

logically, therefore, the seat of its headquarters, could only be Turkey. When I suggested that many people thought of Turkey more as a European than a Near Eastern state he replied that Turkey is a bridge both approaches to which are of interest to Turk nation.

If Chargé's thinking is truly representative of his government, this would appear to give substance to several indications that Turkish Government at last has shifted from Kemalist attitude toward Arabs and is now looking to its position of prestige in Middle East world.

BERRY

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No. 124

790.5/3-2253: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

BAGHDAD, March 22, 1953--11 a. m.

1158. Foreign Minister Tawfiq Al-Suwaidi asked me to call this morning. He said that recent conversations with Turkish Chargé (mytels 1053, 1107 and 1118)<sup>2</sup> had made Iraqis realize how very vulnerable their country was to a Soviet attack coming through Persia. Foreign Minister had discussed this situation with Cabinet with result Cabinet had decided to improve Iraqi defense as rapidly and completely as means permitted.

Currently Iraq had no external military responsibilities except those specified in Arab League treaty of mutual defense, the military clauses of which have not yet been implemented. Thus, until such time as these, and arrangements of mutual defense by Western powers, are completed Iraq is bound to supply its army with the means to meet situation. Therefore Iraq desired to commence forthwith in building up its army. Foreign Minister then outlined importance to Western world of Iraq both from viewpoint of resources and strategy and asked that US, with British, assess Iraqi needs to meet its obligations in defense of its own territory and Western world. Foreign Minister said that he would send Embassy written note<sup>3</sup> expressing these thoughts. He said he planned similar approach to British Ambassador today.

I told Foreign Minister that I would report this conversation and forward to Department by airpouch his note when received. I said

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<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Ankara as 31, to Cairo as 68.

<sup>2</sup> Telegrams 1053 and 1107, Documents 120 and 123; telegram 1118 is not printed.

<sup>3</sup> *Infra*.