

8A/220
P R E S S R E L E A S E

The Use Of Toxic Gas In Iraqi Kurdistan

According to recent reports, the Iraqi Government, in its latest futile attempt to force the Kurdish revolution to surrender, has resorted to the use of toxic gas which is deplored and prohibited internationally.

These reports were confirmed by the B.B.C. (Arabic), The Daily Telegraph, the communique of the General Representation of the Kurdish Revolution Abroad, and the statement of the International Union of Students.

It is now more than four years since the Kurdish people together with all the Iraqi people have been waging a heroic struggle for a democratic regime in Iraq which would guarantee the autonomy of Iraqi Kurdistan within the Iraqi Republic. The present regime in Iraq has been and still is employing the most barbaric methods to suppress the Kurdish revolution, using more than two thirds of the Iraqi Army in Iraqi Kurdistan. In addition the terror and the inhuman treatment suffered by the Iraqi people as a whole is unparelled in Iraq's contemporary history.

In the Spring of 1965, the Iraqi government purchased 70,000 gas masks and toxic gas as reported by many western and British newspapers. Recent reports indicate that the Iraqi Government has in fact used this toxic gas against the Kurdish people. The fact that some villages in Iranian Kurdistan have been affected by the gas indicate that it has been used on a very large scale.

Our Organisations strongly condemn this action and call upon all governments, organisations and men of good will to protest to the

Iraqi Government against this inhuman act and provide every moral and material assistance to the Kurdish revolution and send fact-finding missions to Iraqi Kurdistan.

We call upon you to support the struggle of the Iraqi people Kurds and Arabs for the establishment of a democratic and genuinely independent regime in Iraq.

London, 25th. March, 1966.

The Kurdish Students' Society
in Europe(U.K. Branch),
21, Onslow Gdns.
London, S.W.7

The Iraqi Students Society in U.K.,
3/4, Shavers Place,
London, S.W.1

STATEMENT ON THE KURDISH REVOLUTION

Iran and the Kurdish Revolution:

It is known that the current Kurdish revolution against the rulers of Iraq is a national democratic revolution struggling to obtain the legitimate national rights of the Kurdish people by establishing an autonomous regime within a free and democratic Iraqi Republic. The foreign policy of the Kurdish revolution is based on positive non-alignment. It seeks the friendship of all and accepts assistance from the liberated peoples of the world provided it is unconditional. The Kurdish revolution expresses its satisfaction at the neutral policy adopted by Iran in the conflict between the revolution and the ruling clique in Iraq. It hopes that Turkey and Syria would take the same attitude. Unfounded reports spread by the Iraqi government in this respect are aimed at creating an artificial crisis in the region. The Iraqi government tries in vain to put the blame for its failure in the war against the Kurds on others, by alleging that the Kurds receive outside help, hoping that it will be able to draw the rest of the Arab countries into the conflict and deviate the attention of the Iraqi people away from its grievances imposed upon them by the reactionary rulers whose hands are stained with blood. The Iraqi Government also hopes to get additional weapons and arms from certain countries to satisfy its needs at the present time.

Attitude of some Arab countries:

It has been customary for Arab countries to support one another in various occasions no matter which country is right or which is wrong. Some of them even involve themselves in conflicts without having sufficient information or reasons by which they would justify their becoming a party to any one dispute or another. They base this attitude

on a pre-Islamic principle which says: " Support your brother, be he the oppressed or the oppressor". Therefore, some Arab countries rushed to support Iraq in its stand against the Kurds. Their support to Iraq was accompanied by a campaign against the Kurdish revolution giving it all kinds of degrading descriptions and undermining its national and democratic objectives.

These hostile attitudes not only reflect the fascist and aggressive intentions of these governments, but also reflect badly on Arab nationalism and threaten the future of relations between Arabs and Kurds.

The forces of freedom in the Arab World are called upon to bring maximum pressure to bear on the rulers of Iraq to halt their racialist war against our Kurdish people and respond to their legitimate national rights.

Despite all allegations and false rumours our struggling Kurdish people and their revolutionary army will continue their struggle against the dictatorial military regime in Iraq until they are able to impose their demands on the rulers and until the people of Iraq restore their freedom of expression and will through free and democratic elections in order to put an end to coup d'etats and military governments which exercise authority against the desires of the people in contradiction with the fundamental principles of democracy.

The Kurdish Students' Society
in Europe (U.K.Branch)

21, Onslow Gdns. - London, S.W.7

25th March, 1966.

General Representation Abroad
of the Revolution of Iraqi Kurdistan
Bruxelles I P.O.B. 63

March 23, 1966

Communiqué

We are informed by General Mustafa Barzani and his High Command that the forces of the Baghdad Government are making use of toxic gases in the battles presently in process against the units of the Kurdistan Revolutionary Army. The gas is also being used against the civilian population in the liberated areas of Iraqi Kurdistan. Because of the air currents in these mountainous areas, even the civilian population of the frontier districts in Iranian Kurdistan is suffering of these criminal acts. The Kurdish High Command needs experts to determine the chemical composition of the gases used, in order to take the necessary measures of protection.

The General Representation of the Kurdish Revolution abroad sent already telegrams to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Commission on human rights, the International Committee of the Red-Cross and to the International Commission of Jurists, requesting them to send urgently enquiry mission to Kurdistan with the necessary relief.

We also address ourselves to all Governments, organisations and men of good will to arise vigorous protestations against these acts and to send the necessary humanitarian help to our Kurdish people so savagely attacked in their own country.

Ismet Chériff Vanly

General representative abroad of the
Revolution of Iraqi Kurdistan

Republished by the Kurdish Students Society in Europe U.K. Branch

25th March 1966

STATEMENT OF THE I.U.S. ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAQI KURDISTAN

PRAGUE 13th MARCH 1966

It is now more than four years since the Kurdish people together with all the Iraqi people have been waging a heroic struggle for a democratic regime in Iraq which would guarantee the autonomy of the Kurdish people within the Iraqi Republic. The present regime in Iraq has been and still is employing the most barbarous methods to suppress the Kurdish revolution, using more than two-thirds of the Iraqi army in military operations in Iraqi Kurdistan, in addition the terrorising of the Iraqi people as a whole is unparalleled in Iraq's contemporary history.

A few months ago, the I.U.S. revealed to the student public that poison gas had been bought by the Iraqi government for use against the Kurdish patriots. Recent reports indicate that the Iraqi government has in fact used this toxic gas against the Kurdish people. The fact that the fumes have crossed Iraqi frontiers blighting Iranian villages indicate that this gas must have been used on a very large scale. As a result of the use of this poison gas a wave of terror has swept through all of Iraqi Kurdistan.

This is a desperate, cruel and aggressive act on the part of the Iraqi government in its chauvinistic efforts to crush the Kurdish people. It constitutes in fact, an effort by the Iraqi rulers to spread terror throughout Iraq in a final effort to keep its shaky military and dictatorial regime intact. Moreover, such inhuman acts as the use of toxic gas are a gross violation of the International agreement incorporated in the Geneva Convention of 1925.

The I.U.S. Secretariat strongly condemns this action and calls upon all national unions of students to make every effort to put an end to this inhuman and barbaric action of the Iraqi government.

The I.U.S. Secretariat reiterates its unequivocal support of the Iraqi people - Arabs and Kurds - in establishing a democratic and genuinely independent regime in Iraq.

SECRETARIAT OF THE INTERNATIONAL
UNION OF STUDENTS

Republished by the Kurdish Students Society in Europe U.S. Branch

25th March 1966

NEWS BULLETIN BY THE GENERAL REPRESENTATION OF THE
KURDISH REVOLUTION ABROAD

THE WINTER CAMPAIGN (DECEMBER 1965- 1966 FEBRUARY)

The winter campaign of the 5th year of the revolution has been marked by a series of fierce armed engagements. Our forces have manifested a growing capacity of facing up to full strength of the enemy as well as of mounting counter attacks which have repulsed the enemy, Frustrated his plans, and wreaked havoc deep behind enemy lines.

The enemy is constantly aiming at overpowering our positions in Kala-Dizah, Rawanduz and Penjwin areas in order to open up their lateral roads. The Iraqi government forces have in fact officially boasted that the Kurdish revolution was quelled except for some tiny pockets of resistance in the north (around Rania, Rawanduz and Kala-Dizah) which were described as completely surrounded and isolated. The failure of the Arif regime to attain any of its declared goals and the growing military efficacy of our forces in confronting the heavily armed attacks, have definitely upset the government plans. They have been unable to force our positions in any of the three major fronts (see infra) and their limitations have caused concern and dissension within the ranks of the High Command and within Arif's fascist clique. This was one of the main factors which led to ill-conceived government raids against the Iranian frontier posts. Another outlet for the Iraqi government's blind rage has been the criminal burning and total destruction of Kurdish settlements including schools, mosques and all plants, trees and livestock (see memorandum of Mulla Mustafa Barzani submitted on to the Secretary General of the United Nations Organisation).

These failures of the Iraqi Army have led to a partial withdrawal of their units from most operations lately launched against us and their return into fortified positions and bases. Our forces have been attacking these

strongholds with growing momentum and with ever increasing effect.

Our Raids on Principal Towns.

Erbil & Surroundings: Following the Iraqi government's attempts to push our forces back from areas overlooking the approaches of the town last November, our forces counter-attacked and later penetrated into the town on several occasions. They attacked army camps, government installations and kidnapped several traitors, killing one of the leading collaborators in his house. Armed engagements lasting for several hours took place inside the town.

Throughout the first half of December, the government forces kept up their attempt to force our units to retreat to the surrounding mountains. But after heavy fighting in which the Iraqi units returned to the easier and less dangerous task of attacking and burning our peaceful kurdish villages. In the above mentioned engagements, the enemy suffered over 200 casualties (wounded and dead) of which at least (4) are known to be army officers. Our losses amounted to (6) dead and (13) wounded.

Kirkuk: The town was raided early in December 1965, when our partisans struck at the police station, the customs house, the check post at the entrance of the town and the surrounding settlements. Following these raids enemy reinforcements pursuing our forces were engaged and the fighting lasted for several hours. The enemy incurred considerable losses in men (including officers), buildings, equipment and armoured vehicles. Later in December, a new raid striking at water installations ended in fighting with enemy units in the very centre of the town. On this occasion a number of traitors were captured. The regional administrative centres of the Kurdish sub-districts were also raided last month.

SULAIMANIYA; The town was raided towards the end of December. Army bases were attacked incurring 20 casualties (wounded and dead).

Khanaqin: During November, positions held by mercenaries, in villages around the town, were attacked by our forces and heavy fighting ensued. The mercenaries suffered numerous casualties and a considerable quantity of light arms was captured and several ^{people} taken as prisoners. Our forces penetrated the town three times in December destroying army posts and striking at electricity installations, the Post Office, and the Government Officers Club - inflicting heavy damage to troops (56 casualties including 3 officers) and to property.

The Protracted Battle of Penjwin

The fighting commenced in the eve of the 22nd of last December and was carried up to the Middle of February. The Iraqi offensive was preceded by our shelling enemy concentrations, convoys, road repairs parties, their guards and positions. The enemy thereupon set out by concentrating his main force along the Halabja - Seyid Sadiq - Nawpariz - road. Enemy forces were:

2 Reinforced Brigades;

I Reinforced paratroop Battalion;

I Reinforced Infantry Battalion,

and over a thousand mercenaries (Jash). The elements in support included, Mig, Ilyushin, and Hunter aircrafts.

Our command decided in favour of a preventive attack. By shelling enemy concentrations, transport, Convoys, roads, bridges and camps behind the lines; we succeeded in foiling his plans to breakthrough our positions and reach the Iranian border. Moreover, our forces penetrated into the Penjwin camps inflicting heavy casualties especially on the Commando battalion and other units. Their casualties amounted to 12 killed including 4 officers one of whom was the Commander of the Commando Battalion.

On 27.12.65 our units attacked the base in Seyid Sadiq causing serious damage and inflicting casualties on the Iraqi government forces.

A major army attack was launched between 9-16th Jan. when a Brigade tried hard to take over strongholds on the Kulan mountain ridge and was badly defeated. The enemy was forced to withdraw from positions held previously by them in the Kaya mountain slopes - overriding the parallel road Banasura-Bakhan.

By 20th January enemy losses amounted to:

Casualties: Scores of dead of which 20 were officers; over 200 wounded; 3 prisoners.

Damage: 130 vehicles and armoured cars were destroyed or badly damaged; several tanks and a 122 mm gun; dozens of tanks, great depot of fuel supplies and ammunition were set on fire.

Mercenaries: 150 casualties (wounded and dead).

Our losses: 15 dead and a few wounded.

Captured: Mortars, machine-guns, sub-machine-guns, pistols, wireless sets, considerable quantities of ammunition and military equipment.

Recently the Iraqi government has reduced its forces in this sector.

The Northern regions of Zakho and Dohuk

These two regions have been entirely under our control, except for army camps in urban centres. At the beginning of January 1966 The Iraqi authorities boasted of "cleaning up" these regions from "rebels" while our partisan forces continue to have full control in these two regions.

The first Iraqi attempt to get out of their camps in Zakho and Dohuk in a so-called "mopping-up" operation was made last November. But they encountered a stiff and determined resistance and returned to their camps having suffered over 200 casualties. The brunt of the battle was born by the mercenaries (Jash) of the "AL-WALID" regiment. Heavy damage was inflicted on armoured transport vehicles and tanks. They have since then confined to their barracks.

A second attempt to break through our lines was made in January. The mercenaries again served as the spear-head of this second attack against our positions North-East of Zakho. This attempt was also foiled while enemy endeavours to reinforce the Zakho garrison also failed. Iraqi government reinforcements were ambushed and attacked by our units. As usual the enemy wreaked their vengeance by bombing defenceless Kurdish villages in the area with Napalm bombs.

Our brave forces have continued to harass military convoys attempting to break through the countryside in these regions.

Only in January did our forces finally evacuate the town of Zakho while keeping control of the countryside. But these forces mounted numerous attacks against the Iraqi government forces in the town. In January, the military post in Zakho was attacked. The morale of the enemy is low and government soldiers keep coming over and joining our ranks with their weapons.

The North -Eastern Region (AQRA, BALIK, SAFFIN) :

In this sector of the front the enemy is firmly entrenched within his fortified positions along the Arbil- Koisanjak- Qaladizah and the Arbil- Shaqlawa- Khalifan axes. Our units do however constantly attack these enemy positions. These assaults of ours are often accompanied by laying ambushes and mines against troops and transport. Here again the enemy reacts by setting fire to our villages with Napalm and other incendiary bombs.

Our uninterrupted attacks and losses inflicted upon them have adversely affected enemy morals. As a result there is in this sector a constant flow of soldiers joining our ranks with their arms.

The last large scale government operation in this sector was their attempt last November to overpower our positions in Mount Harir but due to our firm resistance they followed another objective: the burning down of scores

of villages on the plains of Arbil. They have carried this out with the aid of heavy artillery, air bombardments, tanks and an Egyptian Rocket Battalion. But still, our attacks continued with more determination. Toward the end of January our units attacked enemy strongholds in the Kumsban sector inflicting heavy losses in wounded and dead. They have also raided the administrative centres of Mirvan, Midan, Surdash and the Katul, Irwani camps.

In the Rawanduz front our forces have been mainly active in harassing enemy positions, attacking traffic, ambushing convoys and laying mines on approaches to enemy posts. These operations resulted in many scores of casualties to enemy troops; heavy damage to enemy transport, artillery and supplies. In these engagements, there was a considerable number of officers among the dead and we managed to capture large amounts of arms and ammunition.

The South-Eastern Sector:

During the first half of last November, the government endeavoured to occupy our positions at Khalkhalan near the village Kanjugha and round Chemi-Rezan and Surdash. The government formations were supported by artillery and planes. Our units ambushed the reinforcements and prevented their arrival. The enemy withdrew suffering heavy casualties. The Iraqi government forces set fire to adjacent Kurdish villages.

The success of our forces has had an excellent effect on morale and despite the difficult winter conditions our troops have kept up their attacks on the enemy positions.

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