspect of flexibility and maneuverability, up to the standard of the original launchers, which were closed to the fixed bases. Therefore, we only used them once from the western region. Still, they did a splendid job.

(U) It was a quiet evening. And my thoughts went back to 1964 when I entered a strong competition for admission into the Military Technical College in Egypt and succeeded with honors. But, I also waited for the results of my admission into the Iraqi Military College, which I wanted to join very much. My father did not interfere with my choice. God fulfilled my wish and I joined the college. My mother's prayers must have been with me also. I almost flew with joy. Military service suited me. It brought me closer to Palestine. I wondered: Would I ever find the record with the song that created our awareness of the Palestine question; the one that says: Jerusalem will remain Arab?!

(U) 8 November 1988

(U) I and a group of officers studied a report and a map from the Military Intelligence Directorate-12th Branch explaining enemy military targets in occupied Palestine, as well as others which were not on the map. The purpose was to give us ample time for planning.

(U) We had requested this information three weeks ago. And when we got the information we felt that one requirement had been fulfilled. The report included information on nuclear reactors, military and chemical factories, air bases and airports, naval bases, and targets that give support to enemy military effort.

(U) 24 January 1989

(U) These coordinates are not accurate, I told the officer facing me. We discovered that the coordinates we received on some of the targets were not accurate.

(U) Accuracy was our main obsession. Maps kept piling up in the operations room. The search, investigation, and verification continued for five continuous months. In May 1989, with the help of the Military Intelligence Directorate and the Military Survey Directorate, we reached the most accurate coordinates.

(U) My thoughts, as I carried one particular map to the Military Survey Directorate, were with my wife who worked hard for days trying to organize a room we assigned for old things in the top floor. I remember spreading everything on the floor of that room to find a map of Palestine which I had when I was teacher at the Military Staff College.

(U) Taking that map with me to the Military Survey Directorate today was a big event. It helped us a great deal. Still, we in the Missiles Directorate, depended on our own discretion when it came to deciding whether geographical or quadrangular coordinates were accurate.

(U) The shape of the target was important when determining the accuracy of the firing. For this reason, we asked for tourist maps in May 1989. And no sooner than the Military Survey Directorate supplied with maps of a 150-200 scale, which we found acceptable, although we continued to strive for something better.

(U) 15 June 1989

(U) Another joint effort began with the Air Force and Air Defense Command. We had to clearly define our responsibilities in this joint effort. We spent many hours of technical discussion on the first strike. For example, should it be for the Missile Corps or the Air Force? And how often should the strikes be repeated?

(U) The participants agreed that we must concentrate on the targets which should be hit by the Missile Corps and those by the air force. We found eight suitable targets for the Missile Corps and eight for the Air Force. Thus, we had 16 suitable targets for attack by aircraft and missiles in retaliation for any military action that might be carried out by the Zionist entity against Iraqi targets.

(U) We took into consideration the commander-in-chief's directives that the targets should be far from cities and residential areas and that they should be vital to enemy military effort, which would thus deter them from committing further crimes against the Iraqis and the struggler Palestinian people.

(U) 28 August 1989

(U) More updated maps of Palestine were printed after the Military Intelligence Directorate had carried out a general revision of the coordinates.

(U) Efforts were also concerted at the Missile Directorate to make the changes in light of the new maps and data.

(U) A few minutes before close of business, I received the report about the official Soviet apology not to supply us with AR17 Missiles. They told the Iraqi Defense Ministry and MIO that they no longer produced the missiles and did not have any reserve.

(U) 7 October 1989

(U) I remember this day in 1973 very well. I was enthusiastic as any other fighter in the Iraqi Army. War broke out on 6 October 1973 on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts, and Iraq decided to take part after hearing the news from the radios. I was staff officer at the time in charge of movements and armaments in the Artillery Directorate. We were following the movement of our forces as they

rushed to the rescue of Damascus. They included tanks and armored cars.

(U) I spoke enthusiastically: If all the strategic missiles and guns with the Arab states are used in one effective strike, what can the Zionist entity and the United States do in face of such a massive force? Can they take revenge from all the Arab states?!

(U) My vision stemmed from my belief and faith about the need for a unified Arab policy against the Zionist entity. We had the strongest weapon, oil. And life, in my opinion, was faith and jihad. So, what were we waiting for?

(U) I recalled how I fought in the 1967 War and how a relative of mine fell in the battle with pride. He was a co-pilot of the Iraqi plane shot down over Tel Aviv in 1967. It was one of two Iraqi planes that flew deep into enemy territory. Well, I said, the day will come when we will achieve the big dream. (more) 25 oct  (b)(3)

(U) 1 November 1989

(U) The work continued to achieve at least the minimum level of engineering preparation for the process of hiding the launching pads of mobile and fixed bases with the limited resources available then with the Military Engineering Corps. We received the army chief of staff's approval of what we termed "Project 44" for full engineering support. The project was summed as follows:

(U) Due to the range of al-Husayn Missile, H2 area in the western desert would be suitable for launching strikes at targets in the center of occupied Palestine, such as Tel Aviv; H3 area would be suitable for launching strikes at targets in the south, such as Elat; and the area west of Kilometer 160 would be suitable for launching strikes at targets in the north, such as Haifa. And due to the fact that western Iraq is all desert and free of suitable natural fortifications, it was planned to build such installations that required time and the allocation of large sums of money.

(U) It was decided that the installations should include scores of armed shelters to protect and hide the means of firing, fortified depots to store missile parts, and fortified command posts and shelters for personnel up to the level of brigade, battalion, and battery. This was in addition to building double the number of such installations with less fortification for the purpose of camouflage and deployment. I must explain here that these installations were not built as we had in mind, in view of the difficulty of insuring the resources.

(U) I had always hoped to possess a missile system with a range of 850-1000 kilometers and a high accuracy to enable us to attack any target in the Zionist entity from safe areas in Iraq; in other words, from areas concealed and forested so that it would be possible to hide in them, not like the western region which is open desert with no fortifications in sight.

(U) 5 December 1989

(U) The president continued to follow the stages of our work, which increased our morale and made us work continuously without feeling tired or needing leave or rest. I thought that the efforts put up by some of our technicians were beyond human endurance and definitely showed a desire to excel and to create.

(U) Here are the MIO men giving the homeland their best scientific efforts. And here are their efforts bearing fruits with the launching of al'-Abid Missile this day after sincere and earnest work and several months fields of planning and launching tests. The experiment was a success, the good tidings were communicated, and we reaped the fruit of our patience, hard work, and efforts, which were purely Iraqi, without the help of any foreign expertise.

(U) 29 December 1989

(U) The year 1989 came to an end, but there were still many problems that required solutions in

the armament, logistical, and management fields.

(U) We all believed that our efforts in these fields were for the sake of the nation's basic issues. In the midst of the political chaos that pervaded the world due to US bias and alliance with the Zionist entity, we must turn to finding the right weapon, despite our inclination to peace and desire for justice and equitability to prevail in the whole world.

(U) This was why, we in the Missile Corps, felt the real need for long-range missiles with a range of 1,000 kilometers. We also felt the need for a modern meteorological system and other up to date equipment for a more effective missile corps.

(U) The year 1989 passed while we were trying to form a new brigade which would absorb the strategic Iraqi launchers and manage the fixed bases. We were also busy making the liquid fuel for al-Husayn Missile System.

(U) But, I felt gratified when I accomplished with a staff officer a plan for "carrying out the first strike," from the time we received the signal from the highest authority to the time of the launching.

(U) I included in my calculations, cooperation, and coordination with all the parties concerned, headed by the Air Force and Air Defense Command. But I and others also learned from my experience in al-Qadisiyah Battle 1980-1988 that it important to coordinate matters earlier with all the other directorates, commands, and formations, such as the Military Intelligence Directorate, the Military Survey Directorate, the Air Force and Air Defense Command, the Technical Equipment Directorate, the Military Engineering Corps, the Supplies Directorate, the Transportation Directorate, the Mechanical Engineering Directorate, and the Electrical Engineering Directorate.

This was why I included all these addresses when ordering tasks for the Missile Corps. (more) 25

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(U) We in the Missile Corps were able to tackle many problems pertaining to armament, logistics, and management. This was what we resolved to do in 1989. And to place the efforts of my men in their precise historical perspective, let me mention here briefly the main problems we tackled as follows:

- (U) Endeavoring to develop long-range missiles with a range of 1,000 kilometers.
- (U) Obtaining modern survey equipment.
- (U) Obtaining a modern meteorological system, which was quick, precise, safe, and requiring less manpower.
- (U) Tackling the problems of Tariq--Astras--[radar] system and its spare parts and accessories.
- (U) Tackling the security aspects of Astras radar system.
- (U) Obtaining highly efficient telecommunication system.
- (U) Tackling the problem of old transportation vehicles, not suitable for moving launchers.
- (U) Meeting the need to increase the range of operational missiles to 150 kilometers.
- (U) Tackling training and management problems, such as:
  - (U) The lack of training equipment and decoys for the missile system.
  - (U) The lack of training movies. What we had were a few videos which were not as good theater movies.
  - (U) The problem of providing housing for the missile sectors and the missile school.
  - (U) The problem of securing the needs of the special units.
  - (U) The problem of the special cadres; that is, volunteers for specialized assignments.

(U) I believe that while a military commander must be trustworthy, he must also be creative. On this basis, we examined all the resources available and worked out the plan of "carrying out the first strike" in a manner that was clear and understandable to everyone and had no complications,

according to the following steps:

- (U) Order the commanders of Brigades 223 and 224 to pack the missiles with fuel.
- (U) Inform the Military Intelligence Directorate of its duty.
- (U) Open the telecommunication systems on receive and record all information with the Technical Equipment Directorate.
- (U) Order the first missile maintenance unit to stand ready, since it will be concerned with storing and transporting missiles and their parts.
- (U) Inform the Air Force and Air Defense Command and the Air Defense Operations Center of their duties.
- (U) Pack another group of missiles and time their movement, after making sure about the number of the strikes and their approval by the higher authorities.
- (U) Supervise the implementation and make sure that personnel do not stay long in the sites and only then just before launching time.

(U) We were concerned about something else; namely, air defense. We were aware of the need to provide air protection for the missile units so they could move freely and would not be threatened by enemy attack.

(U) For this reason, I tried my best to convince the authorities in the Defense Ministry to place at least two anti-aircraft battalions at the disposal of the Missile Corps, and make them even permanent later on.

(U) 30 December 1989

(U) I kept listening to the rain drops and staring at the Missile Corps insignia, which was one of our 1989 accomplishments. The insignia consists of two palm branches forming a circle with their ends touching the warhead of a missile standing in the middle of the circle. The two branches are the symbols of goodness and peace. The base of the insignia carries the words of Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings be upon him, which say: "Power Is Throwing." The words are part of a Prophet's tradition which says: "Prepare all the power you can for them. Power is throwing. Power is throwing. Power is throwing."

(U) [Description of source: Independent newspaper often critical of government policies. Internet version is also available at <http://www.alarab-alyawm.com.jo>]

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