

(U) Iraqi Commander Memoirs on Missiles (2)

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(U) Chapter 2: The Zionists' Threats

(U) 1 January 1990 [subhead]

(U) This is a new year, and we have new wishes of progress. I believe that our scientific tests to develop our missiles are important to all the Arabs who are aware of the enemy's plots. Nothing has made me more unhappy than Arab inattention to the attack the Zionist entity carried out against the Iraqi Tammuz reactor on 7 June 1981, although Iraq is not a neighboring state. So, the attack is part of a Zionist plan to apply the slogan of "From the Euphrates to the Nile," which the Zionist entity still adopts and which is displayed by the Zionist flag. This was stated in the speech President Saddam Husayn addressed to the conference of solidarity with Iraq held on 12 June 1981 in the aftermath of the attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor. He said: "The attack against the nuclear reactor in Iraq means that the Zionist enemy gives itself the right to attack any part of the Arab homeland, any factory or project, or any Arab program any time it likes under the pretext that its security is endangered. It also gives itself the right to determine the course of development, growth, and policies. This is the most dangerous, hostile theory in this age and is even more dangerous than Fascism and Nazism. Those who close their eyes to this reality deny human principles and ethics."

(U) Hence, in light of these words showing the extent of the danger, some Arab rulers should realize the nature of the aggression against the Arab nation and Iraq instead of backing the Zionists' plan to harm Iraq. Moreover, this mujahid country should accept the challenge and keep

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its effective weapons to defend itself and the Arab nation.

(U) 9 January 1990 [subhead]

(U) I like Hegira dates. Today is 12 Jumada al-Awwal 1410 Hegira. For some important reason, I was summoned from inside a conference, held at MIO [abbreviation not further explained] to study the second phase of al-'Abid missile. I was summoned to attend another meeting.

(U) On the way, I thought that nothing was more important than this conference except a meeting with the president. This was what actually happened. There was another meeting under the chairmanship of the commander in chief, attended by the defense minister, the industry and mineral resources minister, the army chief of staff, the air force commander, and the director of the military intelligence.

(U) The commander-in-chief opened the meeting with a question on how to prepare ourselves to confront the Zionist threats and how to deploy our missiles in and protect the western region.

(U) We exchanged views frankly, and we discussed the issue whether it was better to fire missiles from fixed or mobile bases. The industry and mineral resources minister said it was better to fire from fixed bases and to increase the number of mobile bases, while the defense minister and the army chief of staff said that the mobile bases were more successful. The president made his decision, ordering that both fixed and mobile bases be used along with camouflage and that more missiles be produced. He also ordered that the areas for the fixed missile bases be chosen.

(U) We spent the days from 21 to 25 January 1990 trying to choose areas for the fixed missile bases. We surveyed nine areas looking like a semicircular table and suitable for firing al-Husayn missiles at hostile targets around Tel Aviv and Haifa in occupied Palestine in order to affect the Zionist enemy's military and war effort.

(U) 17 January 1990 [subhead]

(U) We asked the operations department to obtain the army staff's agreement to form a working team including representatives of a number of departments, commands, army corps, and other apparatuses to meet work requirements in the western region of the country. Among these requirements were security telecommunications, engineering effort to improve roads and shelters, camouflage, the protection of the launching pads, checking their security and that of roads to them, as well as other issues necessary for the success of the mission. On 29 January 1990, our proposals were approved, and we had to conduct a land and air survey of the area in which we would work. (more) 27 oct (b)(3)

(U) 31 January 1990 [subhead]

(U) We were busy trying to attain accuracy for al-Husayn missile, and we had to conduct a new firing test. We went to the city of al-'Amarah in Maysan Governorate and fired four missiles toward the western region. On the same day, we made another scientific achievement by conducting a successful test on a missile engine in al-Habbaniyah in al-Anbar Governorate in cooperation with the MIO.

(U) Tests on al-Husayn missile faced many difficulties, including the problems of guiding the missile and searching for falling shrapnel over large areas.

(U) The R-17 missile, which the enemies call Scud is not al-Husayn missile. It may be useful to mention the following specifications of the Scud missile, compared to al-Husayn missile:

- (U) The Scud missile weighs 5,860 kg, while al-Husayn missile weighs 6,533 kg.
- (U) The Scud missile's warhead weighs 987 kg while that of al-Husayn missile weighs 650 kg.
- (U) The Scud missile has a maximum range of 300 kilometers, while al-Husayn has a range of

650 kilometers, and the al-Hijarah missile has a longer range than that.

- (U) The Scud's driving rocket reaches a maximum height of 86 kilometers, while that of al-Husayn missile reaches a much higher point.
- (U) The Scud missile's engine is started in 65 seconds, while that of al-Husayn is started in 82 seconds.
- (U) The Scud missile takes five minutes to reach its maximum range, while al-Husayn missile takes more than eight minutes.
- (U) The Scud missile takes a total of 3,771 kg of all kinds of fuel, while al-Husayn missile takes 4,758 kg. The proud lajis used local expertise to manufacture and develop surface-to-surface missiles and their launching pads.

(U) 6 February 1990 [subhead]

(U) I attended a meeting at the MIO headquarters with a Kuwaiti delegation, which came to exchange expertise and acquaint itself with the Iraqi experience. We do not conceal anything from any fraternal Arab country.

(U) 12 February 1990 [subhead]

(U) Helicopter gunships flew over the western desert of the country. It was an exciting travel over a barren land. We chose the right sites for our work after we conducted a detailed surveillance of the area. We then examined the land very well as if we had wanted to build houses on it. Whenever we landed, the helicopter gunships rose dust that lasted for a while. We also chose the bases of the launchers one by one.

(U) 5 March 1990 [subhead]

(U) Iraq announced the execution of British spy Bazoft. The Zionist circles in Britain exploited the issue and stepped up their fierce onslaught on Iraq. The Iraqi leadership knew that the uproar had been planned for to attack the industrialization installations in Iraq. Spy Bazoft himself confessed to his complicity in espionage in favor of the Zionist entity and Britain. Baghdad television showed the evidence of the crime, as well as the maps, which had been found with him upon arrest. The evidence was also recognized by the British nurse, who had fallen into Bazoft's trap. Moreover, Bazoft, who is of an Iranian origin, was a criminal and was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment in Britain for robbing a bank nine years earlier. It seemed that the British and Zionist intelligence organs had recruited him while he was in jail, but the Western media organs portrayed the criminal and robber as a victim. (more) 27 oct (b)(3)

(U) 20 March 1990 [subhead]

(U) In view of the increasing number of scientific experiments, including space research in al-Anbar base, we formed a new team for the special tests so as not to affect the performance of the missile directorate and its branches. We also formed a force for the missile tests.

(U) 22 March 1990 [subhead]

(U) In light of our surveillance and the proposals we submitted on 14 March 1990, the Army Staff Command approved the decision of the committee, which was charged with preparing the western theater. As a result, several units of the Republican Guards were placed under our command to protect the working team in the western region.

(U) 3 April 1990 [subhead]

(U) This day is the eighth day of Ramadan 1410 Hegira. On this evening, the Iraqi television showed the president's meeting with a group of fighters. He spoke at the meeting, warning the Zionist entity that any attack on Iraq would be retaliated for strongly.

(U) The commander in chief was speaking about a series of painful issues, including US decision to cancel the corn deals in February, as well as threats by the Zionist entity, the United States, Britain, and France to attack the Iraqi industrial installations. On 28 March, the campaign was stepped up in Britain under the pretext that nuclear intensifiers had been discovered. Meanwhile, the Zionist entity alleged the presence of Iraqi Army units in Jordan, and general Ehud Baraq, Israeli deputy chief of staff, announced on 30 March that Israel was ready to carry out a preemptive strike against Iraq any time it felt that Iraq's power posed a threat. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir also threatened that Israel would attack Iraq if the Israeli Government felt that Iraq was about to produce nuclear weapons.

(U) 7 April 1990 [subhead]

(U) Edition 9,456 of the Kuwaiti newspaper al-Ra'y al-'Amm arrived in Iraq on 7 April 1990. Its front page carried an exciting banner headline saying that Radio Israel had disclosed the scenario of aggression against Iraq.

(U) The text of the news item was as follows: "The enemy radio said that a heated argument erupted at the weekly meeting of the Israeli army general staff command on 4 April 1990. The meeting, held between two camps of the members of the General Staff Command, was also attended by interim prime minister Yitzhaq Shamir. The first camp was led by General Ehud Baraq, deputy chief of staff of the Army, and the second camp was led by Chief of Staff Dan Shomron. The two sides formed a committee including the prime minister, the chief of staff, the Air Force command, the Mosad chief, and the members of the General Staff Command." The meeting discussed the following:

- (U) Shelling and destroying the Iraqi surface-to-surface missile batteries, which have a range of more than 900 kilometers and which were directed at Israel.
- (U) The assistant to the General Staff Command proposed a military plan, which he had prepared in cooperation and consultation with the Mosad chief and the Air Force commander to deal a military blow to Iraq by 28 Israeli warplanes, including 16 F-16 warplanes and 12 other warplanes equipped with extra fuel tanks.
- (U) The plan was objected to by 10 generals, who said that such a large-scale attack might lead to a comprehensive war.
- (U) The enemy radio said that the Egyptian ambassador in Tel Aviv conveyed Egypt's warning that any Israeli attack against any Arab country would have grave consequences. The radio also said that Egyptian President Husni Muarak held urgent contacts with the US president and US secretary of state in this regard. (more) 27 oct (b)(3)

(U) 9 April 1990 [subhead]

(U) I attended a meeting, which was held by the joint committee of the military intelligence directorate and the Air Force and Air Defense to study important information on the intentions of the Zionist enemy.

(U) We came up with a joint plan for the Air Force and Air Defense and the missile headquarters to use paratroopers day and night, anti-aircraft battalions, and ground protection units in order to protect any site chosen for the missile units and to confront a possible aggression.

(U) 12 April 1990 [subhead]

(U) Several Republican Guards units were placed under the command of the Missile Corps to protect the fixed bases.

(U) 14 April 1990 [subhead]

(U) We gave a Ramadan Iftar banquet on 19 Ramadan 1410 Hegira. On that day, we started the

formation of Brigade 223 at the order of President Saddam Husayn. We also reorganized some other specialized army units.

(U) 18 April 1990 [subhead]

(U) We carried out a test on a chemical warhead.

(U) 24 April 1990 [subhead]

(U) The blessed 'Id al-Fitr was approaching. I held a meeting of the commanders of the formations. The Zionist threats escalated. The Iraqi military intelligence warned of a surprise Zionist attack. The units were put on alert, and we filled the missile fuel vehicles.

(U) 8 May 1990 [subhead]

(U) We carried out a firing test from al-Habbaniyah with the purpose of improving the missiles. It was, in fact, a series of experiments to manufacture the Iraqi engine. We also discussed issues related to the second phase of al-'Abid missile in al-Anbar base.

(U) 20 May 1990 [subhead]

(U) It was a tiring day. We moved from our old headquarters to a new one on the outskirts of Baghdad. The new headquarters has much more facilities than the old one.

(U) 5 June 1990 [subhead]

(U) I obtained the Army chief of staff's approval to choose two more areas in the operation theater in the western region, and we resumed our previous efforts to secure communications to the region and to establish fixed bases.

(U) The June 1967 setback anniversary caused pain to us. It was the first duty in which I participated. I was lieutenant and I served in the Fifth Antitank Artillery Battalion of the 14th Brigade of the First Division. Such names as Irbid, Janin, Kawkab al-Hawa, Netania passage, and the Jerusalem front still lived in my memory. In Irbid, we met with good, patriotic people, and I saw the green Arab land through the binocular. At the sunset, I sat alone and tried to express my feelings in poetic words. Was it poetry? I do not know. Among my old papers I found a poetry-like passage under the headline: "The Sad Planet." It says: "Planet of love, patience has a limit. Despite time, loyalty is for you. At sunset, I call you and I feel sad, as if the sunset was death. O my planet, I call you with tearful eyes. When will evacuation take place? The perfumed sea wind touched our enemies and was desecrated."

(U) We carried out an artillery shelling and we were relieved. We felt the need for a united Arab military and political command. At that time, that was like a dream and a hope. (more) 27 oct

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(U) 29 June 1990 [subhead]

(U) Quoting the Iraqi intelligence, the General Military Intelligence Directorate told us that the Zionist entity would carry out an air raid on Iraq and Libya within hours and that it installed long-range missiles in the Negev desert. Our units were put on alert.

(U) 17 March 1990 [subhead]

(U) Today marks the anniversary of the glorious 17-30 March revolution of 1968, which was, in one aspect, a reply to the June setback and its hateful consequences and a beginning of a comprehensive, true Arab awakening.

(U) The situation with Kuwait worsened after the Zionists and the Americans encouraged the

Kuwaiti rulers to harm Iraq under this difficult circumstance. These rulers worked with the Americans to turn Kuwait into a basis for conspiracy. So, Schwarzkopf carried out an exercise in Kuwait without units, and the enemy was Iraq.

(U) Realizing the extent of the conspiracy against a country that defends the Arab nation's causes, the Iraqis repeated the following words contained in the president's speech: "It is better for us to die than to lose our livelihood."

(U) At that time Iraqi was facing painful, difficult situations from every direction. Kuwait started to increase its oil production quota in violation of the OPEC resolution, decreasing oil prices and negatively affecting the economy of Iraq, which had emerged from a lengthy war with Iran.

(U) Some brothers stood by the enemies, and the situation may lead to grave consequences.

(U) 19 June 1990 [subhead]

(U) Following our discussion with the Republican Guards Command, the al-Ra'd Missile Battalion "Luna" of Brigade 225 was ordered to move to al-Basrah.

(U) 22 June 1990 [subhead]

(U) The Republican Guards unit under our command was withdrawn from the western region.

(U) 31 June 1990 [subhead]

(U) We received information that the Zionist enemy was planning to carry out an air raid against Iraq within a few days. Our units were put on alert.

(U) We had prepared for a training on the action plan in the western theater and other parts of the country, and we chose the Baghdad-al-Kut-al-'Amarah and Baghdad-al-Hillah-al-Nasiriyah roads instead of Baghdad-al-Ratbah-al-Qa'im road.

(U) For this purpose, we made our rear technical arrangements in Ba'qubah, making al-Ramadi and Baghdad friendly positions and the city of Kuwait and al-Ahmadi targets inside the Zionist entity. In terms of distance calculations, exercises are much easier in cities compared to the western region.

(U) No units were used to conduct the exercise. We were content with conducting the battles by telephone because the crisis was escalating in July 1990. On the Call Day of 2 August 1990, some officers of the directorate came and inspected the exercise plans on the meeting table, believing that I knew the details of the action plan against Kuwait. In fact, I knew nothing about that. What was really regrettable was that the rulers of Kuwait backed the Zionists in an aggression against the Iraq of dignity and Arabism.

(U) 1 August, 1990 [subhead]

(U) The missile Brigade 224 was moved to the western region to be able to quickly reply to the Zionist entity if it attacked Iraq.

(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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