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I R A Q

The Regent of Iraq, H.R.H. Abdul Ilah, G.C.V.O. is the maternal uncle of the King of Iraq, Feisal II. who was born May 2, 1935 and acceded the throne April 4, 1939 following the death of his father, King Feisal I.

Until the end of the 1914-1918 war, the territory which is today Iraq was a part of the old Ottoman (Turkish) Empire. Liberation was carried out by British and Dominion troops, and a provisional government was set up in November 1920. An independent Kingdom was proclaimed on August 23, 1921, when Feisal I was crowned King. (Feisal, third son of ex-King Hussein of the Hejaz) had been a leader in the Arab revolt against Turkish suzerainty.

Great Britain recognized this kingdom by Treaty of October 10, 1922, at the same time assuming a mandate for Iraq on behalf of the League of Nations. This mandate came to an end following the conclusion of a treaty of alliance signed on June 30, 1930, and Iraq was admitted to membership in the League of Nations on October 3, 1932. (Iraq was the first of the "Class A" mandates to obtain recognition in this way as a sovereign nation).

Turkish sovereignty over Iraq had meanwhile been formally renounced under the Treaty of Lausanne (August 6, 1923).

A National Constituent Assembly was convened on March 27, 1924, to draft a constitution which came into force on March 21, 1925.

The Government is now described as a

constitutional hereditary monarchy

(Feisal I. was elected King)

Parliament = Senate, (appointed by the King)
not exceeding 1/5 of
elected chamber.

- elected chamber of 115 deputies
(manhood suffrage)

first Parliament opened by King Feisal July 16, 1925.

On April 4, 1941, Rashid Ali al-Gailani staged a coup d'etat and attempted to establish a pro-Nazi government. The Regent fled, but he returned with British help, at the end of May.

Iraq declared war on Germany, Italy and Japan, on January 17, 1943.

W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1933-1939
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