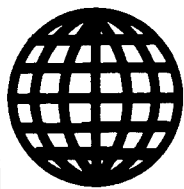


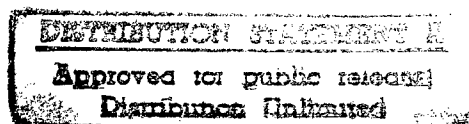
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**FOREIGN
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JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia



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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Efforts To Mitigate Embargo Effects Discussed

93AF0543A Tunis REALITES in French 8 Apr 93
pp 21-22

[Article by Chokri Gharbi: "Waiting for Recovery"]

[Text] The Lockerbie affair has weighed heavily on trade between Tunisia and Libya. Several Tunisian industries have seen their sales contracts voided because Libyan authorities decided to reconsider their priorities.

The air embargo imposed some time ago on Libya has had negative repercussions on Tunisia's bilateral trade with Libya. According to statistics published by the National Institute of Statistics (INS), there has been a net decline in Tunisian exports to Libya. Those exports earned our country 155,193,926 dinars in 1992, compared to 186,321,641 in 1991. Tunisian imports from Libya were valued at 45,367,983 dinars in 1992, versus 29,113,279 in 1991.

What has happened since the embargo went into force?

When contacted, several heads of enterprises told us that since the embargo they have been surprised to get formal notifications their sales contracts were being voided. This was what happened to "M.N.," who was producing hundreds of plates pursuant to a contract with a Libyan importer. "A month after the embargo," he says, "we received a fax from the importer advising us it was no longer able to honor its contract and purchase the quantity produced."

To avoid disaster, M.N. was obliged to reorient his company—not without difficulty—to the local market to unload the merchandise.

Priorities

There are dozens of cases like M.N.'s, and they affect every sector of industry. What's disturbing is that some companies have been forced to stockpile their wares in hopes of seeing the embargo lifted and trade restored to normal levels. Because some products made for the Libyan market cannot be sold profitably on the Tunisian market.

It should be noted that since the embargo the Libyan authorities as part of an austerity policy have reviewed the list of priority products, moving medical supplies, agricultural products, and food items to the top of the list. Several other products previously imported in large quantities were cut back or simply abandoned.

In 1992, Tunisia for example exported 462 kg of medicaments containing vitamins for 20,224 dinars, and 6,303 kg of other medical supplies valued at 245,414 dinars. But we also exported race horses, newly hatched chicks, hens, cheeses, and even confections.

Temporary Situation

Mr. Khaled Ben M'Barek, president of the Tunisia-Libya Economic Chamber, acknowledges there has been a

noticeable dip in bilateral trade from the "halcyon days" of 1988, 1989, and even 1991.

"Trade began to decline in 1992," he said. "The political situation and the embargo imposed in the aftermath of the Lockerbie affair have weighed heavily in the economic domain." "But as an optimist I believe the situation is temporary" and there is hope things will improve in the future.

He adds: "The efforts made by the president and Tunisian diplomats to find a solution to the Lockerbie affair will lead to improvements both in the bilateral situation and at the Maghrebian level, since Libya is a potential market for the other Maghrebian countries."

Permanent Ties

Libya's greatest asset is its natural resources, above all the oil that enables it to finance large projects such as the famous artificial lake in the middle of the desert. Given the political will, it could also further increase inter-Maghrebian trade.

According to our source, "the Arab Tunisian-Libyan Economic Chamber—a body dedicated to promoting and supporting commercial relations—is working on the ground to ameliorate the situation. Our Libyan partners, like ourselves, are distressed at the slowdown in trade."

The figures passed on by the Arab Tunisian-Libyan Economic Chamber (at the request of Libyan partners) are eloquent and have led to the scheduling of a 10 April meeting to give fresh impetus to economic relations between the two countries.

The board of directors of the chamber has 24 members (12 from each country). Each director represents one clearly defined economic sector. The aim is to promote closer economic collaboration and establish permanent standing ties that would tend to insulate normal trade flows from political discontinuities.

New Policy

"Our Libyan partners represent all economic sectors," says our interlocutor. "As importers, they are enthusiastic about bilateral cooperation and technical and technological assistance in the interest of both countries. That's why the two governments (Tunisian and Libyan) have given the commission the very important role of authenticating certificates of origin issued by the chambers of commerce of the two countries."

It should also be noted that this function used to be handled by the chancelleries, which shows that in only five years the Arab Tunisian-Libyan Economic Chamber has obtained its letters of accreditation from the authorities of the two countries. "It has fallen to us to resolve many problems between economic partners," adds Mr. Ben M'Barek, "since the national authorities have recognized our status as mediators."

The president of the chamber also assures us that all cases of litigation between Tunisian and Libyan partners are considered with a view to finding a favorable resolution.

Tunisian economic partners can only hope the trade picture improves. Especially since there are several unexploited sectors such as machinery, auto parts, construction materials, and textiles, where more goods could be exported. According to our interlocutor, the future may even see partnership ventures with Libya, which is beginning to inaugurate a new policy of economic opening.

CMF Study on Maghreb Foreign Debt Discussed

93AF0538A Algiers LIBERTE in French 12 Apr 93 p 9

[Unattributed article: "Mediterranean Financial Club Study on the Maghreb: \$60 Billion in 1991"]

[Text] *"The main factor complicating the economic situation in the countries of the Maghreb is the structure of their foreign debt," a study done by the Mediterranean Financial Club [CFM] says.*

The Maghreb's debt rose to \$60 billion in 1991; Algeria accounted for close to one-half, or 46 percent, as compared with 37 percent for Morocco, 13 percent for Tunisia, and only 4 percent for Mauritania.

According to a study done by technicians from the CFM (Mediterranean Financial Club), Algeria's debt is estimated to be \$28 billion. After a noticeable drop during the period 1981-85, Algeria's debt has risen sharply since 1985. Service on this debt in relation to exports, according to the CFM's study, accounted for 71 percent in 1989.

The main factor complicating the situation is without doubt the structure of this very same debt which, unlike the other countries in the Maghreb, was contracted mainly with private financial institutions.

Indeed, 75 percent of Algeria's debt is contracted with private creditors.

In this regard the CFM points out that it is Western banks, in particular, which have gotten involved in Algeria and government credit agencies guarantee more than 80 percent of supply and purchase credits.

As to how this debt is managed, Algeria has constantly insisted on honoring its commitments without having recourse to a rescheduling of the debt which, following the 1986 oil shock, has risen considerably to offset the drop in petroleum receipts.

So service on the debt went from 35 to 54 percent of export receipts in 1986, then to 97 percent in 1988. This sharp increase in service on the debt, the experts explain, is due to speeded up liens and short-term business loans.

Faced with this "almost untenable" situation, the CFM notes, the Algerian Government decided to manage [the situation] because bills due to mature in the next two to three years are called refinancing.

This operation relates to unguaranteed business loans. This financing is accompanied by the market rather than administered by the Paris or London Clubs.

With regard to Morocco, the CFM's experts point out that that country's debt has risen to approximately \$22 billion, or 37 percent of the Maghreb's debt. As for the service on that debt, it accounts for 30 percent of export receipts.

Sixty percent of Morocco's debt was contracted with public agencies, 20 percent with the London Club, and 20 percent with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

So Morocco's debt is of a different character than Algeria's. It is also managed differently.

Indeed, Morocco, which has had repayment problems since 1983, initiated negotiations with the IMF to come up with an adjustment program so as to obtain stand-by credits and reschedule its public debt. Since that time and up through 1988, \$7.3 billion in long-term debts have been restructured.

In 1990 a rescheduling was arranged with commercial banks affecting approximately \$3.2 billion in debts, 86 percent of which were rescheduled over 20 years, with a 10-year grace period.

This rescheduling is part of the "Brady plan." According to the CFM, all of the rescheduling contracted by Morocco helped drop service on the debt from 42 percent in 1986 to approximately 30 percent in the years that followed.

To offset financial support from the World Bank and the IMF, beginning in 1983 Morocco has had to submit to numerous constraints, among them reducing the cost of running public services such as education, health, and teaching.

Tunisia's debt is the smallest, inasmuch as it accounts for only 13 percent of the Maghreb's debt or approximately \$7.5 billion.

In 1989 that amount accounted for 145 percent of exports of goods and services.

Service on the debt is estimated to be 25 percent of export receipts. In terms of the structure of the debt, it resembles Morocco's more than it does Algeria's. Private banks' share is on the order of just 20 percent, the remaining 80 percent being public debt.

In its analysis of the status of Tunisia's debt, the CFM report emphasizes two important facts: the first is a disturbing one, since it is of an increase in the debt from year to year, at least through 1987.

The second fact is reassuring; involved is the easing up noted both with respect to the ratio between debts and GNP [gross national product] and to the ratio between debts and current receipts. In 1990, Tunisia's debt accounted for 54.5 percent of GNP and 23.7 percent of current receipts.

It should be mentioned that for a healthy economy, these two ratios should, as a maximum, be 50 and 20 percent, respectively.

With regard to managing its debt, following the 1986 crisis Tunisia appealed for credits from the IMF and the World Bank. Rescheduling was barely avoided.

As for Mauritania's debt, it accounts for only 4 percent of the Maghreb's debt, or \$2.4 billion. Servicing it accounts for close to 20 percent of export receipts.

Mauritania contracted 6 percent of its debt with private agencies, the rest being public debt.

Libya is not considered by the CFM to be a debtor country in light of its petroleum earnings, estimated to be \$7 billion.

Libya's debt, however, hovers around \$3.3 billion, to which should be added a military debt which, still according to the CFM report, is \$4 billion.

Gulf Navies Respond to Iranian Naval Purchases

93AE0456A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Apr 93
p 15

[Article by the military editor: "Arms Race, Balance of Naval Power in Arab Gulf Region"]

[Text] Even before Iran began to take delivery of the Russian-made Kilo-class submarines, this unique and prominent development with regard to strengthening naval forces in the Gulf region, became known. There is a special importance that marks this development's military and strategic ramifications. But at the same time, it is just one of a number of developments for which this area has recently become the stage. All of these developments indicate the exceptional importance that the Gulf states are presently putting on the question of building up and strengthening their naval forces in various fields.

In fact, Iran's acquisition of Russian submarines was not the most outstanding occurrence. It was only part of a continuing series of efforts and programs that the Gulf states are implementing at the present time and that, one may say, forms—in its totality—what can be termed a clear, accelerating naval arms race. In its present nature, this race emanates from the increasing conviction among these nations of the marked importance that characterizes elements of the naval force, in both its defensive and offensive aspects, in an area that enjoys vital, strategic, and economic lines of maritime communications.

There is no need to mention the factors upon which this exceptional interest is based vis-a-vis naval elements in a region like the Gulf. However, it might be sufficient to refer to the basic strategic interests upon which—to a considerable extent—the security and vital resources of the region's nations depend, which involve a sound guarantee for their maritime communication lines and protection for their regional waters and shorelines, leading to ensuring the security of the adjoining seas.

Naturally, the introduction of Iranian submarines into the Gulf's naval equation will result in a change in balance of power there. This guarantees that the region's countries that border Iran will pay more attention to programs to strengthen their navies, or rather, to give the balance of naval power there an importance that it has not previously enjoyed.

Iranian Naval Forces

To date, Iran has received one of the original three Kilo-class submarines that it ordered from Russia. However, the Iranian fleet, even before acquiring these submarines—the delivery of which is assumed to be completed before the end of this year, still forms a naval force that should not be underestimated, despite the many problems and difficulties that this fleet has faced since the founding of the Islamic Republic. These problems involve the lack of spare parts, maintenance services, and ammunition needed to maintain and operate its Western-made units that were obtained by Tehran during the shah's reign.

One has considerable difficulty, at the present time, determining the operational status of each Iranian naval unit, but this fleet still has 18 major combat ships, including three missile destroyers, three missile frigates, two cannon-mounted picket ships (corvettes), and 10 missile attack launches. The most important units—in terms of combat effectiveness—are, in fact, the three missile frigates. They are British-made Vesper-5's, which the Iranian Navy calls "al-Fanid," equipped with Italian-built, surface-to-surface Sea Kill antiship missiles. The 10 missile boats are of the well-known French-built La Combattant class, called "Kaman" by the Iranian Navy. They are now armed with Chinese-made, C-801 surface-to-surface antiship missiles instead of their original armament of American Harpoon missiles, which Tehran has not been able to acquire since the revolution.

Saudi Arabian Navy

Without a doubt, Saudi Arabian currently has the largest and most modern navy among the Gulf states. Moreover, this force is a candidate for more growth and strengthening because of plans, either being made or currently being implemented, to upgrade its condition. The Saudi fleet includes 21 ships, consisting of four missile frigates, four missile picket ships (corvettes), nine missile attack launches, and three torpedo boats. In addition, there are five minesweepers. The most important units are the four French-built F-2000 class frigates, known in the Saudi Navy as "al-Medinah." Riyadh obtained these vessels through the Sawari-1 agreement, which was signed with France in the early 1980's. These frigates are the best-armed and best-equipped of their kind in the Middle East. They are equipped with surface-to-surface Otomat antiship missiles and surface-to-air Crotale antiaircraft missiles. Each frigate also carries a French-built Dauphin helicopter for antiship and submarine operations. This helicopter is armed with air-to-surface AS-15 missiles. Other Saudi naval units include four American-made Tacoma-class missile

picket ships (corvettes), which are known in the Saudi Arabian Navy by the name "Badr." They are equipped with Harpoon antiship missiles. There are nine missile attack launches of the al-Saddiq class, which are armed with Harpoon missiles, and three German-made Jaguar-class torpedo boats, known in the Saudi Arabian Navy by the name of "al-Dammam." Riyadh has also received from Britain the first of six Sandown minesweepers, which the Saudi fleet has named "al-Jauf." Saudi Arabia is acquiring these ships under the Yamamah-2 agreement, which has been signed between the two countries. They will be operated alongside four American-built (al-Dar'iyah) class minesweepers, used by the Saudi Arabian Navy at the present time.

The important program that Saudi Arabia is currently planning to implement for its navy is Sawari-2, which was approved in principle with France several months ago, preparatory to being ratified sometime later this year. It includes acquiring three new missile frigates, which will be of the French La Fayette class or a new modified class. Information that surfaced during the past few months indicates that Riyadh is currently expressing increased interest in the possibility of acquiring two or more missile frigates of the Canadian Halifax class. These frigates are top-rated for antisubmarine duties. This indicates that the recent Saudi interest in acquiring these frigates is, apparently, a direct reaction to Iran's acquiring the Russian Kilo-class submarines.

In addition, Saudi planning has been ongoing for years concerning acquiring a submarine force, which would be composed of four to six units in a major program. Perhaps Riyadh has decided to begin implementation during the next few years. Several world classes of new submarines are in competition to win this program in preparation for the decision to be made with regard to supplying the Saudi Navy with its requirements during the second half of the 1990's.

Arab Gulf Navies

For its part, the United Arab Emirates [UAE] has a naval force that should not be underestimated for its effectiveness and modernity. At the present time, it is composed of 10 main combat units, including two missile picket ships (corvettes), which are German-made Lurssen-62 class ships called "Murai Jib" by the UAE Navy. They are armed with French-built, surface-to-surface Exocet antiship missiles and surface-to-air antiaircraft Sadral missiles, which is the navy's version of the French Mistral antiaircraft missile. Each one also carries an Alouette-3 class helicopter for naval observation and patrol missions, as well as antiship and submarine operations. In addition, the UAE fleet currently includes two Lurssen-50 missile attack launches, known by the UAE name of "al-Mubarriz." They are also armed with Exocet and Sadral missiles. There are six missile attack launches of the Lurssen-45 class, known as "Baniyas." They are armed with Exocet missiles.

There is information, which has not been officially confirmed, about a UAE decision to supply its fleet with

two additional Lurssen-62 class missile picket ships, but it is not yet clear if, in fact, a contract has been concluded in this regard with the German manufacturing company or if the matter is still in the planning stage. Moreover, it is assumed that the UAE will soon decide to equip its naval forces with attack helicopters for naval patrol missions and antiship and submarine operations. It is likely that these will be British Super Lynx helicopters, equipped with air-to-surface Sea Skua missiles, for use from the Lurssen-62 picket ships, as well as from coastal bases.

Oman is currently implementing an important program to strengthen its naval capabilities, concentrating in the main on acquiring two missile picket ships (corvettes) of a new class, currently being developed by the British Vosper Thornycroft Company. They are known by the name "Vigilance" or "Vosper-83." The Omani fleet will call them "al-Muhit." The contract for these two ships was recently concluded. They will be equipped with surface-to-air Exocet antiship missiles and Crotale surface-to-air antiaircraft missiles. This is a new improved type of Crotale missile. In addition to a "Ghoul Kabir" antiaircraft artillery system and the missiles, they each will carry an attack helicopter for naval patrol and observation missions and for antiship and submarine operations. These two ships will be added to the Omani fleet in the mid-1990's, at which time they will operate beside eight main combat units that are now in this fleet. They include four missile attack launches of the Province, or Vosper-56, class, which the Omani Navy calls "Zafar." They are armed with Exocet missiles. There are also four cannon-mounted, Brooke Marine-37 class attack launches, called "al-Wafi."

Oman is also planning to provide its naval forces with a number of minesweepers, which would also likely be obtained from Britain. They are thinking of providing the Omani Navy with two or three frigates at a later date. A decision concerning them may be made within the next two years so as to acquire these units during the second half of the 1990's.

For its part, Qatar is currently implementing a major program to strengthen the capabilities of its naval forces. It has chosen the British Vosper Thornycroft Company to supply the Qatari Navy with four new "Vita" missile attack launches, equipped with surface-to-surface Exocet antiship missiles and surface-to-air Sadral antiaircraft missiles. The decision has been made for the Qatari Navy to begin receiving these new boats in the mid-1990's, at which time they will join the main combat units currently in use, which are three French-built La Combattante missile attack launches, known in Qatar by the name "Damsah." They are also armed with Exocet antiship missiles.

Bahrain has recently implemented a program to strengthen its fleet by taking delivery of two new missile picket ships of the German-made, Lurssen-62 class. This is the same class currently being operated by the UAE Navy. This class is known in Bahrain by the name

"Manama." They are armed with Exocet antiship missiles, and each ship carries a French-built, Dauphin-class attack helicopter for observation and patrol duties and antiship and submarine operations. This helicopter is armed with air-to-surface AS-15 missiles.

With the delivery of these two ships, the Bahraini Navy is now composed of eight major combat units. Besides the two Manama-class ships (Lurssen-62), Bahrain is currently using four missile attack launches of the Lurssen-45 class, known as "al-Fatih." They are equipped with Exocet missiles. In addition, there are two cannon-mounted Lurssen-38 attack launches, which are called "al-Ri'ah."

Rebuilding the Kuwaiti Navy

Kuwait is presently rebuilding its armed forces as a result of the heavy losses incurred because of the Iraqi invasion and the subsequent military operations in the Gulf War, resulting in its liberation from the invasion. This situation applies to the Kuwaiti Navy, which, before the Iraqi invasion, consisted of eight major combat units, including two Lurssen-57 missile attack launches, called "Istiqlal" by the Kuwaiti Navy, and six Lurssen-45 class missile attack launches. All of these were equipped with French antiship Exocet missiles. Only one Istiqlal-class boat and one Lurssen-45 launch remain at the present time.

Some months ago, Kuwait concluded a memorandum of understanding with France concerning the rebuilding of the Kuwaiti fleet and outfitting it for the future. Work has, in fact, begun on implementing some aspects of this comprehensive program, with the recent signing of a contract to provide Kuwait with patrol and coast guard boats. However, the most important steps will be those pertaining to providing the Kuwaiti Navy with its future requirements, including missile attack launches, which will probably include four to eight La Combattante-class boats, armed with antiship Exocet missiles and Sadral antiaircraft missiles. Kuwait is also thinking about providing its naval forces with a number of French-built minesweepers of the Tripartite class and, probably at a later stage of this program, two or three missile frigates of the new F-1200 class. They will be equipped with antiship and antiaircraft missiles and an antimissile air-defense system. Each frigate will carry armed attack helicopters for naval observation and patrol missions and antiship and submarine operations. If Kuwait decides to acquire these frigates, initial plans require that the contract be concluded during the next two years, so that the Kuwaiti Navy can begin to take delivery during the second half of the 1990's.

Present Naval Forces in the Gulf (1993)

Saudi Arabia:

- four Madinah-class (F-2000) missile frigates;
- four Badr-class (Tacoma) missile picket ships (corvettes);
- nine al-Siddiq (P-58) missile launches;
- three al-Dammam-class (Jaguar) torpedo boats;
- five minesweepers.

UAE:

- two Murai Jib-class (Lurssen-62) missile picket ships (corvettes);
- two al-Mubarriz-class (Lurssen-50) missile launches;
- six Baniyas-class (Lurssen-45) missile launches.

Oman:

- four Zafar-class (Province) missile launches;
- four al-Wafi-class (Brooke-37) cannon-mounted launches.

Bahrain:

- two al-Manama-class (Lurssen-62) missile picket ships (corvette)
- four al-Fatih-class (Lurssen-45) missile launches;
- two al-Ri'ah-class (Lurssen-38) cannon-mounted launches.

Qatar:

- three Damsah-class (La Combattante) missile launches.

Kuwait:

- one Istiqlal-class (Lurssen-57) missile launch;
- one "al-Bum"-class (Lurssen-45) missile launch.

Iran:

- three Kilo-class attack submarines;
- one Damafanid-class (Battle) missile destroyer;
- two Babar-class (Somnes) missile destroyers;
- three al-Fanid-class (Vosper-5) missile frigates;
- two Bayanur-class (P.F.-103) cannon-mounted picket ships (corvette);
- 10 Kaman-class (La Combattante) missile launches;
- three minesweepers.

Important Future Gulf Naval Armament Programs

Saudi Arabia:

- Sawari-2 program with France to acquire three new missile frigates of the La Fayette class;
- Interest in acquiring two or three Canadian Halifax-class antisubmarine missile frigates;
- Completion of delivery of British minesweepers of the al-Jauf-class (Sandown), in accordance with the Yamamah-2 agreement (so far, one out of six ships has been delivered);
- Preliminary planning to acquire six to eight new attack submarines by the mid-1990's.

UAE:

- Possibility of acquiring two additional Murai Jib-class (Lurssen-62) missile picket ships (corvettes);
- A program to acquire eight naval attack helicopters for antiship and submarine operations, likely to be British Super Lynx helicopters.

Oman:

- An agreement with the British Vosper Thornycroft Company for two al-Muhit-class (Vosper-83) missile picket ships (corvettes), to be delivered in 1996;
- Thinking about acquiring two or three new missile frigates during the second half of the 1990's;
- Thinking about acquiring three or four minesweepers, probably of British make.

Qatar:

- An agreement with the British Vosper Thornycroft Company for new Vita missile launches to be delivered during the second half of the 1990's.

Kuwait:

- A comprehensive program to rebuild the Kuwaiti Navy. A memorandum of understanding in this regard has been signed with France, which includes 12 patrol and coast guard boats of the Naja-12 class, 12 patrol and coast guard boats of the P-48 type, and four to eight La Combattante missile launches. In addition, Kuwait is thinking of acquiring two or three Tripartite minesweepers and possibly two or three new F-1200 missile frigates at a later stage.

Ben Ali Comments on UMA, EC

93AF0541A Tunis LE TEMPS in French 6 Apr 93 p 4

[Article: "President Ben Ali Says UMA (Arab Magreb Union) Must Take Realistic and Flexible Approach"]

[Text] President Ben Ali granted an interview to the director general of the Mauritanian information agency and editor in chief of the Mauritanian daily ACHAAB.

The head of state talked about the Tunisian political system, the Arab Maghreb, and issues of the day. Following are extracts from that interview.

Democracy

Democracy is the foundation of the system of government we in Tunisia established after the change, inspired as we were by deep conviction and a profound sense of the historic responsibility we unhesitatingly shouldered at a crucial moment in our country's history.

I am convinced the legislation we have introduced since 7 November and the reforms we have undertaken in every domain, especially in the educational and cultural fields, will consolidate the foundations of democracy and human rights by inculcating those values in the younger generation.

UMA

Tunisia, which currently fills the revolving presidency of the UMA [Arab Maghreb Union], is determined to go forward, in cooperation with its fraternal Maghrebian neighbors, in the realization of that cultural vision and in implementation of the agreed-upon programs and objectives. We will work on the basis of an approach that is both realistic and flexible, taking into account current

opportunities, objective facts, and regional and international developments. It is a level-headed approach, that, while not losing sight of the objectives, gives due weight to the time factor and thus rejects not only procrastination and vacillation but also excessive haste and improvisation.

UMA-EEC

There is no doubt the fundamental structural evolution of the European Community demands new ideas, new approaches, and new mechanisms capable of bringing new life to the cooperative relationship between the two groups. There is a place for a cooperation policy based on a new concept of regional security and stability encompassing both shores of the Mediterranean, through a "5 plus 5" dialogue and the "12 plus 5." This new policy will also be based on a real determination to lay the foundations for codevelopment between the European and Maghrebian communities and to establish new mechanisms of financial and technical cooperation.

Tunisia-Mauritania

Relations between Tunisia and Mauritania are distinguished by their cordiality and continuity. Relations are solid and close.

Economically, we are all determined to strengthen our cooperation in diverse domains in light of the ambitious programs adopted in the sectors of mines, energy, agriculture, and fishing, as well as all that has been accomplished in terms of technical, cultural, and media cooperation. All these factors support the close ties and continuity between our two countries and fraternal peoples and our joint endeavor to build the Maghreb.

International Relations

Developments on the international scene in recent years have been both sudden and profound. Their repercussions have been felt all over the globe.

It seems to me the international community was rather ill prepared to assimilate such sudden and global changes. So these changes have been very costly, in the sense that they swept away many regimes, destabilized a number of states, created confusion, and made the future difficult to predict.

We are now beginning to see emerge from all these changes the outlines of a new world order that prefigures among other things a trend toward the creation of large economic blocs, the marginalization of ideologies, and diffusion of a body of values and principles such as democracy, human rights, and the market economy.

Cheysson Comments on Euro-Maghreb Relations

93AF0541B Tunis LE TEMPS in French 2 Apr 93 p 2

[Interview with former French foreign minister Claude Cheysson by Mouldi M'Barek; place and date not given: "Euro-Maghreb Relations Are Still Superficial"]

[Text] As part of the EEC-UMA [Arab Maghreb Union] dialogue, Mr. Claude Cheysson, former French minister of external relations, European parliamentarian, and head of the French Socialist group in the European Parliament, is currently visiting Tunisia accompanied by European parliamentarians from various political groups. The delegation arrived in Tunisia after concluding its stay in Algeria.

On the margins of this visit, Mr. Claude Cheysson, a friend of the Third World and proponent of Euro-Arab dialogue, granted TEMPS this interview, in which he answered our questions (very quickly, though, as he was pressed for time).

Today Mr. Cheysson is giving a press conference in which he will explain in more detail the purpose of the parliamentary delegation's visit to Algeria and Tunisia.

[M'Barek] Could you tell us about the purpose of your visit, and then how you, as a champion of Euro-Maghreb relations, assess the outlook for those ties?

[Cheysson] This is a European parliamentary visit to two Maghreb countries, Algeria and Tunisia. It is one of a series of periodic meetings with the UMA where we meet with leaders of governments, political parties, and other associations, and organizations.

Our visit to Algeria was very interesting given the current situation in that country. I should point out that the Algerian authorities allowed us to meet with everyone we pleased, such as political parties, associations, and organizations.

Concerning the outlook for Euro-Maghreb relations, I must observe that they are still superficial. They still lack substance.

It's only fair to add that Maghrebien relations themselves are also superficial.

We greatly deplore the fact that the government-to-government relationship, "the 5 plus 5," is currently in limbo for reasons of which you are well aware...

[M'Barek] You mean because of Libya?

[Cheysson] Certainly there is a problem with Libya, but that ought not to justify suspending relations with it.

The embargo by its nature is not a tactic that serves to strengthen Euro-Maghreb cooperation.

To come back to the assessment of our relations, I think there is a solid economic relationship between Europe and especially Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. There is also a human relationship between the EEC and UMA, due to the large Maghrebien immigrant community in Europe.

[M'Barek] Since you bring up the question of immigration, the return of the French right to power worries some Maghreb countries that fear certain political parties may exploit the immigration issue. In your view, are these concerns justified?

[Cheysson] As you know, I am a man of the left, a long-time militant in the [French] Socialist Party. Everyone knows where I stand. That said, I don't think the new French Government is trying to exploit this issue. It's not the National Front [FN] that's in power!

The UDF [French Democratic Union] and RPR [Rally for the Republic party] are not extremist parties. One must not forget RPR is an heir to General de Gaulle, [who] pursued a strong Arab policy. I think that in France both right and left are aware of the rise in xenophobia and racism, and we find it seriously disquieting.

Moreover, this phenomenon is not unique to France. It is making waves in all the European countries.

[M'Barek] But consider the Pasqua bill on immigration, which immigrants fear will lead to further restrictive measures against them. In your opinion, won't Mr. Charles Pasqua, the new interior minister, try to put additional restrictions on the immigrants?

[Cheysson] I think the current government is as determined as we are to try to emotionally defuse this issue.

And we should not forget that Mr. Charles Pasqua was one of General de Gaulle's faithful supporters. De Gaulle's heir is not going to pursue an anti-Arab policy.

[M'Barek] Would you say the right is more pro-Arab than the left?

[Cheysson] No, it's simply a question of personalities.

[M'Barek] We have had the impression for some time that France was absenting itself from the Mediterranean arena. How do you explain its silence?

[Cheysson] France, like the other European countries, is very absorbed in the building of Europe, which entails major restructurings and changes at every level.

ALGERIA

National Plan: Management of Foreign Debt

93AF0537H Algiers EL WATAN in French 13 Apr 93
p 6

[Article: "External Debt: \$7.24 Billion in 1993"]

[Text] Under the national plan for 1993, Algeria will have to pay back some US\$7.24 billion this year on its external debt, the volume of which is unchanged from 1992.

In addition to payments falling due on medium and long-term external debt—some \$6.91 billion, in absolute terms down \$150 million from 1992—Algeria must increase its payments to the IMF on the 1989 borrowing (\$327 million in 1993, compared to \$163 million in 1992).

However, according to the report of the National Planning Council (CNP), thanks to expected levels of mobilization of medium- and long-term credits, the effects of credit restructuring—in part with the help of Italy and

the operation led by Credit Lyonnais—and the government's austerity policy, the balance of payments should show "a moderate deficit," which will cushion the fall of international reserves (non-inclusive) estimated at \$1.6 billion.

Thus the external balances projected by the 1993 plan will lead to a \$1.5-billion reduction in medium- and long-term external debt. Apart from the obligation to the IMF, the total stock of Algeria's external debt should be less than \$23.3 billion, or 44.5 percent of GDP (gross domestic product), compared to 55.6 percent in 1992 when overall indebtedness was \$26.16 billion.

The 1993 plan for balancing Algeria's external accounts calls for relying exclusively on the country's own resources, particularly hydrocarbon exports (estimated at \$10.9 billion), net remittances from Algerians overseas (up a moderate 7 percent), and "relatively certain" prospects for medium and long-term borrowing not to exceed \$3 billion.

It will be recalled that the government's policy on managing external accounts, as spelled out in the program adopted in September 1992, is intended to reduce—by 30 percent in the initial phase, then by another 10 to 15 percent in a second phase—the annual level of tied commercial credits mobilized, in order to reduce the external debt service ratio to 40 percent by circa 1997.

Inability To Keep Pace With Demographic Growth

93AF0540A Algiers *LIBERTE* in French 7 Apr 93 p 2

[Article by Lamine Chikhi: "Population Explosion and Development: The Threat"]

[Text] Can we build a new Algeria if we can't even keep up the one we have now? The 21st century is just around the corner, and it looks as though Algerians aren't ready for it...

When Mohamed and his young wife Leila decided to wait a year or two before having children, Mohamed's parents were upset and his friends made fun of him. But he stood his ground. Because his decision was based on a painful personal experience: that of having grown up in too large a family. Now, at age 34, Mohamed still remembers all the problems his parents had raising their 10 children.

"I don't see why I should make the same 'mistake,'" he said to people willing to hear him out.

Does this mean Algerians, especially the young, understand the population problem?

By the year 2025, Algeria will have a population of 50 million. Will we be able to feed, house, educate, and provide medical care for 50 million Algerians, when it is hard to do so for 25 million now?

In 1936, Algeria had only 6 million people. Today there are 23 million inhabitants, so the population is increasing 93 percent every 30 years. By the end of the

current decade, projecting the same rate into the future, the population will be 31 to 34 million.

Algeria has one of the highest rates of demographic growth in the world.

According to experts, to assure balanced growth—meaning no drop in the standard of living—GDP [gross domestic product] should grow by 6 percent per year if the population increases 1 percent.

Algeria falls far short of that. Economic growth for 1993 is not expected to top 2 percent, while demographic growth will be slightly under 3 percent.

The gap between production and consumption of food continues to widen. The statistics: Algeria imports 250,000 tons of milk per year, at the astronomical cost of \$500 million. It is also the world's largest importer of durum wheat. Altogether, the budget for imported "eats" is \$2.5 billion.

More than ever, the "food weapon" is the surest means to perpetuate the domination of the rich over the peoples of the Third World. In terms of health care, the 800,000 births per year pose a real challenge. Are there enough doctors, pharmacists, and dentists?

Another point: Are contraceptives available? Apparently yes, but still they are too expensive: Adepal costs 93 Algerian dinars (for three months). As for the other brands, the ones gynecologists recommend—Regividon, Daphiron, Ovidon—they're simply not obtainable. Is that any kind of population policy?

And what ever happened to the public awareness campaigns?

In the field of education, the population explosion is having a devastating impact. Each year, 70,000 young Algerians drop out of the primary cycle, while another 100,000 complete it but cannot go on with their studies. Another 100,000 finish secondary but are unable to enroll in universities. In addition to these 270,000 excluded, each year 217,000 young illiterates swell the ranks of the 2 million unemployed. Three-fourths of the youths between 16 and 29 are looking for work.

Female students become fewer and fewer as one goes up the ladder: In 1987-88, they accounted for 44 percent of all students in primary, 33 percent in general education, and 30 percent in secondary and technical.

The housing crisis is another aspect of the problem: The shortage amounts to 1.2 million housing units. To overcome the shortage, we would have to build 270,000 units per year from now until the year 2000. On average, seven people are living in each housing unit—three per room. And there are 200,000 new couples each year. All this has led people to wait longer and longer for marriage.

In 1987, average age at marriage was 23.7 for women (compared to 18.3 in 1966) and 27.6 for men (compared to 23.8 in 1966). Moreover, within the 25-29 age group, there were three unmarried men for each woman in 1977; by 1987, the ratio was five to one.

According to Todd, the famous anthropologist, the two critical variables in any development process are the length of time women wait before getting married, and their literacy rate. In Algeria, there are 7.5 million illiterates, and 4.3 million of them are women.

Today more than ever before, it is vitally important to come up with a comprehensive population policy. As early as 1966, Tunisia established a family planning program, and it soon brought results: Tunisia's growth rate is 1.8 percent. Egyptian writer Andre Chedid's story *La Longue Patience* [*The Long Patience*], in which villagers administer a thrashing to a holy pilgrim who blessed the women by asking Allah to grant them seven more children...could serve as an inspiration for many young Algerians.

Brain Drain; Shortage of Scientists

93AF0504D Algiers LIBERTE in French 7 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by Rachid Ikhenoussene: "The Death Knell for Scientific Research in Algeria: 5,000 Researchers for 26 Million Inhabitants"]

[Text] *Scientific research in Algeria is in a critical state, according to the sector's highest authorities.*

Added to the flagrant lack of interest from which it suffers there is also this hemorrhaging called [a] "brain drain." With its close to 5,000 researchers, our country's scientific potential enjoys the dubious distinction of being among the lowest in the world. While developed countries have some 2,000 to 3,000 researchers per 1 million inhabitants, Algeria has but 100. This is a figure which, by itself, illustrates the seriousness of the situation and the immensity of the task, which needs to be carried out.

Stating [this fact] is like a tragicomedy when you know that 70 percent of potential skills are not involved, this affecting only the university sector. On top of this is an overly great dispersal of efforts of our scientific potential, which is spread over 1,656 research projects, that is, 2.5 researchers per project.

But to be sure, the Achilles heel of scientific research in our country is without doubt the exodus of skills and the loss in terms of foreign training. So between 1985 and 1992, out of the 5,045 potential researchers sent for training abroad, only 1,635 returned, making for a 60-percent loss rate. This is a rate that has been increasing from year to year and it has now reached the 90 percent level. And the misfortune does not stop there, because there is every indication that this trend will snowball further, given the enormous disparities between socioprofessional conditions offered in Algeria and in developed countries.

In addition, scientific research suffers from serious financial constraints. Budgetary resources allocated to the sector are still clearly inadequate and largely below international standards.

In 1992 a budget of 912,332 million dinars was allocated for the operating budget, and a budget of 728 million dinars for credit payments was allocated to the sector.

Total budgetary support accounts for only 0.34 percent of GNP [gross national product].

Scientific research, which eats up a good deal of hard currency, suffers no less because of a low quota. An analysis of hard currency financing plans demonstrates the huge disparity between how they are allocated among various research sectors, sometimes in a 1:3 ratio.

In an interview with the daily newspaper EL MOUDJAHID, Mme. Allab, the state secretary for scientific research, provided an outline of the general guidelines for "the implementation of every means that will make it possible to restore confidence to our scientific community so as to remobilize it to serve development."

To this end, two legislative decrees pertaining to improving the material situation of researchers were recently signed and the corresponding implementation decrees have practically been finalized.

So there are plans to bring the researcher's [legal] status up-to-date and to come up with a law on research, which will be submitted for comment to the entire scientific community.

Last, with an eye towards harmonizing scientific research and the socio-economic sector, researchers will be called upon to work together even more so as to give value to the products of their research. Amen!

Contraception Programs To Control Birthrate

93AF0540B Algiers LIBERTE in French 7 Apr 93 p 2

[Article by G.K.: "Contraception Requires Means"]

[Text] The family planning program has everything it needs to succeed, if management of existing resources is rationalized.

By its very name, the Ministry of Health and Population Affairs reflects the state's determination to give higher priority to the nation's demographic problems.

In October 1992 there was created an intersectoral committee composed of representatives of the Ministries of Religious Affairs, Culture, and Health and Population, along with representatives of bodies such as WHO.

Its goal was to study modalities of reviving the population program, which had been temporarily shelved in recent years.

Broadly speaking, the revived program is based on more efficient organization of family planning efforts to alleviate shortages of the requisite supplies. According to Mrs. Safir of the Health Ministry, "henceforth we will not be the cause of any constraints on access to contraceptives."

Once the supply problem (continuous availability of services and contraceptives) is overcome, it will be possible to "identify those segments of the population

that resist contraception," said Mrs. Safir. To reach that point, steps must be taken to improve contraceptive distribution channels and mobilize everyone involved in the supply process.

What's most important is to ensure continuity in utilization of contraceptives.

Shortages due to failure to restock and erroneous import projections can threaten progress already made in changing people's behavior.

The period 1986-92 saw a hopeful change in demographic trends. Nationwide usage of modern contraceptive methods (the pill and IUD) rose to 42 percent, and 74.9 percent of women were using contraceptive techniques (either modern or traditional). It's easy to see why the Health Ministry wants to safeguard and reinforce those gains.

The urgent task at present is to bridge the one and one-half month gap (March to mid-April) before regular pharmaceutical acquisition procedures go into effect.

Until the arrival of these imports, plus those financed by a \$700,000 donation from the EEC, available stocks must be parceled out to all the distribution units.

To solve the problem of contraceptive availability, there are plans to establish a production center in 1994.

Requests have already gone out for international bids on this project, the hard-currency cost of which (estimated at \$3.4 million in 1987 dollars) is paid by UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund).

The production unit eventually should be able to satisfy domestic demand. At the same time, over the next three years, the population program will concentrate on establishing the network of family planning units, identifying the various participants, and making an accurate assessment of needs.

Also of primary importance will be retraining paramedical personnel and sensitizing them to their role in mother-child protection [PMI]. The 500 midwives also need more training.

"These technicians are often dedicated and highly motivated," says Miss Benkhelli of the Health Ministry. All that's needed is to "decompartmentalize the maternity-PMI system to liberate great potential."

Training of midwives is indispensable if they are to be vectors of national population policy.

Miss Benkhelli is convinced that getting information to the people is the most important task.

To do this, experimental telephone assistance lines have been activated in several wilayas, with notable results.

There are also plans to put to use the time women spend waiting in health units [for their appointments] by showing them informational videos and using other educational aids to furnish them information and sensitize them.

Algeria has infrastructure and human resources sufficient to make the family planning program a success, if they are exploited more intelligently.

Unemployment Figures: Women in Work Force

93AF0537F Algiers *LIBERTE* in French 12 Apr 93 p 12

[Article by Belkacem Rouache: "Seven Percent of Women Have Jobs"]

[Text] Out of a population of 26 million, close to 50 percent are women. But only 360,000 out of some 5 million women of employable age have jobs.

According to figures from ONS [National Office of Statistics], 88 percent of working women are in the public sector, where 70 percent of them are in office jobs.

Jobs for Algerian women are concentrated heavily in the health sector, where 50 percent of all workers are female, and education, where they account for more than 33 percent of the workforce.

In the industrial sector, they account for only 11 percent.

There are no statistics for rural Algeria, but women certainly must occupy preponderant positions in a number of activities, notably agriculture and stock raising.

More than 150,000 women earn money from work done in the home. This type of work includes a large variety of activities: sewing, embroidery, babysitting, etc.

Statistics from the National Manpower Agency show that in 1991, [line of text missing] more than 106,000 women, or about 8 percent of them were under 30 years of age.

More than 43 percent were housewives. Even if they receive no direct remuneration, their activities create "added value."

According to the ONS study, female wage-earners are more likely than males to be satisfied with their jobs; only 4 percent of the women wanted to change jobs, while 12 percent of the men were looking for other work.

Female employment in Algeria is characterized principally by its high mobility.

Women generally enter the job market at age 20 and leave near age 30. Their mobility is certainly correlated with how much income their work generates and the weight of that factor in the choice between employment and family responsibilities. Thus female doctors and other well-paid white-collar types are more stable than secretaries and other similarly situated female workers.

Many believe the status of women overall in the job market has failed to change despite the laws now in force, including Article 30 of the constitution. Sexual segregation is still an influential fact of life in our (male) society.

Efforts to find jobs for young people coming into the job market have filled a total of 120,000 jobs, but only 2,300 women have benefited from these programs.

This explains why militants in various feminist associations are raising their voice against the state's neglect of Algerian women, and first of all in the area of employment.

Annaba: Demographic Figures Published

93AF0537G Algiers LIBERTE in French 12 Apr 93 p 12

[Article by APS: "Significant Decline in Annaba Birth-rate"]

[Text] The commune of Annaba, whose more than 250,000 souls account for half the population of the wilaya, recorded 11,141 births in 1991, and 11,088 in 1992, the majority of them male children.

According to the vital statistics offices of the Annaba APC [Peoples Communal Assembly], 2,244 deaths were recorded in 1991, compared with 2,473 in 1992.

The majority of decedents in 1992 were male, and their ages ranged from less than one to more than 60 years.

The number of marriages performed in 1991 was 1,980, while more than 1,943 were performed in 1992.

The same offices also recorded 202 divorce cases in 1991 versus 373 in 1992.

The population density of the chief town of the wilaya rose to about 5,000 inhabitants per square kilometer, the highest density of any of the 12 communes, as half the wilaya's population resides in the city of Annaba.

More than 550,000 souls live in the wilaya of Annaba, which accounts for 2 percent of the country's total population.

The city of Annaba is Algeria's fourth-largest in population, after Algiers, Oran, and Constantine.

This phenomenon, which results from several factors—rural exodus being the biggest—is creating enormous problems for local officials, particularly in housing, health, and education.

Moreover, the city of Annaba has experienced escalating demographic growth for which it was not prepared.

Nevertheless, the soaring population growth during recent years has not been followed by rapid development in most areas that affect citizens in their daily lives (unemployment, housing, renovation of spillway channels, potable water supplies, improvement of the steadily deteriorating environment).

Despite the efforts that have been made, most of these problems stubbornly persist.

Moudjahidine: Solidarity With Terrorist Victims

93AF0537A Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French 12 Apr 93 p 5

[Article by R.N.: "Moudjahidin Comfort Victims"]

[Text] Seen in the right light, the visits by moudjahidin yesterday—to victims of fundamentalist terrorism in

Ain Naadja and to those wounded in Bosnia-Herzegovina—were manifestations of the selfsame struggle against fascism. According to ONM (National Organization of Moudjahidine), the terrorist groups involved are two of a kind, even though one hopes to seize power in the name of Islam and the other in the name of ethnic cleansing.

The moudjahidine from Algiers started off in early afternoon with a visit to the terrorism victims, whom the veteran fighters consider worthy descendants of November 1954. More than soothing words, the moudjahidine brought living testimony of solidarity and resolve to build a modern and democratic republic. This demonstration of solidarity comes at a time when fundamentalists are desperately pulling out all the stops. By the time the visit was over, the overall impression, shared by visitors and terrorism victims alike, was one of greater resolve in the antifundamentalist struggle.

The visit to those wounded by terrorism in Bosnia-Herzegovina was an expression of broader solidarity. This actively expressed solidarity at the international and Islamic level deeply touched the victims being treated in Algeria (at Zeralda).

Ettahadi Leader on Assassination Attack

93AF0537D Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French 11 Apr 93 p 2

[Article by T. Slaouti: "Abdesselam's Responsibility"]

[Text] The secretary general of Ettahadi, only just released from the hospital and having returned to his movement's headquarters at 1330, still had his hand bandaged, and the top of his head still bore traces of injuries sustained in a terrorist attack against him and his close collaborators earlier the same day. Now he was repeating before a large audience including journalists in attendance that "everything that should be said has been said." And it was only owing to the insistence of the audience that he agreed—having just recovered from his ordeal after a short stay at Ain-Naadja hospital—to talk about the attack. "What happened this morning only goes to confirm what we have been saying repeatedly for months and years..." "What is new is that there is almost a direct connection between the arrest of Abdelhamid Benzine on Wednesday and what happened today."

Facing a motley audience of journalists, militants, and silent and attentive personalities, Mr. El Hachemi Cherif said he was not at all surprised at the "recrudescence of terrorism," adding: "I say the head of government must assume full responsibility for things getting out of control, but the HCE [Higher State Council] must take some of the blame, since it is responsible for the drift." Statements made by Abdesselam and the minister of religious affairs, "a veritable bridgehead for fundamentalism in the government," clearly engage the government's responsibility. According to the Ettahadi leader, "the drift towards fundamentalism" is readily apparent in the editorial lines of public-service press organs.

Citing the latest edition of the weekly EL MOUDJAHID, an FLN [National Liberation Front party] organ, he described the articles and the political logic that inspires most of the journal's contents as "criminal."

Mr. El Hachemi Cherif said personal feelings had nothing to do with his views. "For our part," he said, "we had long been expecting such horrible events to happen.... But it is the country that it is in danger, and the only way to act is to block every Islamist endeavor" and "break off all dialogue" once and for all. He declared: "We understand the stakes, and they are enormous."

Next he reviewed the inadequacies and weaknesses that impede civil society's efforts to create a "political society." "We have to pull ourselves together," he added, "because civil society did not react strongly enough to the assassinations of Liabes, Senhadri, and Flici...."

"Marches are not enough," he said. What's needed is for "each of us to mobilize every day in every way."

Issuing an appeal for all the "dynamic forces" of the country to "join together for a leap into modernity and democracy," Mr. El Hachemi Cherif said the march of 22 March was "not our doing" but rather a mandate for his movement. In clear, concise, and direct words—only hours after the former ALN [National Liberation Army] officer and militant for the cause of progress narrowly escaped death—he added that the process of strengthening civil society must be carried out with the most complete transparency. Thanking those in attendance, he concluded with an injunction: "Do your duty. Never fear: We will prevail."

El Hachemi Cherif, a zealous partisan of the "twofold rupture," reaffirmed the movement's determination to build a republican and democratic Algeria. We note that some of those in the audience were militants who had already escaped attacks at Boufarik and elsewhere.

Some time ago, El Hachemi Cherif said: "Effective protection can come only from political vigilance on the part of those who are steeped in the reality of the struggle unfolding in the country...."

Hamas Leader Criticizes Break With Iran

93AF0537E Algiers EL WATAN in French 7 Apr 93 p 3

[Article by R.N.: "Algeria-Iran: Nahnah Regrets Break"]

[Text] A lengthy interview with Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of the Hamas movement, appears in this week's edition of ALGERIE-ACTUALITE.

In the interview, Nahnah does not hesitate to shock readers by expressing his regret at the decision taken by the HCE [Higher State Council] to break diplomatic relations with Iran and recall our ambassador to Sudan for consultations.

According to Nahnah, "breaking relations this way weakens the unity of the Umma."

He questions how a country like Sudan—which is struggling to cope with inextricable problems, and which is thousands of kilometers from Algeria—could be responsible for Algeria's woes? To head off any accusation he might be working for those countries, Nahnah stated that "no country, whether it be our Arab, African, or European neighbors, has the right to interfere in the affairs of our society." According to Nahnah, the government lied to us about the reasons behind its decision to break diplomatic relations with Iran and recall our ambassador from Sudan.

Regarding the tenor of the meeting with the HCE, the leader of the Hamas movement said his party took the opportunity to recall "the necessity of doing things in accordance with our convictions, that is in accordance with our Islamic, national, and democratic visions."

Later on, he sketched out the shape of the Islamic republic that underlies the vision of society he preaches. For him, the republican system and Islam are both facets of the Islamic republic, which reconciles the foundations of republicanism—that is, "the 'choura' [consultative council], democracy, or both together: 'chouracracy'"—with Islam, as the state religion. "The Islamic republic," he says, "means a Muslim country that adopts the republican system; in other words, there is no separation between state and religion."

Crime Figures for 1992 Published

93AF0566A Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
14 Apr 93 pp 1, 3

[Article by Rachid H.: "Crime Figures for 1992: Crimes in Times of Crisis"—first paragraph is ALGER REPUBLICAIN introduction]

[Text]

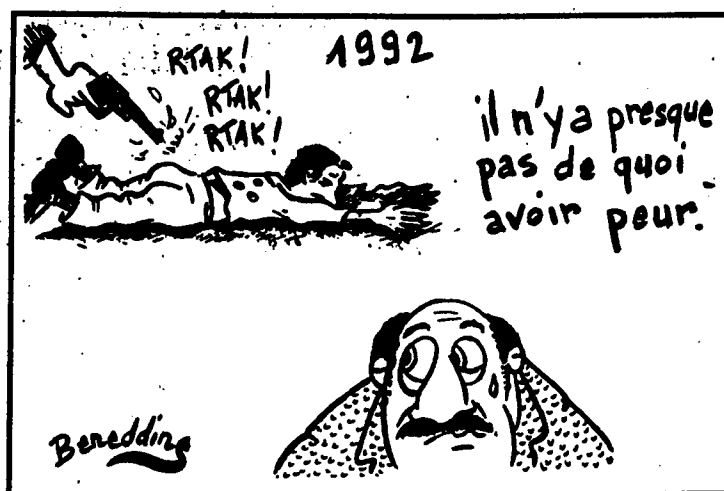
- 4,470 crimes, 19,949 offenses, 28,738 individuals arrested;
- 95.65 percent of terrorist murders were committed in the Algiers area;
- Increased aggressiveness of the Algerians. Breakdown of family ties.
- Rapes as a result of conservatism and intolerance.
- Misappropriation of 25,081,132.28 dinars in public funds.

The national gendarmerie has just published crime figures for 1992. According to the document published by APS, an estimated 4,470 crimes and 19,949 offenses resulted in 28,738 arrests, including 1,193 women.

These crimes and offenses fall into five categories: terrorist crimes; crimes and offenses against public security and national defense; crimes and offenses against individuals and property; crimes and offenses against family and morals; and finally actions undermining the national economy.



There is nothing to be afraid of!



There is hardly anything to be afraid of!



Go on! With a little luck, we shall have the upper hand!

Terrorist Crimes

They accounted for 1.29 percent of all crimes and offenses, and were essentially concentrated in the Algiers area. Figures for 1992 were 95.65 percent of 1991 figures.

Crimes and Offenses Against Public Security

This category accounted for nearly 10 percent of all crimes and offenses. An "unprecedented increase" was noted, due to present political conditions. That had something to do with certain preaches and incitements to violence.

Crimes and Offenses Against Individuals and Property

They accounted for 83.13 percent, falling in two categories:

A. Crimes and Offenses Against Individuals

They accounted for 46 percent all crimes and offenses, and were 1.04 percent more numerous than in 1991. They are evidence of the increasing deterioration of social relations and family ties and various moral malaises; the breakdown for this category is as follows:

- assault and battery: 52.72 percent;
- assault and battery against one's ascendants (parents): 6.62 percent;
- acts of violence, brawls, etc.: 25 percent;
- involuntary manslaughter: 10.17 percent;
- voluntary manslaughter: 2.70 percent.

B. Crimes and Offenses Against Property

This category accounted for 37.12 percent of all crimes and offenses against individuals and property. It showed a decline of 1.75 percent compared with 1991, and consisted essentially in thefts and extortions. These were committed by 27 percent of all the individuals arrested, the overwhelming majority of whom were unemployed or working for low wages. Sixty-six percent of them were over 25, unmarried, with unstable family situations, and coming from large families with inadequate resources. They are the ones hardest hit by the crisis, especially as far as education, employment, and housing are concerned.

These crimes involved the destruction and deterioration of property, with damages to real property accounting for 10 percent of the total.

Crimes and Offenses Against Family and Morals

They accounted for 6.4 percent of all the crimes reported, and were 9.01 percent less numerous than in 1991. These crimes and offenses are related to the malaises and sexual frustrations that affect in particular the young people who suffer from the social and economic crisis and from social inflexibility and intolerance. Their breakdown was as follows:

- rapes and indecent exposure: 4.9 percent;
- prostitution (more widespread in large towns and involving mostly divorced women with no means of support): 21 percent;
- incest: 2 percent.

Actions Undermining the Economy

They included some 85 cases of misappropriation of public funds, which are being dealt with by the national gendarmerie; they resulted in losses of 25,081,132.28 dinars.

FIS Presence in French Suburbs; Afghans Noted

93AF0566B Algiers *LIBERTE* in French 15 Apr 93 p 2

[Article signed A.B.: "A French Weekly Divulges a Report to Mitterrand: Uzi and Scorpio Submachine Guns for Sale in Nanterre"]

[Text] Under the front-page headline "The Guerrilla of Allah's Madmen," the French weekly reveals, in particular in its latest edition, that there currently exists a policy of recruiting Algerian Islamists into the French army.

The weekly in question claims that the activities of the former FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] in France are directed at suburbs such as some parts of Nanterre where "Islamist leaders have succeeded in imposing themselves as the representatives of young Maghreb people in dealing with local authorities."

According to the newspaper, the hard core of the Nanterre group tried to acquire war weapons (Uzi and Scorpio submachine guns made in Israel and Czechoslovakia, respectively) and the transaction was partially completed.

In an article entitled "Allah's Madmen Prepare for the Suburban Guerrilla," which claims to be a summary of a report sent to Francois Mitterrand last summer by "an expert on Islamist fundamentalist phenomena possessing very precise information concerning the activities of fundamentalist agitators in Maghreb circles," the weekly underlines that the most worrying activism is taking place in the northern Hauts-de-Seine, where a group of some 50 young people of Maghreb origin, all Islamists and within the sphere of influence of the former FIS in France, was formed to hunt down drug dealers. However, the weekly estimates that "the objective of these agitators goes beyond the fight against drug dealers and should be viewed from the angle of an urban guerrilla." The newspaper also considers what it calls Islamist "fellow travelers," i.e., "French people converted to Islam who," it writes, "are the most dangerous supporters of the fundamentalists' operations in France." "The federation of Shi'ite Islam, under cover of the new Ahl-ul-Bayt association," especially worries the French security services, according to the newspaper, which recalls that "in the past, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always found relays for its policy in our country." In its column "State Secrets," the French weekly asks several questions: "Is it true that the French Army has started recruiting Afghans, the Algerian Islamist mercenaries who fought the Kabul communist regime at the side of the mujahidin? Is it true that, after being discharged, the Algerian brothers, most of whom refused Afghan citizenship, were given every facility to obtain visas for France, where they were taken care of by our

special services? Is it true that they were then taken to Calvi where they were enrolled in the Foreign Legion to follow a training course? Is it true, finally, that the DGSE [General Directorate for External Security] operational department thus intends to constitute in time an Islamic legion capable of intervening in any Muslim country?"

French Moudjahidine Statement of Support

93AF0566C Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
18 Apr 93 p 3

[Unattributed article: "Veterans Association of the FLN Federation in France: 'Edifying a Strong State'"]

[Text] At a regular meeting held in Sidi Fredj (Algiers) on 15 April 1993, the board of the Veterans Association of the FLN [National Liberation Front] Federation in France:

- "reaffirmed its determination to play its proper part within the ONM [National Veteran's Organization] of which it is an integral part."

The board of the association:

- "is determined to work relentlessly side by side with all patriotic and republican forces to create a modern, prosper, and just Algeria, free from all the archaisms and nostalgias that will use our most unquestionable constants—including Islam and the spirit of November—for partisan purposes";
- "is convinced that the historical march of 22 March expressed the will of the vast majority of our people to fight terrorism and eventually witness the edification of a strong and credible State more decided than ever to accept no compromise in its fight against obscurantism in all the guises under which it hides to impose, through terror and other equally reprehensible means, a project of society that goes counter to history";
- "denounces the maneuvers and dissenting voices which, in their desperate quest for a third way, attempt to take over and use for their own profit the generous movement of 22 March by spreading division among patriots and the forces of progress";
- "states that it does not understand certain legal decisions and act of intimidation against undisputed patriots";
- "testifies that the Algerian people can no longer be the subject of experiments in fields as economy and education, and earnestly calls for a system that would ally individual initiative with economic consistency, and national values with modern pedagogy."

The board of the Veterans Association of the FLN Federation in France,

- "pays a resounding homage to the ANP [People's National Army] and all the security forces who have shown abnegation and a spirit of sacrifice in defending law and order, republican values, and

national sovereignty, and wishes to express its compassion and solidarity to the families of the victims of terrorist rage";

- "warns against any attempts to use for political ends the speech of 14 January, which aims to get Algeria out of its political, economic, social, and cultural crisis";
- "calls for members of the Veterans Association of the FLN Federation in France to increase their vigilance and remain mobilized at all times to defend Algeria, one and indivisible, republican and democratic."

Membership in Inter-Parliamentary Union

93AF0537B Algiers EL WATAN in French 13 Apr 93
p 1

[Commentary by Khaled Mahrez: "International Legitimacy"]

[Text] Algeria has returned to the international diplomatic scene. Its readmission to the Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU]—a CCN [National Consultative Council] delegation is representing it at the meeting in New Delhi—constitutes a fresh setback for those who wanted to see Algeria diplomatically isolated and economically strangled after the interruption of the 26 December 1991 elections. That the CCN was seated at the IPU constitutes de facto legitimization of the nation's current [governmental] institutions.

The desperate activism of "overseas representatives of the former FIS [Islamic Salvation Front]" and certain parties and personalities calling for Algeria's isolation and for cessation of all cooperation with the country has been ignored by the world's parliamentarians. The New Delhi vote testifies to the correctness of the decisions taken by Algerian authorities on 11 January 1992 and expresses the parliamentarians' faith that Algeria is in fact working to establish a democracy with respect for universally shared values.

The CCN delegation were cheered when they took their seats among delegates from around the world. It was both a political and moral victory for those patriots struggling for a democratic, republican Algeria that respects universal values.

Legitimized internally by the impressive national march of 22 March—and now by the international community [in the IPU action]—Algeria's leaders have no choice but to continue and to redouble their efforts to safeguard the republic.

Should it come as any surprise that Israel and Iran were among the few countries to have voted against Algeria?

Plans To Reduce Milk Imports Discussed

93AF0537C Algiers EL WATAN in French 12 Apr 93
p 7

[Article by H. Bouarfa: "Milk Production: Major Projects and Reduced Exports"; word within slantlines published in English]

[Text] Authorities hope the raising of producer prices and a series of other measures taken to encourage increased milk production will trigger long-term growth in the sector...

Oran—Efforts are being made to give new impetus to the agrolivestock sector, which is stagnating despite inflows and state aid (cattle imports, credit allocations).

All along, several negative factors have been behind the problems in this sector, notably drought and increased feed costs. The same factors have been responsible for the indifferent success investors have had in the sector.

Liberalization of agrofood activities and far-reaching changes in agricultural policy led to the creation of cooperatives, some of which are beset with serious management problems today.

Taking into account all these parameters, and with the aim of reducing the country's very large dairy import bill, OROLAIT [expansion not given] has moved to cut back imports of powdered milk. The first step was creation of a common interest group of producers and processors of dairy products.

This group essentially brings together milk producers' associations, stock-raising cooperatives, pilot farms, representatives from chambers of agriculture, heads of agricultural services, and OROLAIT's milk units.

The new organization's task will be to restimulate and promote dairy production in the Ouest [western] region, which is considered one of the country's biggest dairy regions; the goal is to increase existing capacity (livestock, infrastructure, intensification of forage cultivation) and make dairy farming one of the country's most potent assets in the struggle to reduce imports.

The program also calls for direct action to improve conditions for producers. "We will help pilot farms having cash-flow problems with advance payments as high as 80 percent against future raw milk deliveries," said Mr. Cherif Oussedik, OROLAIT's chief executive officer. The private sector is not being left behind either, because it can benefit from similar advantages.

Also, OROLAIT is pledging to furnish, under its dairy livestock import program, as many head as may be needed to repopulate pilot farms with depleted herds.

OROLAIT is also interested in a technical study of the possibility of financial or material assistance under the aegis of a grower-processor partnership. There are even plans to assist stock-raising cooperatives with data processing, by providing software for managing their routine activities.

To transport more milk from the network of collection sites to the cheese factories of Sidi Bel-Abbes and Relizane, the Ouest Regional Office of Dairy Products plans to acquire 12 6,000-liter tanks to be mounted on Algerian K-120 trucks, providing 72,000 liters of new collection capacity. The OROLAIT president adds that "to extend our raw milk collecting activities throughout Ouest, we envisage establishing eight collection centers

in the near future. Far from representing new investment, these collection units will be transferred from or leased by local authorities to facilitate creation of new jobs."

OROLAIT's training service is currently negotiating agreements with agricultural institutes to train personnel from the office (and from its partners) in extension activities. The target population here is composed of dairy farmers, prospective dairy farmers, and pilot farm personnel.

There are also plans to create a cadre of veterinarians and zootechnicians, who will run a health education program for breeders.

It is vital to build up enough forage capacity to tide livestock herds over a three to six-month [dry] period if stock raisers are to weather the seasonal droughts typical of the Ouest region, so breeders have no choice but to intensify forage cultivation. That is why OROLAIT has promised to provide them select seed acquired from ONAPSA [expansion not given], to be paid back in the form of "leasing/."

Finally, imports of powdered milk will be reduced by 3 percent per year, the difference to be made up by [increased] local milk collection. All reductions will be used to pay for imports of dairy livestock and production-related equipment.

Background on Saipem Accord With Sonatrach

93AF0535C Algiers LIBERTE in French 12 Apr 93 p 3

[Article by Z. Ferroukhi: "\$3.4 Billion for 1,070 Km"]

[Text] On 26 July 1978, the state-owned companies Sonatrach [National Company for the Transport and Marketing of Hydrocarbons] and Saipem [expansion not given] (an Italian company belonging to the ENI [National Hydrocarbons Agency] group) signed the contract covering the construction of the Algerian section of the Algeria-Tunisia-Italy gas pipeline, as provided for in the agreements signed on 22 October 1977 by Sonatrach and ENI. Saipem was selected following an international invitation to bid issued by Sonatrach in 1977.

The total cost of this extraordinary 1,070-km-long project connecting the Hassi R'Mel gas deposit to Mazzara Del Vallo in Sicilia will amount to a staggering \$3.4 billion, one half of which was provided by Algeria.

The 1977 agreements provided that Sonatrach would get \$1.03 billion in financing as a 15-year loan (with a five-year grace period and repayment over 10 years). The amount also included \$550 million in supplier credits at 7.75 percent interest, and \$350 million in credit instruments at a 8.2-percent interest. A genuine technical success as far as natural gas transportation is concerned, the project required the installation of a submarine gas pipeline across the Sicilian Strait, at a depth of 600 meters [m] in places. To finance this section, a \$100-million credit agreement was signed in Paris on April 1980 by Transmediterranean and Co., an international

banking syndicate (with Credit Lyonnais acting as coordinating bank, and Bank of America International Ltd. as agent bank).

The borrower—a subsidiary owned 50-50 by Sonatrach and SNAM [National Gas Pipeline Company] (a subsidiary of the Italian group ENI), both of which also guaranteed the loan—used the loan to build two sections at sea, over a distance of 160 km across the Sicilian channel, and 15 km across the Strait of Messina.

The construction of the project was entrusted to SNAM-Projects, an ENI subsidiary, and required complex operations: sounding, mechanical assembly of compact units, protection and telecommunication facilities, etc. The cost of the Algerian section alone, from Hassi R'Mel to Oued Saf Saf (550 km), amounted to \$702 million. Therefore, starting at Cape Bon in Tunisia, Algeria paid 50 percent of the cost of the submarine section, which amounted to \$532 million.

The gas pipeline is owned by Algeria and Italy. Italy benefited from total investments of 48 billion lire to increase its gas storage capacity.

In addition, in March 1980, under an overall economic and industrial cooperation agreement, the two countries agreed in principle on the creation of an Algerian-Italian bank. One year later, the agreement was signed in Algiers, and the joint bank endowed with a starting capital of 1 billion lire, the equivalent of 50 million dinars, owned 50-50 by the two parties; the financing of the Algerian share was provided jointly by BAD [Algerian Development Bank], BNA [National Bank of Algeria], the CAP [Algerian Employers Confederation], and BEA [Algerian Foreign Bank]....

Figures on Foreign Workers Published

93AF0504F *Algiers EL WATAN in French*
12-13 Mar 93 p 1

[Article from APS: "Employment: The Foreign Work Force in Algeria"]

[Text] [The number of] work permits issued to the foreign workforce in Algeria reached 1,546 during the fourth quarter of 1992 as compared with 1,123 in the third quarter of the same year, an increase of 37.67 percent, according to an update from the National Labor Agency (ANEM). The countries of the CIS (the former USSR) top the list of 47 countries that were given work permits, with 214 permits issued, or 13.8 percent. Moroccans were in second place with 187 permits, accounting for 12.1 percent, followed by French [workers], with 126 permits, or 8.15 percent.

Poles and Yugoslavs, with 108 and 102 permits, accounted for 6.9 percent and 6.5 percent of the total of work permits issued, respectively. A labor force of 42 other nationalities was granted 809 permits, or 52.3 percent of the total number of permits.

The work permits issued broke down in the following way: 796 work permits were issued, 532 permits were renewed, and there were 218 worker statements. The 218

work statements were divided among the French and the Tunisians with 126 and 92 statements, or 57.8 percent and 42.2 percent, respectively.

During the same period, the number of broken labor contracts reached 334 jobs.

EGYPT

Israel, U.S. Accused of 'Reaping' Terrorism

93AF0518B *Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English*
25-31 Mar 93 p 7

[Article by Salamah A. Salamah]

[Text] If we are going to talk about terrorism and violence in the Middle East, then we also have to talk about the active role played by Israel, and the way it has succeeded in nurturing the roots of violence and extremism through its repressive measures, terrorism and siege tactics in the occupied Arab territories.

The phenomenon of violence in the region as a whole, and the way Israel commits its outrages against the Arabs, cannot be left out of any discussion of the phenomenon of violence and extremism in other Arab countries. The very existence of Israel—built as it is on the principle of the "ethnic purity" of the Jewish state, and taking the Jewish religion as the basis for the Zionist stage—and its constant attempts to liquidate the Palestinian people by means of the so-called "transfer" policy of moving them to other Arab states, such as Jordan, deporting them, constantly laying stage to them and establishing Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, have all combined to give rise, on the other side, to the extremist Islamic groups' idea of setting up their own religious state, seeing this as the only way of restoring the Arab's lost glory and resisting Israeli-American influence in the region.

The extremist tendencies of those Islamic groups that embrace the idea of terrorism in the Arab and Islamic world have only taken root and flourished because of the Arab failure to stand up to Israel and halt its expansion, and because of Israel's spectacular success in imposing its will on the Arab world, with the support—sometimes veiled, but usually quite brazen—of the United States.

This is something many people who regard terrorism and extremism as primarily a political issue cannot bring themselves to admit. In their analysis of the problem, they simply say that the ultimate aim of these terrorist organizations, is "to seize power."

Current events in the occupied territories are evidence of this. The multi-pronged Islamic tendency spearheaded by Hamas has grown steadily stronger with the stepping up of Israeli repression and the failure of the peace effort, despite all the concessions offered by the PLO since it agreed to take part.

Then came the deportee issue cooked up by Yitzhak Rabin, on the pretext of punishing terrorist elements in

Hamas, as a way of increasing pressure on the Palestinians—and what was the result of that? An explosion of anger in the occupied Arab territories, and even more brutality in Israel's use of force. The number of Palestinians killed has risen sharply within the past few weeks, and Israel has not hesitated to use the maximum degree of force, spilling blood, blowing up houses and imposing curfews. Rabin even went to Washington and met President Clinton without the American president finding any way to persuade Israel to resolve the problem of the deportees.

In fact it seems that the American understanding of the role of a "full partner" in peace efforts means giving Rabin a free hand to carry on his repressive, terrorist policies in the occupied territories, while trying to persuade the Arab states and Palestinians to return to the negotiating table—with Israel meanwhile dropping hints that it is ready to conclude a separate peace deal with other Arab parties.

And against the background of this farce, the people of the Arab world see a new chapter being added to the strategic alliance between America and Israel, on combating terrorism in the Middle East. What terrorism? The terrorism sown by Israel, or that reaped by the United States?

AL-NUR Criticizes Butrus-Ghali's UN Leadership

93LD0001B Cairo AL-NUR in Arabic 3 Mar 93 p 2

[Article by Yasin Mahmud 'Awdah: "What Does Butrus-Ghali Want?"]

[Text] What exactly does Mr. Butrus-Ghali, currently the UN's secretary general and formerly an Egyptian and an Arab, want from us?

All of the statements or actions emanating from Butrus-Ghali are difficult to explain. Let us examine some of them:

- "The Muslims in Bosnia bear the same amount of criticism as the Serbs!"
- "The United Nations does not have sufficient financial resources to mobilize international forces in Bosnia!"
- "Milosevic is a good, peaceful man, and I disagree with you over your view of the man!"
- "Resolution 242 does not oblige Israel to withdraw from Arab lands!"

Butrus has publicly made these and other statements to the news agencies. He has made them with a level head and in full consciousness. And his actions are no less than his words. For instance:

- He hastened to stop the fighting between Serbs and Croats about a year ago and deployed international forces by the thousands to support the cease fire.
- He prevented the removal of heavy weapons from the Serbs and used military force only to deliver humanitarian aid to the Muslims in Bosnia.

- He renewed the air embargo on Libya despite Libya's agreement to surrender those charged with blowing up the American airliner to anyone but America, since the latter is a party to the conflict.
- He prepared a plan to divide Somalia among the warring factions.
- The passage of Resolution 799 on the Palestinian deportees was merely ink on paper; Butrus-Ghali made no effort to implement it in practice.
- He supported the resolution on American military strikes on Iraq and the murder of innocents, even though the latest American strike violated U.N. resolutions and required passage of a special resolution by the Security Council.

It was Butrus-Ghali who recently accused France of partiality toward the Bosnians and of violating U.N. laws because of French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas's statement that Muslim detainees in Serb prisons must be freed.

It was Butrus-Ghali who threatened to resign several times because some European countries were trying to interfere in the work of the United Nations when they demanded that decisive action be taken against the Serbs.

Perhaps this Butrus-Ghali who repudiates the causes of the Arab and Islamic world is gratified to see the destruction and loss of Bosnia, Iraq, and Somalia. Certainly he is happy at the wiping of the Republic of Bosnia off the map of Europe. The proof is that the Kosovo region, the Sandjak, the Balkans, and Albania are on their way to destruction—the plans are ready to be implemented—yet Butrus-Ghali gives no thought to averting the tragedy before it occurs.

Several hundred American women, outraged by what the Serbs have done to the women of Bosnia, held a women's demonstration to express their human feelings. Certainly, the least of these women was a million times better than the likes of Butrus-Ghali. If the secretary general of the United Nations had been De Cuellar, Waldheim, or U Thant, things would have proceeded differently. But the secretary general is Butrus-Ghali, and this his real nature!

Officials Report Development Projects in Hala'ib

93AF0518C Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English 4-10 Mar 93 p 2

[Report by Rania Saad]

[Text] A joint Egyptian-Sudanese committee met in Khartoum last week to seek a solution for the problem of Hala'ib-Shalatayn—a border region that is claimed by both countries. The talks ended inconclusively and the committee is reported to be planning a second meeting in Cairo in the near future.

While the talks drag on, the Egyptian government has acted to assert its sovereignty over the area by launching a major development project there. Whether the project was started before or after the dispute erupted over a

year ago is the subject of disagreement. But there is no doubt that the development of the region underlines Egypt's resolve to keep it as an integral part of its territory. The scheme is carried out by the Ministries of Housing and Construction, Information, Communications and Transport.

Seeking to affirm that Hala'ib-Shalatayn, despite its remoteness from Cairo, is part of the motherland, the Ministry of Information has sought to bring it within reach of radio and television broadcasts. Mahmud Kishk, head of the engineering sector of the Radio and Television Union, said that in addition to the Egyptian space channel, which can be picked up there, a relay television station is being established at Barnais on the Red Sea. This will make it possible for the transmission of Channels One and Two to reach Shalatayn and Abu Ramad and possibly Hala'ib, he said. Fifteen television sets were distributed by the Ministry to the inhabitants of the area, he added.

As for radio broadcasts, the programmes of the principal Radio Cairo station have been reaching Shalatayn and surrounding areas as of last year. A relay station is being built at Barnais to carry the programmes of the Sawt al-Arab (Voice of the Arabs) radio station, Kishk said.

"The people there are very happy to receive the Egyptian broadcasts," he said. "This makes them feel citizens of this country." Asked if the Egyptian programmes faced competition from Sudanese radio and television, Kishk replied: "The people there hardly receive Sudanese broadcasts."

Plans are also underway to link the region by road to other parts of Egypt. Fuad 'Abd-al-'Aziz, chairman of the General Authority of Roads and Bridges, said for the past two years the Ministry of Communications and Transport has worked to integrate the region into the current five-year development plan. A 250-km road is being built at a cost of LE40 million to connect Barnais with Shalatayn and Abu Ramad and then with Hala'ib, he said.

The Ministry is also planning to pave the road between Qussair and Barnais on the Red Sea, at a cost of LE35 million, 'Abd-al-'Aziz said. Roads inside the Hala'ib region itself will also be paved, he added, expressing hope that the improvement of road conditions would encourage investors to the area.

Muhamad Ashur al-Bitar, head of the Red Sea Construction Authority, said the Authority launched a master housing plan three years ago for the three villages of Shalatayn, Abu Ramad and Hala'ib.

Starting with Shalatayn, 134 housing units—each consisting of three rooms and a courtyard—were constructed for the inhabitants of the region. "The aim is to settle the bedouins who are mainly nomadic shepherds," he said.

Another 100 buildings are being constructed to serve as administrative offices, such as local government and police, and also to provide public services such as medical care, he said.

A public hospital and a water desalination unit, with a daily capacity of 500 tonnes, are being established in Shalatayn. As for Abu Ramad, it will have another desalination unit with a daily capacity of 100 tonnes. Primary education schools, run by al-Azhar, will be built in both villages.

Other plans for digging wells, improving pasture lands and providing fishermen with boats and refrigerating facilities are also under way.

Government Merges BCCI With Misr Bank

93AF0498A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
26 Mar 93 p 41

[Article by Mahmud Salim]

[Text] Egypt finally closed the Bank of Credit and Commerce's [BCCI-Egypt] file, which had remained open for a long time. It was the Egyptian Central Bank's decision to shut the bank and merge it with Misr Bank.

A few days ago, more than 40,000 former BCCI (Egypt) depositors began to deal with Misr Bank, acquiring all the rights and obligations of Misr Bank depositors.

The Egyptian Government took responsibility for this important case in order to bolster confidence in the Egyptian banking system and protect monies deposited in banks operating in Egypt. Egypt will also not allow any of these banks to file for bankruptcy.

Misr Bank took over this difficult assignment because it is one of the largest Egyptian banks and has had long expertise in these matters. Misr Bank obtained an interest-free loan of 1 billion pounds from the Central Bank of Egypt in order to meet the merger obligations.

The merger decision was made after lengthy discussions, which were held while awaiting the BCCI investigation findings and liquidation results.

Muhammad 'Ali Hafiz, chairman of the board of directors of Misr Bank, and 'Isam al-Ahmadi, vice president of the bank, had met with Dr. Salah Hamid, the governor of the Central Bank. Naturally, Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi was kept informed of the developments. The prime minister had asserted all along that the government had an obligation to solve the BCCI depositors' problem. In addition, President Husni Mubarak gave his assurances more than once that an appropriate solution for this problem would be reached. The solution was reached when the banks merged and the depositors acquired all of their rights. Thus, Egypt solved the depositors' problem with this troubled bank. Many other states have not yet done that.

This problem was an extremely difficult one. Bank deposits exceeded \$300 million, and the procedures to solve the problem took a long time. The merger process also took a long time because certain legal procedures

had to be followed. The merger was agreed upon last August, and it took five months to complete those procedures.

'Isam-al-Din al-Ahmadi, vice chairman of Misr Bank board of directors, had said that there were certain legal procedures to be followed in order to carry out the merger. These procedures included convening the BCCI (Egypt) general assembly in October to discuss the bank's 1991 budget. If there had been no quorum for the general assembly meeting, it would have had to be postponed for two weeks. 'Abd-al-Ghani Jami', the bank's special administrator, had to follow these procedures before the merger decision could be made. During the general assembly meeting, the budget, with \$350 million in losses—an equivalent of 1 billion Egyptian pounds—was approved.

The bank's capital amounted to 20 million Egyptian pounds, 51 percent of which was the Egyptian subscribers' share and 49 percent of which was BCCI's.

According to law, the Central Bank had to intervene. It had either to issue public stocks to increase the bank's capital, which would not make sense; liquidate the bank, which was also out of consideration; or merge it, which was the only option left for the Central Bank.

Merger procedures started and took about four months. During this period, BCCI depositors started to feel relieved as the solution was on way. After a long period of extreme anxiety, the depositors' fears began to disappear. During this anxious period, depositors formed a "union," which organized many protests. They also held meetings with the responsible personnel in order to pursue a satisfactory solution.

Misr Bank then started legal merger proceedings.

Meanwhile, Misr Bank started certain technical proceedings to accommodate the systems of both banks, as a prelude to the merger. During this period, and in September 1992, a delegation from a British law firm visited Cairo to get acquainted with information regarding BCCI. Misr Bank had called for this visit after its president, Muhammad Hafiz, had visited London to become familiarized with the liquidation results and legal proceedings that were being taken at that time. The British law firm was assigned to safeguard BCCI-Egypt's rights from the impact of BCCI's liquidation.

Although BCCI depositors felt assured about their deposits, they lived through hard times!

In the middle of last February, BCCI (Egypt) depositors became Misr Bank customers and started earning interest on their deposits.

Actually, Misr Bank started paying depositors interest about one week ahead of time. Changes began to take effect in 19 former BCCI branches, where BCCI signs were replaced by those of Misr Bank. Technical and accounting systems were also changed in these branches. Depositors started to deal with the new system for both withdrawals and deposits.

In fact, some expected a great rush of depositors who wanted to withdraw their money, but this did not happen. True, some depositors withdrew some of their funds, but others left their deposits intact. Others still added new deposits because of their confidence in Misr Bank. Matters started to return to normal with Misr Bank...not with BCCI!

Therefore, the problem has ended. The BCCI file has been closed as an assertion by the Egyptian Government that it does not allow the bankruptcy of any bank in Egypt and also in order to bolster confidence in the Egyptian banking system.

Israeli Oil-Pipeline Plan Discovered

93AF0498B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Mar 93 p 2

[Text] Egyptian Petroleum Minister Hamdi al-Banbi indicated that the Petroleum Ministry obtained the text of an Israeli study of a plan for an oil pipeline across Israel that would carry Middle East oil, especially Iranian oil. This study was done in light of the existence of secret relations between Tel Aviv and Tehran. The petroleum minister yesterday told the Industry Committee of the Egyptian People's Assembly that this project's goal was to jeopardize the Egyptian's Sumed pipeline which carries oil from four Gulf states to European and American markets. The agreement contract for the Sumed pipeline had recently been renewed between Egypt and the four Gulf states—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and the Emirates—for 27 years. Hamdi al-Banbi mentioned that the study had been prepared last July. Israeli Government officials refused to initiate contacts concerning the oil-piping project's execution and its inclusion in the Middle East regional development projects addressed by the working group for economic development in the multilateral negotiations. He also said that this study seeks to establish a region within Gaza.

Negative Impact of Economic Reforms Discussed

93LD0002C Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
8-14 Apr 93 p 4

[Article by Jamal 'Isam al-Din]

[Text] The lifting of trade barriers on a number of imported goods has hit Egyptian industries manufacturing similar products. Not only are imported products cheaper, but increasing energy prices and the cost of spare parts is preventing local companies from offering competitive prices.

The production of fertilisers is one of the sectors at risk. Ministry of Agriculture statistics reveal that Egypt presently produces 7.6 million tonnes of fertilisers annually.

In a Shura Council discussion held last December on agricultural development strategies in Egypt, Dr. Sa'd Hajras, a veteran agricultural expert and Shura Council member, pointed out that inundating the market with large amounts of cheap imported fertilisers has not been,

and will not be in favour of local producers such as al-Nasr Fertilisers and Chemical Industries Company (Suez). This is especially so as we take into account the huge rise in electricity prices which led to a 100 per cent rise in the price of fertilisers.

For example, a one millieme rise in kilowatt/hour increases the production costs for major fertiliser companies such as the Suez Nasr and Aswan's Egyptian Chemical Industries Co. (Kima) by LE1,600 million, not to mention the rise in costs of other production requirements such as phosphate.

Another cry comes from the three major public-sector paper producing companies in Egypt: the General Company for Paper Industry (Rakta), the National Paper Company and the Middle East Company (Simo).

According to chemist Tahir Bishr, chairman of the Holding Company for Chemical Industries (HCCI) which supervises the three companies, inundating the local market with huge amounts of imported paper and the reduction of custom duties on newsprint from 20 per cent have combined to seriously threaten the future of paper companies in Egypt. Much worse, adds Bishr, most of the imported paper is of inferior quality.

Elaborating on the negative consequences on the three companies, Bishr says that they depend for their production of writing and printed paper on local inputs such as farm wastes, e.g., rice straw, wood pulp and sugarcane, and strictly complies with international specifications.

According to HCCI statistics, local paper production in 1989/90 amounted to 84,000 tonnes; 61,000 tonnes by Rakta, 20,000 by the National Paper Company, and 3,000 by Simo. In the same year 111,000 tonnes of paper were imported. In 1991, the price of imported paper declined by 25 per cent, to LE2,250 per tonne on average. To meet this challenge, an HCCI official who preferred to be anonymous, said Rakta had to introduce subsequent reductions in its price to reach the levels of imported paper but at the expense of its productive capacities. However, at a time when the three companies strove hard to grapple with imported paper and keep low profit margins for themselves, all were taken aback by sudden rises in prices of energy and production inputs such [as] electricity, wood pulp, mazut, caustic soda and a sales tax.

In the meantime, according to the official, while custom duties on imported paper were greatly reduced, duties on production inputs and spare parts rose by 30 to 50 per cent. This, he adds, led to a 46.4 per cent increase in production costs of Rakta, while quantities in store climbed from 4,500 tonnes in 1991 to 14,600 in June 1992.

The long-standing textile industry is a third affected sector. As decided by the government, the next five years will be a transitional period for lifting bans in imported ready-made garments. This decision will not only pose a serious challenge to the textile industry in Egypt, but is also a warning for it to find fast solutions for its current

problems. In December 1992, the Chamber of the Textile Industries held a conference on the future of the textile industries in Egypt.

'Abd-al-Wahab al-Sharqawi, deputy president of the textile chamber, elaborated on the present problems of the textile industry in Egypt. Al-Sharqawi cited the soaring rise in machine prices to levels beyond the capacity of many producers who had to borrow high interest-rate loans (19 per cent) from banks, and the sharp rise in electricity prices (recording an increase of 1,100 per cent over eight years). According to al-Sharqawi, a kilowatt of electricity now costs 18 piastres. At this rate, the electricity costs for medium-scale textile factories now reach LE6,000 per month accounting for 10 per cent of the overall production costs of the textile industry in Egypt. This figure, he adds, increases to 30 per cent in the print and dyeing factories.

In a paper presented to the conference, al-Sharqawi further indicated that more than 600 out of 1,200 textile factories in Mahall al-Kubra, the bastion of this industry in Egypt, had to close down because the costs of replacing and renovating their production lines were beyond their capacity. However, he revealed, there are other major reasons behind the closing down of these companies such as: the 13 different kinds of taxes which the textile factories are subject to, the high costs of raw materials such as polyester and lint yarn because of a 30 per cent customs duty and an 18 per cent sales tax. These two points led to raising the costs of the final textile product to levels higher than the corresponding imported varieties, denying the Egyptian textile product from any competitive edge.

The Egyptian Sugar and Distillation Company is another company in distress. As early as this year Minister of Supply Jallal 'Abd-al-Dahab announced that his ministry will no longer receive all the locally-produced sugar production (1 million tonnes per year) and opted to allow the import of sugar from European markets. As a consequence, the ministry received only 600,000 tonnes and decided to cover the rest from abroad, under the pretext that the European community reduced the price of its sugar production from \$500 to \$250 per tonne.

According to Eng. Faruq 'Afifi, head of the Council of Sugar Crops, this decision led to grave consequences: more than 400,000 tonnes of sugar were accumulated at the al-Nasr Company's stores, more than 300,000 sugar farmers were not paid the full price for the quantities they had already delivered to the factories, and a halt to the new sugar production factory being built at al-Daqahliyah governorate financed by SR207 million from the Saudi Development Fund.

However, during a recent visit to the New Valley governorate, President Mubarak announced that the government had decided to raise the delivery price of sugar from LE66 to LE72.5 per tonne.

Meanwhile, customs duties were also raised by 2 per cent to 30 per cent for refined sugar and 2 per cent for raw sugar to protect farmers from any further reductions in the European market.

According to Eng. 'Afifi, as the sugar industry in Egypt is a highly strategic one, the government allocated 25,000 feddans for sugar cane production and 50,000 feddans for sugar-beet production. Besides, he adds, there are eight sugar cane production factories and only one for sugar-beet production.

They produce 1.6 million tonnes of sugar, an amount which covers 64 per cent of Egypt's needs, and leaves a gap of around 600,000 tons. In the year 2000, he adds, Egypt will need its growing needs. As shown by Eng. 'Afifi, the free import of cheap sugar from Europe not only affected al-Nasr Sugar Company's 30,000 employees, and 300,000 farmers, but also seriously jeopardised the future of other sugar-dependent industries such as paper, wood, molasses, alcohol and yeast. As a way out of this perilous crisis, Eng. 'Afifi says the recent rise in sugar delivery price is a good step, but should be followed by others such as creating close cooperation among concerned ministries to stabilise sugar policies in favour of more investments, imposing high tariffs on imported sugar (subsidised in its countries of origin), and to confine imports within real need.

Business Privatization Guidelines Listed

93LD0002D Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
8-14 Apr 93 p 4

[Analysis by Yusuf Mazhar]

[Text] For a long time there has been considerable debate about what privatisation means. Many knowledgeable and other not-so-knowledgeable volunteers formulated their own versions of privatisation. Some spoke of outright one-shot sales of government or public sector assets. This started a debate on which assets should be sold, for how much and whether anyone would really care to buy.

The Public Enterprises Office recently published "The General Procedures and Guidelines for the Government's Programme of Privatisation and Restructuring." The guidelines answer many questions which have troubled decision makers on the levels of the holding companies and their affiliated companies.

The guidelines define a privatisation transaction as "one in which the ownership of the major productive assets of an entire affiliated company or all of the government-owned or government-controlled shares in a joint venture company established under Law 43, or its successor, Law 230, is to be transferred from the government or a government-controlled entity to the private sector."

The next important problem, after privatisation is defined, is how to select the entities eligible for privatisation to avoid the discussion which started as to whether companies losing money should be the first to go. This is a fact which has disturbed potential buyers

who refused to accept being singled out to be offered the worst of the companies. So this idea was rejected.

The other alternative was to sell the profit-making companies first to encourage privatisation. Defendants of the public sector resented this idea, claiming that as the companies were successful they did not represent a burden on the government, so why sell them at all?

The Public Enterprises office (PEO)'s guidelines clarified this issue:

"Candidates for privatisation, particularly in the first few years of the privatisation programme, should be those which would cause minimum economic disruption and would be chosen according to the following criteria:

- Profitable, mainly small and medium-sized enterprises or business units operating in competitive business sectors which have no need for financial restructuring, additional investment, operational reorganisation, legal restructuring or significant corrective environmental measures.
- Economic, financial and commercial viability. Selected companies are expected to have a positive cash flow, viable current ratio and the liquidity ratio must indicate a positive long-term trend.
- Rates of return on assets and equity, and profit margins, must be attractive to the private sector. Debt and debt-to-equity ratios must be low to allow for easy privatisation, and activity ratios against dumping and unfair trade practices such as inventory turnover and accounts receivable collection periods or a joint team from both inside and outside the company must reflect efficient enterprise operation.
- Operating a relatively undistorted or easily correctable business environment where there is private sector competition and no monopoly or oligopoly.
- No production now or in the future will be granted to business enterprises.
- A minimal number of redundant employees and social disruption.

There are already lists of candidate firms but of course not all of them comply with all the selection criteria. However, at least there is some pattern in the course for privatisation. The guidelines answer many other questions which will be analysed in future articles.

Cooperation Minister on Economic Reforms

93AF0518A Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
4-11 Mar 93 p 4

[Interview with Dr. Maurice Makramallah by Ghadah Rajab; place and date not given]

[Text]

[Rajab] Last week an agreement was signed with the World Bank on the second part of the Structural Adjustment Loan. What were the main points covered by the negotiations with the World Bank mission and what were the most important terms of this agreement?

[Makramallah] Actually, it is not an agreement. In May 1991, we signed a programme with the World Bank concerning economic reform in Egypt. The general rule is that the economic reform programme is determined by us, according to our conditions and our goals. When the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund [IMF] come into it, it is an affirmation, on the part of these international organisations, that this programme is a strong one and that it will result in actual economic reform in this country.

In the standby agreement the IMF gives limited funding of not more than \$300 million. This amount in itself does not achieve economic reform. The same goes for the structural adjustment loan. However, these agreements constitute an admission that this programme is a strong one and is therefore a signal to all countries that Egypt is embarking on this programme.

It is also standard for these organisations to review from time to time what has actually been achieved and what still has to be achieved, as a means of ensuring the seriousness of the programme's implementation. Last week a group from the World Bank was here to review what reform measures had been taken, and how serious these measures were. This mission will present a report to the board of directors of the World Bank to inform it that the programme has been followed.

What was signed last week is known as an aide memoire. It constitutes a review by the World Bank mission in cooperation with the Egyptian authorities, saying that the mission found that the implementation process of the reforms is moving well. When the agreement was first signed in 1991 the World Bank provided \$150 million as the first tranche of the structural adjustment loan. It will provide the second tranche—a further \$150 million—on the basis of last week's aide memoire.

[Rajab] Shortly before the aide memoire was signed, it was reported that the World Bank was not satisfied with the pace of the reform. Does this aide memoire mean that the bank is now satisfied with the way in which the programme is proceeding?

[Makramallah] Yes, the aide memoire lists all that has been achieved in each sector, and says that the situation indicates the seriousness with which the implementation of the reform programme is being carried out.

[Rajab] Can you provide more details on the points Egypt discussed with the World Bank mission and the achievements that were listed in the aide memoire?

[Makramallah] The aide-memoire reviewed all six parts of the agreement. The first part is concerned with macroeconomic policies: interest rates, the exchange rate and the budget. Interest rates before the programme were determined by the Central Bank. Now banks are free to determine their own interest rates. This is important for two reasons. Interest rates should be higher than inflation rates, or else they will not encourage people to save. More savings mean more funds for investment and development.

We used to have three exchange rates, the commercial banks' rate, the Central Bank rate and the parallel market rate. Exchange rates have now been unified and are now determined according to supply and demand.

This is important because having different rates creates instability in the market, and affects exports and imports. When the exchange rate is artificially controlled, people refrain from exporting because their profits are not worth their effort and imports increase. In turn, this increases the deficit in the balance of payments. When there is a market rate there is competitiveness, and Egyptian goods can be exported and can compete with imports. This has already been achieved.

Concerning the budget deficit, it can be confronted in two ways: Firstly by borrowing from the banks, drawing on funds which could be used in developmental projects. Secondly by printing money or issuing treasury bonds, which create inflationary pressures, creating buying power not matched by an increase in production, thereby causing more instability in the market.

The second part of the agreement reviewed by the aide-memoire is the liberalisation of foreign trade by removing administrative protectionist barriers.

There used to be a list of banned imports, as well as of goods which could not be imported except after obtaining the approval of certain authorities. These non-tariff barriers created instability in the markets and encouraged smuggling. In case of imports which needed prior permission this also encouraged the use of twisted methods to obtain the required approvals.

It was agreed therefore, that only customs tariffs would be used, as in the rest of the world. However, the understanding was that the tariffs would be within normal limits, with a minimum of 10 per cent and a maximum of 80 per cent. By agreement with the World Bank, the minimum duties were reduced to five per cent.

We have already implemented this with most goods, with some exceptions in the case of goods which for social and religious reasons are still taxed beyond the maximum limit. These include such items as luxury cars and alcoholic beverages.

The agreement also called for the simplification of export-import procedures, cutting through the red tape that has hitherto obstructed foreign trade. All these points were reviewed [by the Bank mission] and it was found that the agreed foreign trade liberalisation policies had been implemented.

Concerning price liberalisation, which constituted the third part of the agreement, it is a known fact that prices set by administrative order were usually less than the cost, giving opportunities for smuggling and so on. We had five groups of items the prices of which were government determined. Four of these groups now enjoy full liberalisation. The fifth group has been partially liberalised and the remaining part needs more careful study, because it includes some basic medicines which

are used by the low-income strata. This is not an easy matter because we cannot allow the prices of these items to increase indefinitely.

This part of the process of liberalising prices needs more time. We used to have fixed prices for rice, cotton and sugar cane. Now the prices of rice have been fully liberalised, cotton is on its way towards full liberalisation, and we are currently studying how to liberalise sugar cane prices. So these are the points which were reviewed in the area of price liberalisation.

The fourth part of the agreement concerns the liberalisation of the public sector. This was achieved through Law 203 issued last year which provided for the establishment of holding and affiliate companies.

The idea was to distribute the public sector companies over a number of holding companies to create competition and not monopoly, because if all the cement companies are gathered under one holding company, this would be a monopoly.

The companies are now being redistributed to create management efficiency, thus increasing competition to the benefit of the producer and the consumer. These companies would be cost-conscious, would review their marketing policies and so on. We had 27 holding companies. These were reduced to 17 and the companies redistributed among the holding companies.

The fifth part of the agreement involves widening the base of private property. We have three kinds of public companies. The first are the companies affiliated to the different governorates and these have been sold in full, or almost in full. The second are the joint public-private companies and these should be converted into fully privately owned companies.

As for the fully publicly-owned companies, these own assets which they do not use, such as buildings and lands, and they should get rid of these assets which have no direct link to production. These companies can also widen the scope of their activities by resorting to the private sector. Some unproductive companies can be sold in full; some have unused production lines which can be leased to the private sector, or private sector management can be brought in. There was an agreement with the World Bank, according to which they reviewed what has been achieved so far, what is currently being offered in the market and our plans for 1993-1994.

The sixth segment of the agreement is related to labour laws. When we encourage the private sector we have to liberalise labour laws by freeing them of the link to the Work Office. We have agreed to give the private sector the right to employ whoever it chooses, without prior permission from the Work Office but on condition that the company informs the Work Office, to enable it to keep track of employment and unemployment information.

The final part of the agreement concerned the problems of the reform programme and the establishment of the Social Development Fund.

All this is part of the programme which we presented in 1991 called the Letter of Development Policies, issued by the Egyptian government.

[Rajab] Will the second tranche of the structural adjustment loan be released immediately?

[Makramallah] The second tranche will be released when the board of directors of the World Bank approves the aide-memoire signed by both parties. The decision is in the hands of the board of directors, not the visiting mission. The mission only makes a report supported by documents.

[Rajab] How does the Egyptian government utilise the Structural Adjustment Loan?

[Makramallah] This loan is used to support the balance of payments. In countries where these policies are implemented, imbalances and instability are created in the balance of payments, so this loan is given to guarantee a sort of stability in foreign exchange rates. We honestly are not very much in need of this loan, and the World Bank knows that. But this does not mean we will not implement the programme, nor does it mean we will not accept the loan. However, when interest rates were liberalised and increased to 18 per cent, interest rates on the dollar dropped, and confidence in the economy increased: many people who had savings abroad brought them into the country in foreign currency. The reserves of the Central Bank have increased dramatically during the past two years.

Foreign currency reserves in the central banks are currently estimated at about \$12 billion. However, we will use the loan to further support our balance of payments. But more importantly the World Bank's report saying that Egypt is moving ahead with the reforms gives a green light to the IMF that the reforms are going well. Therefore we will be able to sign a second standby agreement with the IMF.

[Rajab] Does the World Bank agreement include provisions for technical assistance, particularly in the field of privatisation?

[Makramallah] The International Development Agency part of the World Bank group came forward with an offer to give us about ten million dollars. IDA loans carry a very low interest rate of about 0.75 per cent, a ten year grace period and repayment over thirty years. It is considered that the grant component of these loans exceeds 50 per cent. The Americans are also helping in this field with a grant, as are a number of other countries. This assistance is used to provide the Public Enterprises Office, which is conducting public sector reforms, with funding to enable it to employ the services of international consultancy companies to carry out its studies.

[Rajab] When will Egypt resume negotiations with the IMF?

[Makramallah] Our standby agreement with the IMF expired last November. To obtain the second part of the debt forgiveness plan, we have to sign a second standby

agreement. The IMF, however, felt that the World Bank had not reached a decision yet, so they postponed the negotiations for a second agreement until the Bank gives its final word. Now that the Bank has given its word, we will resume negotiations for the agreement, on the basis of which we will get the debt write-off.

[Rajab] It has been reported that the IMF was holding up the agreement not because of the delay of the World Bank report, but because its experts were unsatisfied with the control of the budget deficit, high interest rates, and so on. Is this true?

[Makramallah] The IMF can say whatever it likes, but in the end they will come to negotiate for the second standby agreement. What was holding them up was that they wanted the Bank to make its decision first. I cannot say that what they [the IMF] say is wrong from a theoretical and scientific point of view but economic theory cannot be applied in the same manner in all countries because each country has its own conditions. They have their ideas, we have our own and these things have to be adapted according to the circumstances. It is likely that we will differ sometimes and agree sometimes, but we always come to an agreement in the end. Once the Bank has given its word, it becomes easier to come to an understanding with the IMF.

[Rajab] Does the Egyptian government have reason to be optimistic that an agreement will be concluded soon?

[Makramallah] Personally, I am optimistic for a number of reasons. First, we have already done a lot. The negotiating missions express their reservations. Why? Because most of them are bank employees. They try to take every possible precaution to avoid being reprimanded in the future if they do not do their job well. So they are unusually strict. But the board of directors has its own point of view which is, of course, affected by the experts. I believe stability and the application of economic reform in Egypt is of importance to the board which represents countries of weight. Also the role of Egypt in the region is of paramount importance. It is not just pure economics, but political economy.

[Rajab] What effect will the agreement with the World Bank and the IMF have on the debt rescheduling and write-off programme?

[Makramallah] In May 1991 we rescheduled our debts. After signing the Paris Club agreement, we got a 15 per cent write-off. Once we have signed the second agreement with the IMF we automatically get another 15 per cent. At the end of the second standby agreement, the IMF will evaluate what has been achieved and we get another 20 per cent, making the total write-off equal to 50 per cent.

[Rajab] What is the size of Egypt's debt?

[Makramallah] It is very difficult to evaluate, because there are commercial debts, military debts, government guaranteed debts, debts which cannot be rescheduled such as those owed to the World Bank. The debts under discussion at the Paris Club amounted to about \$28

billion, and these are the government-to-government debts. The total debts would amount to about \$50 billion.

[Rajab] On the subject of debts, we hear these days of debt swaps currently being concluded in the market by Egyptian banks and companies. What kinds of debts are these and how is the government keeping track of the debts that are actually being bought?

[Makramallah] In the Paris Club agreement, there is a provision that Egypt can buy back some of its debts to other countries through debt-equity swaps. This means that Egypt can transfer a maximum of ten per cent of its debt to a certain country into Egyptian pounds on condition it be used in Egypt for new investments.

Mufti Accused of Overstepping His Authority

93LD0001C Cairo AL-NUR in Arabic 17 Mar 93 p 10

[Article by Dr. 'Ali al-Salus, professor of jurisprudence, faculty of Islamic Law, Qatar University: "Shaykh Tawfiq Diverges From Views of All Legal Bodies; Mufti Oversteps Limits of His Position"]

[Text] In Egypt, fatwas [Islamic legal rulings] have an organizational framework. A map has been drawn for them—one that prescribes a procedure for this important function. According to Professor Fahmi Huwayda, the following are its salient features:

Before the law reorganizing al-Azhar was issued in 1961, fatwas on Islamic law were under the jurisdiction of the rector of al-Azhar and the Board of Senior Ulema.

The mufti, on the other hand, was part of the Ministry of Justice. His function, as defined in the criminal procedures code, was to render an opinion about the extent to which death sentences emanating from the courts conformed to the precepts of Islamic law.

The post had a historical origin closely connected to the system of shari'ah courts. It was under this system that the post of "mufti of Equity," or "mufti of the Ministry of Justice" appeared. He later became the mufti of Egyptian realm, and then mufti of the republic.

When the law reorganizing al-Azhar was issued, the most important change it effected was to abolish the Board of Senior Ulema and replace it with a similar institution, the Academy of Islamic Research.

Under the 1961 law, the rector of al-Azhar, the chief imam, was considered the person of authoritative opinion on religious matters and those engaged with the Koran and Islamic learning (Section 4). The research academy was described as the highest body for Islamic research. One of its duties was to render opinion on new religious or social problems (Section 15).

When implementing rules for the al-Azhar law were issued in 1975, they specified that a function of the research academy was to render opinions on new religious, social, or economic problems (Section 17). Under the new situation, there was no appreciable change in the mufti's role; his job was still connected to the Ministry of

Justice and remained within the previously set limits. This did not, however, prevent the mufti from widening the scope of his activity, which narrowed or widened according to each mufti's ability to formulate original legal opinion, if he was qualified. There was no reason to object to this, since in Islam the formulation of original legal opinion [ijtihad] is no one's monopoly; the gate is open for anyone who fulfills the conditions for such activity and has mastered its mechanism.

Holding that there is an authority does not mean advocating monopolization; rather it defines each party's sphere of activity and the duties entrusted to it.

Under the Board of Senior Ulema and, afterward, under the Academy of Islamic Research, the governing principle was that fatwas were collective. People's actual lives had become so complex that it had become imprudent for any single individual to venture to give a fatwa.

If that was necessary in the past, it is more necessary and requisite today with the ramification of sciences, uninterrupted new developments, and the deepening of specialization.

This is the structural framework for fatwas in Egypt.

It should be noted that the members of the research academy are not chosen only from Egypt. The academy also includes senior Islamic jurists from various parts of the Arab world.

Ulema from 42 countries attended the first conference, which met in 1383 [1964].

The Islamic community did not create only the research academy. The World Islamic League's Academy of Islamic Jurisprudence and the Academy of Islamic Jurisprudence, which is affiliated with the Islamic Conference Organization, were also created. I will give a brief sketch of the two academies.

The World Islamic League's Academy of Islamic Jurisprudence

The General Secretariat of the World Islamic League saw the need for collective formulation of original legal opinion [ijtihad]. It believed that the means to create such ijtihad was the foundation of an academy of Islamic jurisprudence, modeled on the [Arabic] Language Academy and the other scientific academies for various subjects in the world today. The academy would be composed of well versed, pious Islamic jurists from all countries of the Islamic world.

Realizing the great importance of the subject, the secretariat, in its order issued in Rajab 1383 (November-December 1963), recommended creating a body composed of ulema qualified to render fatwas and representing all parts of the Islamic world.

The matter was submitted to the general Islamic conference held in the league's building in Mecca in Dhu al-Hijjah 1384 (April 1965). The conference made the following decision:

An Islamic academy would be founded to include a group of ulema and investigators from various parts of the Islamic world. They would study Islamic affairs and solve problems that Islam and Muslims face in the affairs of their lives.

Academy of Islamic Jurisprudence of Islamic Conference Organization

In Rabi' I 1401 (January 1981), the third Islamic summit conference was held. A call was addressed to it to create an international academy for Islamic jurisprudence, including jurists, ulema, and thinkers from the Islamic world, to arrive at a genuine Islamic response to every question raised by modern life.

Following discussion of the call, it was decided:

1. To establish an academy to be called the Academy of Islamic Jurisprudence, its members to consist of jurists, ulema, and thinkers from various areas of knowledge (legal, cultural, scientific, and economic) from throughout the Islamic world. The academy would study problems of modern life and formulate authentic and effective original Islamic legal opinion [ijtihad], with the goal of presenting solutions flowing from the Islamic heritage and open to the development of Islamic thought on those problems.

2. To give the organization's general secretary the authority to consult with the World Islamic League to take the necessary steps toward formulating a constitution for the academy and submitting it to the next Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Countries, so that it might be studied and the necessary measures taken for its approval.

After this resolution, a constitution was drawn up and approved by the 13th Conference of Foreign Ministers in Dhu al-Qa'dah 1402 (August-September 1982). The academy's inaugural conference was held in Sha'ban 1403 (July 1983).

These, therefore, are the three academies responsible for researching modern problems which need to be mentioned in this field. This becomes clear from their goals, their composition, and their method of formulating original legal opinion and from a review of the actions of their conferences.

The basic principle of collective ijtihad is that it may not be contested; or, if contestation is allowed, it may take place only by means of a greater (or at least equal) collective ijtihad—one not inferior in size or standing to the former. Certainly it may not be an individual ijtihad by anyone in our age, no matter who he may be.

No mufti in any country may violate the consensus of these academies and pronounce a fatwa that goes against the conclusions they have reached.

No Muslim will have justification for his behavior before God if, abandoning this consensus, he adheres to the mufti's fatwa.

We see from the foregoing that the organizational framework of fatwas is clearly defined in Egypt and the Islamic world. Advisory opinions on death sentences are solicited only from the mufti—formerly the mufti of Equity, now the mufti of the republic—who belongs to the Ministry of Justice. However, the highest body for Islamic legal rulings in Egypt now is the Research Academy, which is headed by the chief imam, the rector of al-Azhar. Although the mufti has the right to deliver fatwas and expound legal provisions, he must abide by the fatwas and resolutions of the Academy of Islamic Research, which, as made clear by the law organizing al-Azhar and its affiliated bodies, is the highest authority for formulating Islamic legal rulings.

Although all this is clear, we have seen the mufti not only going against the Academy of Islamic Research, but also violating the consensus of the three authoritative academies.

His fatwas on banks are the clearest example of this. Until the first half of 1989, the mufti adhered to the opinion of these academies on what constituted usury definitely forbidden by texts of the Koran, Sunna, and consensus. Subsequently, however, we saw him deliver legal rulings overturning this clear prohibition that can be necessarily deduced from religion and that transcends any disagreement, as His Excellency the Chief Imam made clear by referring to the resolution of the research academy.

The mufti took another step when he ruled that the performer of this forbidden deed should be rewarded if he intended to aid the state.

Then he took an even greater step, which I noted earlier: He considered the setting of the interest rate a definitive obligatory duty, and he considered anyone who opposed it a violator of Islamic law and ethics.

Thus, the mufti has overstepped the limits of his office. What is the reward of one who does so?

Then the disaster became even greater.

In the 23 December 1992 issue of AKHIR SA'AH, a magazine of well-known orientation, one of the headlines in large letters on the cover was, "Mufti's Testimony: Multiple Sources of Fatwas Behind Extremism."

On one of the pages of the magazine, the mufti said the following:

"Some issues are not suitable for anyone but the specialist or the mufti—I stress the word 'mufti'—who has his advisers and men of learning and experience to help him. It is not right for anyone else, whatever his office or standing, to give legal rulings on these important questions. For example, when we speak about the dealings of banks, it is not right for someone, whoever he may be—and whatever his office or rank—to come and say something is permitted or forbidden. No, a thousand times no!"

Later in the mufti's interview, on page 55, we find the following:

"I hate monopolies and monopolizers. Everyone should know his job and the limits of his responsibility. This government—you may quote me—must define responsibilities. I have found from personal experience that the most ignorant and bankrupt people are monopolizers. I mean that such people want to serve as teachers, muftis, or shaykhs. No, the official mufti of the state has a definite function: to declare what is permitted and what is forbidden. The opinion of the mufti in this regard—you may quote me—is above the opinion of the rector of al-Azhar. I repeat: the word of the mufti regarding what is permitted and what is forbidden is above the word of the rector of al-Azhar."

I need only quote to the reader these statements by the mufti. I do not want to comment, lest the pen go too far.

IRAQ

Opposition Asks UN To Declare Saddam War Criminal

93AE0471A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Apr 93
p 7

[Article: "Iraqi Opposition Calls for Parliament in Exile"]

[Text] London—Iraqi opposition figures called for an Iraqi parliament-in-exile. They urged the United Nations and "regional and world powers to support the Iraqi people in their trial and alleviate their daily suffering caused by the blockade" and international sanctions.

According to a statement distributed two nights ago by the Iraqi Central Organization for Dialogue and Follow-up, which emerged from the meeting that these independent figures held in London from 2 to 4 April, "The Iraqi people are striving for unity of all opposition political groups and forces in order to save Iraq." The statement urged members of the Iraqi Army, "men of honor in party and security institutions, and tribesmen to join ranks to overthrow the regime."

The statement by figures who opposed the results of the Salah-al-Din conference and had reservations about the proportions of representation in the United Iraqi National Congress indicated that "the opinion of the Kurdish people, who are part of the Iraqi people, concerning the formula under which they want to live within Iraq should be respected. This formula should be adopted afterward by a constitutional government and a unified, democratically elected Iraqi parliament with the right to approve a formula suitable for all members of the people of a unified Iraq."

The statement emphatically rejected partition and urged the United Nations "to pass a Security Council resolution declaring Saddam and his retinue war criminals, to form an international court to try them on an indictment prepared by a committee of jurists, and to head off attempts to normalize relations with the regime."

Italy Reportedly To Discuss Bill To Lift Embargo*93AE0479A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
3 Apr 93 pp 1,2*

[Article by Majid al-Lami: "Italian Parliament To Discuss Bill To Lift Embargo Against Iraq Shortly; Andreotti: We Cannot Let Iraq's Children Die"]

[Text] Baghdad—The Italian Parliament will soon debate a bill presented by 200 of its members who represent all political parties and blocs. The bill includes four points that call for lifting the embargo against Iraq, lifting the ban on Iraq's frozen assets, resuming past diplomatic and economic relations with Iraq, and reopening dialogue between the two countries through the joint Italian-Iraqi committee. Giulio Andreotti, head of the Italian Parliament's International Parliamentary Committee, told the Iraqi National Assembly delegation that visited Rome recently, "We cannot permit Iraqi children to die. This thing pains us greatly." He added, "Iraq is an important element in the region, and we believe that there should be no intervention in its internal affairs. We also call for preserving its unity. Rather, we wish to see a strong and united Iraq."

Andreotti also told the National Assembly delegation that consideration is being given to developing means to lift the drugs embargo through WHO and by involving this organization in helping Iraq acquire drugs. Andreotti also mentioned the possibility of continuing the dialogue through the International Parliamentary Union, which will convene in New Delhi this month to find means to lift the political embargo against Iraq. Dr. Sultan al-Shawi, a National Assembly member and head of the Iraqi-Italian Friendship Society, has asserted that the assembly delegation's visit is in response to an invitation by Giulio Andreotti and that he has held a joint two-hour meeting with the head of the Italian Parliament's International Parliamentary Committee and the head of the Foreign Relations Committee. In these meetings, the assembly delegation reviewed the consequences of the comprehensive embargo that is imposed on Iraq and that makes it impossible for Iraq to secure food for its people, milk for its children, and drugs for its patients or to import the requirements for its continued survival. The delegation said that the purpose is to starve the Iraqi people and that this is a major crime that violates humanitarian principles and human rights.

Dr. al-Shawi stated that the delegation also met with head of the Italian Parliamentary Committee in the European Parliament and with humanitarian organizations working to help Iraq and that he stressed that the embargo imposed against Iraq is a comprehensive political, economic, informational, cultural, and scientific embargo. The delegation felt that the Italian Parliament supports lifting the embargo. This represents a major step, especially since it comes from a country that has its political weight in the EEC [European Economic Community] and that is one of the world's seven industrial nations. Moreover, the Italian people, represented by

their parliamentarians and popular forces, do not support the embargo against Iraq. The very invitation to our delegation to visit Italy under these circumstances has major significance regarding the future developments concerning Iraq. This also confirms that it is necessary to pay attention to parliamentary diplomacy, which has been able to move in this area to support the official diplomacy. At the popular level, the delegation engaged in memorable activity, especially with the Bridge-to-Baghdad Organization.

Dr. al-Shawi added, "We have felt that the humanitarian organizations that support Iraq have been performing distinguished work in connection with providing Iraq with all possible aid, especially drugs. These groups shoulder heavy responsibilities. Through them, one can open the door to normal relations with Europe because they are a part of Europe's." Al-Shawi noted that the National Assembly delegation has met with Italian Foreign Trade Minister Claudio Vitalone, who expressed understanding for the points presented by the delegation and the injustice and crimes committed against the Iraqi citizen. The delegation also met with (Fusci), head of the Italian parliamentary delegation in the European Parliament, who promised to hold consultations within this parliament on the embargo imposed against Iraq. The assembly delegation also witnessed tumultuous demonstrations staged by humanitarian organizations before the U.S., British, and French embassies on the anniversary of the aggression against Iraq.

Talabani Interviewed, Stresses Iraqi Unity*93AE0469A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
26 Mar 93 pp 26-27*

[Interview with Jalal al-Talabani, leader of the Kurdistan National Party, by Ahmad al-Buz in Kuwait; date not given: "Removing Baghdad Regime Is Iraqi People's Responsibility"]

[Text] Jalal Talabani, leader of the Kurdistan National Party, has gone many rounds in the Iraqi opposition's fight against various regimes that have held the reins of power in Iraq since monarchy days. He is one of the prominent symbols of the Kurdish national movement in Iraq. He has also made contributions to political activity on the Arab and international levels.

During his stay in Kuwait, which was at the invitation of the first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, AL-HAWADITH met with him and conducted the following interview:

[Al-Buz] How do you assess the situation in northern Iraq?

[Talabani] This is a general question that carries political, economic, military, and educational ramifications. What do you want specifically?

[Al-Buz] We mean the Iraqi regime. This is the important thing.

[Talabani] The Iraqi regime has separated itself from the north. I hereby accuse it of disassociation. It has separated itself by withdrawing its forces and officials from northern Iraq. You know that the north is managed by a so-called autonomous regime. There is an executive council, which is tantamount to a cabinet, that oversees the local administration because their officials have been withdrawn. There are about 150 civil servants working in departments, such as interior, health, agriculture, agricultural reform, supply, education, and social affairs. Those without a boss and without salaries also left. When I hear that Israel may suddenly withdraw from the Gaza Strip, I remember that Saddam Husayn carried out the same plan against us. I believe that his withdrawal from the north, in this manner, will put us in a critical spot. The fact is that the area has suffered, especially after the blockade that was imposed on us prevented fuel from reaching the area. This is a necessity of life. Consequently, we consider these measures to be a war of annihilation launched against the Kurdish people. The lack of fuel in this area of extreme cold means the shutdown of education and health services. It has resulted in the deaths of a great many children. However, the people are steadfast and prefer to bear all of the burdens of this action on their way to freedom and escape from the teeth of the dictatorship along with the famine and degradation from which they have suffered. Naturally, humanitarian organizations from various countries all over the world came to our assistance. With all that our area has suffered, 300,000 refugees from Kirkuk came to our area. They joined the million refugees from destroyed villages who are living in military camps around the cities. Note that more than 4,500 villages have been destroyed. The tragedy does not stop here. We have tens of thousands of widows and orphans who lost their provider during the annihilation campaigns that were organized by Hasan 'Abd-al-Majid in 1988. We have several official documents that condemn him, as well as Saddam Husayn, for crimes of murder and annihilation. There are 200,000 of our citizens missing; we know nothing of them. When questioned, the Iraqi regime denies knowing anything about them. Imagine the agony their relatives have suffered, not knowing whether they are alive or dead.

Concerning the military side, the government has withdrawn its forces to a line that it considers suitable for its purposes. South of this line, there are three army corps. The first is in Kirkuk; the second is in Jalula; and the third corps is in the al-Mawsil area. These corps are equipped with tanks, as well as medium- and long-range missiles, and are facing the Kurdish forces. Note that these three corps represent only a part of the Iraqi forces deployed north of the 36th parallel no-fly zone. Those deployed south of this line are supported by combat aircraft and helicopters.

When the Iraqi Government separated itself from the area, it became necessary to organize administrative matters. Since the former legislative council had dissolved itself, we held elections for a legislative council, which we call the National Congress. The elections were

conducted under international supervision. Out of this council, a regional government was formed to administer the area. The necessary services have gradually been restored, but we face the problem of officials' salaries. We have asked the United Nations to disburse part of the frozen Iraqi funds, and the request is still under study. These are Iraqi officials, and they must be helped.

The problem of fuel remains. We have working oil wells, but we need to export the surplus. We also have an electricity problem. We have two generating stations that produce 680,000 megawatts, but they are tied in with networks that distribute electricity directly to Kirkuk and Baghdad. We need a local network fed by the two main networks. We also have a problem of destroyed villages and disrupted farming, although we are making efforts to encourage farmers to return to work. We have been successful in our efforts. Last year's harvest was excellent, and we hope for better results this year.

The Kurdish area is a prosperous area. We have five rivers, scores of lakes, and hundreds of springs. All of it is good, fertile soil, which is suitable for growing everything. If the fires of Saddam's forces have destroyed many trees, nature is stronger. New trees have begun to return, and various kinds of fruit are plentiful. The UN's plan for agricultural training will help us achieve self-sufficiency.

Turning to the political situation in the area, we are adopting total, Western-style democracy. Every party has guaranteed, respected freedom. Each has the right to expression, and some of these parties have their own radio stations and newspapers. We are also in the process of unifying the Peshmerga forces in order to form a single, united defense force.

During the interview with Talabani, he received a telephone call from London, advising him that the UN Human Rights Commission had issued a decision harshly condemning the Iraqi regime's violations and calling on the UN secretary general to send UN teams to all Iraqi areas to observe the extent of the Iraqi regime's compliance with the laws of the human rights organization. [end Talabani]

He then said:

[Talabani] The purpose of unifying the forces is to tie them in with the local administration so that no private armed organization remains. Schools and universities have also begun to operate. This is the sum of the situation in the area.

[Al-Buz] You are suffering from a financial crisis. Is there hope that the United Nations will release some of the Iraqi regime's frozen assets?

[Talabani] Yes, we are in a bad financial state. Last year, the United Nations allocated about \$90 million to aid this area, but the Iraqi Government blocked all means of delivering this aid. There are European and American aid packages totaling \$48 million. However, the problem vis-a-vis this assistance is the bureaucratic actions that consume half the aid money, and the rest is taken up by

materials that are purchased at fantastic prices. If this money was given to the government concerned, it could better satisfy the need.

[Al-Buz] Have you discussed this matter with UN officials?

[Talabani] Yes, we discussed it, when we met with Butrus-Ghali last year, and we also discussed it this year with [Ellison], through our representative. We are always promised good things, but we see no change.

[Al-Buz] The Iraqi regime has lasted longer than necessary, according to the Kurdish Iraqi people and the Arab people in general. How long will this continue?

[Talabani] So long as Saddam Husayn remains in power, the one-man dictatorship and its violations of human rights and of all Islamic and Arab values will continue. The Iraqi dictatorship means war at home and abroad. It means destruction and the squandering of Iraq's wealth in unjustifiable ways. Since the beginning, the Iraqi regime has sought all the region's power. Look, for example, at the region's economic losses because of the Iraqi regime and the enormous funds that have been wasted as a result of Iraqi aggression. If these funds remained, all of the Arab countries could be rebuilt. Therefore, this odious, dictatorial regime is not a danger solely to the Iraqi people, but rather, it is a danger to the Arab world and to all mankind. Its presence threatens the new world order. Therefore, I think that it would be to everyone's interest, or rather, it is everyone's job to get rid of this dictatorial regime and find a democratic alternative.

[Al-Buz] Are you for the thesis that says that Saddam Husayn was not overthrown because an alternative is lacking? Does this mean that there is no alternative to Saddam Husayn?

[Talabani] In fact, there is an alternative or alternatives, but the point is, is there a desired alternative? I think that the quarters that have interests in Iraq all think about an alternative that would be appropriate for them. However, the Iraqi people are thinking about an alternative that would suit them. The problem with alternatives is not the existence of alternatives. In Iraq, as you know, there are deep-rooted national, scientific, and political movements that have produced scores of state leaders. The question is, however, who will remove the regime and replace it? We, the Iraqi people, believe that removing the regime is our job, and that the alternative must be a democratic, popular alternative that expresses the interests and aspirations of the people.

We believe that after forming the unified Iraqi National Congress, to which the national majority of activist Iraqi opposition belongs, including Islamic, Kurdish, democratic, and federalist forces, that this conference will be able to be the logical, acceptable alternative to the dictatorial regime.

[Al-Buz] What is your relationship with Iran?

[Talabani] We have a natural relationship with it. The relationship has improved and is based on the principle of good neighborliness and nonintervention in internal affairs, as well as respect for the interests of both sides.

[Al-Buz] What is the extent of coordination between you and the rest of the Iraqi opposition factions?

[Talabani] We, in the Kurdistan National Union, are members of the Kurdistan Front, and the union is a member of the Iraqi National Congress. Therefore, our relations with the others in the National Congress are excellent. We even have good relations with factions that have not joined the National Congress.

[Al-Buz] After the liberation of Kuwait, an uprising took place, but it was aborted. What are the main reasons that led to it being aborted?

[Talabani] First, I would like to correct some information. The uprising was not aborted, but it did not achieve its goals. The uprising continues. For instance, in the Kurdish region there are vast areas that continue to be liberated, thanks to the uprising. Before the uprising, all of these were Iraqi areas under control of the dictatorship. After the uprising, Ahvaz and certain southern areas continued to be liberated. Consequently, the uprising has not been aborted, but it did fail to attain its goals. Why? First, because it lacked a unified Iraqi leadership to coordinate operations in the north, south, and central areas and to lead in accordance with clearly defined plans. Second, there was no coordination between the uprising and the coalition forces, which had invaded Iraq at that time. Third, the mistaken position taken by the Bush administration, when it allowed encircled Iraqi forces to break out of the encirclement and suppress the uprising in the south. It also permitted combat aircraft to operate against the uprising and left the regime's tanks and artillery free to operate, when it was presumed the Iraqi forces would continue to be contained. I think that the major error committed by the Bush administration was its belief that the Iraqi Army would carry out a coup and, consequently, would change the ruling group. The reason for this position was the Bush administration's fear of the Kurds in the north and the Shiites in the south, while the facts confirm that the Kurds of the north and the Shiites of the south are extending to the Iraqi people all their humanitarian and national democratic aspirations.

[Al-Buz] At the Beirut Conference that you held in 1991, surely there were many recommendations for its agenda. What items have been implemented so far?

[Talabani] The truth is that no decisions were forthcoming from the Beirut Conference, since the work of the National Action Committee, which stemmed from the conference, has had difficulties. It was decided to form a preparatory committee to hold another conference, and the committee was formed. It tried to hold a conference in Vienna, but, at the last minute, certain parties boycotted it. This prompted those that did attend the Vienna Conference to form another preparatory committee, which met in the Salah-al-Din area in

northern Iraq. This meeting was attended by all parties. Resolutions were issued to hold a meeting in Shaqlawah, but certain parties also stayed away from this meeting.

[Al-Buz] Who bears responsibility for the failure of these meetings?

[Talabani] The fact is that certain factions at home, foreign interference, and certain factions that live outside the country all share the responsibility.

[Al-Buz] Can you specify these quarters?

[Talabani] Excuse me, but that would not help to improve matters.

[Al-Buz] Saddam still claims that Kuwait is a part of Iraq. This became baseless after the world recognized Kuwait as an independent state. What do you think about this claim?

[Talabani] I believe this claim to be baseless. It is a lie and will continue to be a lie. However, Saddam Husayn does not operate according to what's right. On the contrary, he works in accordance with his unilateral, dictatorial, tyrannical, and greedy desires, because he is the emperor of the Arabs and, consequently, emperor of the region. Therefore, I think that as long as Saddam Husayn remains, Saddam will continue to claim that Kuwait is a part of Iraq. These claims are contrary to the best interests of the Iraqi people and the peoples of the Arab world and region. It is a danger. Therefore, I repeat my statement that the dictatorship in Iraq must be removed. Then, these claims will end.

[Al-Buz] The Iraqi regime has offered to give Kurdistan self-government. You agreed to that. However, this offer has not been implemented. Was that from the Iraqi side?

[Talabani] This offer was made in 1970, and the Iraqi regime has not implemented it. However, in 1974, the Iraqi Government—unilaterally and without agreement with the Kurdish side—formed a ministerial council to administer the area, as well as a legislative council, in the sense of a parliament for the area. In fact, if you refer to these two laws, you will find they are generalized and not specific. This is also the case with the Iraqi National Council, which was nothing but an facade and had no powers. It was the idea and decree of the sole president, Saddam Husayn.

[Al-Buz] Would this offer still stand with the coming of an alternative government to the current regime?

[Talabani] The Iraqi National Congress has determined solutions for Iraq's problems. It has established a policy to end the nationalist and sectarian persecution that exists against the Shiites of Iraq, as well as the policy of racial persecution against the Kurdish people. Consequently, it has established a new policy that will be implemented after Iraq's liberation, so that there will be one democratic, independent Iraq. Within this Iraq, the Kurdish people will enjoy a kind of self-administration, in the federalist mold, within Iraq. God willing, this federalism will be achieved after the liberation of Iraq, and the establishment of one independent Iraqi state.

[Al-Buz] All Arab people totally sympathize with the Kurdish people, but there is criticism from some quarters that the Kurdish movement is a separatist movement. This weakens the position of those who support the Kurdish people. What is your view of this?

[Talabani] There is no separatist movement in Kurdistan. We have lived with the Arabs for more than 70 years. A Kurdish party or a Kurdish movement has not emerged to carry the banner of separatism. This separatism is a charge pinned by the centralized, dictatorial state on any democratic Kurdish movement that calls for democracy.

The separatist accusation is no longer restricted to the Kurds. On the contrary, it now includes the Shiite Arabs in Iraq and all those who demand human rights. I think that there is a deficiency in Arab national thinking vis-a-vis Kurdish nationalism since, so far, no Arab solution to the Kurdish question has been offered. The fact is that the Arab nationalist movement does not have solutions to the issues from which Arab countries suffer, including an Arab solution to the nationalist issue in southern Sudan. One day they talk about self-government, and another day they talk about "states." Now, al-Bashir says that he approves of a federal regime. Where is the Arab solution to the Kurdish issue in Iraq? Sometimes, it is said that we are the descendants of Kurd Bin-('Afaf), or that we are the Arabs of the mountains and have forgotten our language. Sometimes, it is decided that we are a Kurdish people and that we have rights. What are these rights? I remember taking part in a conference of Arab Socialists in Algiers in 1967. I submitted a paper titled "Socialism and the Basis of Nationalism in Iraq." I called on the Arabs to state their views about the Arab solution to our issue. Are we a people who have an issue and rights? A tragedy occurred in Iraq because, for the first time, one learns that a state uses chemical weapons against its people in Halabjah, in the village of Dagh, and in other widespread areas, in addition to committing hideous crimes that have been shown in the world press and on television. Can you justify this? We are Kurds, yes; we do not deny that. What are we doing; we have also been created by God! Was not God the one who said in His book: We created you as people and tribes; know one another.

Food Items, Price Fluctuations Discussed

93AE0440A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
22 Feb 93 p 4

[Article by Fulayh Widay Mujzab: "Sudden Rise in Egg, Flour Prices; Food Markets Manipulated by Rumors, Driven by Hostile Broadcasts"]

[Text] The prices of some food items, which dropped a few days ago, suddenly shot up for no apparent reason except for rumors that were spread by certain merchants and traders in order to reap profits, even though there is adequate supply of many varieties on the market.

Prices of white [refined] flour rose to 480 dinars, and prices of dark flour rose to 250 dinars per sack. A tray of

eggs commanded 60 dinars yesterday morning, even though it sold on wholesale markets for 35 dinars only a few days earlier. It was noted that the egg supply was weak either because farm production is low or because eggs are being hoarded in order to drive up prices.

Prices of other food items also rose slightly or moderately. The price of tea remained stable, but sugar prices climbed from 500 to 520 dinars per sack. Oil prices went from 305 to 315 dinars for a large container. Legume prices also increased by various amounts. Beans, for instance, now command 23 dinars.

The factors underlying lower prices still prevail, according to informed sources, and wholesale markets continue to receive large quantities daily across external gateways. The sources added that cooperatives and official sources provide additional supplies and that shopkeepers and consumers have no difficulty obtaining what they want. The sources attributed this sudden rise in prices to rumors and disinformation mongered by a group of greedy profiteers interested only in furthering their own interests.

The sources wondered if there was any convincing reason behind the price increases when all indicators point to the opposite direction. Food is in good supply and is experiencing no demand pressures. Furthermore, large quantities of various food items have been secured by merchants and by the state as additional quantities keep streaming in under the terms of import contracts with various sources throughout the world. Citizens, the sources continued, find tangible evidence of that in [shelves stocked with] basic goods imported from India, Malaysia, Vietnam, Bulgaria, and other nations.

It should be noted that merchants, brokers, and wholesalers manipulate and raise prices for silly reasons that provoke amazement, surprise, and disgust. They listen to enemy broadcasts and to [hostile] correspondent analyses—so much so that the markets are now driven by those broadcasts, even though they [the merchants] are fully aware that those broadcasts disseminate disinformation because of hostility to Iraq.

One merchant predicted that prices would stabilize or would vacillate within narrow margins but would tend to decline because of rationing and because consumers have already purchased their Ramadan supplies, thereby lessening demand while supply remains ample. Furthermore, several varieties of goods are reaching markets in large quantities from abroad.

In another development, cooperatives continue to distribute rice, meats, eggs, and other staples as citizens begin to receive their March rations, which included such new items as lentils and chickpeas.

Military Industries' Contributions Reported

93AE0440B Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
22 Feb 93 p 4

[Article by Tariq al-Jabburi: "Al-Shumukh Project To Rehabilitate al-Nida' General Enterprise for Mold Manufacturing To Be Completed by Middle of Next Month"]

[Text] The warriors of the Military Industries Organization have completed 70 percent of their work on al-Shumukh project for the rehabilitation of al-Nida' General Enterprise for Mold Manufacturing. It is hoped that rehabilitation will be completed by the middle of next month, according to engineer Yahia Nasif Jasim al-Jabburi, director general of the enterprise.

He said: "Work on the buildings that received direct hits has been 80 to 100 percent completed, which is ahead of schedule."

"Rehabilitation work began on 1 February, having been preceded by the removal of the rubble. On 4 February, we began by introducing service equipment to manufacture replacement parts for damaged machinery. On 6 February, we introduced more machines that were repaired by our facilities and the facilities of other manufacturing enterprises, which allowed us to fulfill some of our obligations to supply the needs of other enterprises such as the manufacture of cylinders for al-Nida' tractors, etc."

He added: "Some workshops have already been restored to working conditions. The number of machinery that are rehabilitated and put on line is increasing daily in implementation of leader President Saddam Husayn's guidelines to restore the enterprise to a better condition that it used to be. We have already completed 60 percent of the project for machinery and equipment rehabilitation. A large number of damaged machinery, about 90 percent, will be restored to operations by the time we are through."

"The most significant accomplishment of al-Shumukh project—which has been undertaken by the Military Industries Organization with the support and supervision of Field Marshal Husayn Kamil Hasan, presidential adviser and supervisor of industry and petroleum, and Marshal 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, head of the organization—has been the manufacture of bridge supports, air turbines, and various electric installations manufactured and repaired at our own facilities and the facilities of other military industries. We took advantage of the rehabilitation drive to distribute our equipment in such a manner as to ward off previous bottlenecks and improve flows."

AL-THAWRAH also interviewed engineer 'Ali Hasan, site manager of al-Riyadh Projects of (al-Faluw) General Enterprise, which has already completed more than 80 percent of the work on its two main buildings. Hasan said:

"From the moment we were given the assignment, we have been working day and night to implement the orders of the leader President Saddam Husayn for the fast and unerring completion of the task. In order to ensure quality and reduce costs, we made some modifications, such as replacing precast concrete pillars with steel ones and modifying the iron box structure that supports service pipes and cables by substituting a simpler design that would serve the purpose while saving

several tons of steel. This is in addition to the manufacture of air propellers and the replacement of imported lighting installations with those produced by the Military Industries Organization. We also put damaged equipment to use after repairing it."

"This involves all civil, mechanical, and other disciplines in a manner that seizes all available opportunities to drive working performance to new heights."

Lebanese Performer Denies Affair With 'Uday

93AE0472A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
24 Mar 93 p 87

[Article: "Rumor About My Affair With 'Udayy Saddam Husayn Is Attempt To Destroy Me"]

[Text] Beirut—Lebanese performer Huwayda al-Hashim is still on edge from the effects of the story that a Lebanese magazine broke and Arab newspapers published about an affair between her and 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, the Iraqi president's son. The alleged mistress quickly denied the entire story, not realizing that the manner of her denial left behind more than one question.

The story, as a number of newspapers presented it, began in the form of a question, "What is the relationship between 'Udayy Saddam Husayn and performer Huwayda al-Hashim?" The details of the story were as follows: "The rumor spreading like wildfire in Baghdad, the erstwhile capital of Harun al-Rashid, is of a relationship between the Iraqi president's son 'Udayy and a well-known Lebanese artist, Huwayda al-Hashim." The story added: "Rumor has it that 'Udayy is a friend of this Lebanese artist and that he welcomes her officially when she arrives in Iraqi territory across the Jordanian border. There has been so much talk about the rumor that it has become fact to many people. Furthermore, those who are spreading the rumor are no ordinary folk."

As soon as copies of the magazine, which devoted part of its cover to the report and a color photograph of Huwayda al-Hashim, reached the markets and bookstores, a young female journalist quickly telephoned the home of Huwayda al-Hashim to ask the subject of the story the truth about what had been published. The following conversation took place between the two women:

[Journalist] "What is your relationship with 'Udayy?"

[Huwayda] "Which 'Udayy is he?"

[Journalist] "Saddam Husayn's son."

[Huwayda (laughing)] "You must be joking!"

The journalist then suggested that she would show al-Hashim the published story.

Before half an hour had passed, Huwayda al-Hashim was reading the story, which left her suspended between seriousness and amazement: "God Almighty! I do not know him and have absolutely no relationship with him. I have traveled—yes, I have traveled several times to

Jordan and given performances at the Regency Hotel more than once, but I never met him, ever."

At first, the matter was not given the proper attention. When she showed her brother the story, he showed no sign of annoyance or anger. But the many telephone calls to her home in Beirut's Saqr district from acquaintances, friends, reporters, and concert fans seeking to clarify the truth of the matter irritated her. She shouted at several callers, "Leave me alone." She retired to her home and made no appearances outside it. She remained there for a number of days.

The family lawyer—he is also an al-Hashim family member and a brother-in-law of Huwayda—asked her to quickly call the report a lie, lest it turn into a refrain that might jeopardize her work and commitments. He wrote a denial for her that was addressed to the magazine. It was subsequently published and reads as follows:

"On 1 March 1993, you published a cover picture with the caption, 'What is the relationship between Huwayda al-Hashim and 'Udayy Saddam Husayn?' On page 8 was a story that said that I was having an affair with 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, that I would cross to Iraqi territory via Jordan, and that he would meet me. Since this is totally devoid of truth, I would like to say the following:"

"First, I have never had the honor of knowing 'Udayy Saddam Husayn and have never met him. I learned what he looks like from the pictures that accompanied the article."

"Second, I have never in my life—so help me God!—crossed a desert road."

"Third, I have never—so help me God!—slipped out to meet a man, even when I was an adolescent."

"Fourth, I marvel and wonder at the party who supplied you with this fabricated information. I wonder what the purpose was and who would benefit. Why all this innuendo and attempts to prove that I am the sort of woman who plays around, when everyone knows how I uphold my family's traditions and honor my young brothers, who have given me their highest confidence?"

Some who read the denial did not like part of it. They alerted Huwayda that her use of the expression, "I have never had the honor," might be used against her. They explained to her that the man in question was the son of the Iraqi president, who invaded an Arab country, killed many of its people, and imprisoned others, and that his soldiers burned and looted many establishments, stores, and homes. Therefore, knowing him was no honor. Some of her women friends criticized her for using certain expressions they considered inappropriate, such as her emphasis on never having crossed a desert road, and her use of the words "plays around" and "slipped out." They wished that she had contented herself with a clear, unambiguous reply and denial, without going into such details. The heroine of the story or rumor and author of the denial replied to all of this, saying about the people who started the rumor, "They want to destroy me. But they will not be able to do it."

We asked her, "Who wants to destroy Huwayda al-Hashim?" Her voice quavered as if crying, and she refused to answer.

Alleged Capture of Regime's Assassins

93AE0471C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Apr 93
p 6

[Article: "Iraqi Opposition Source: We Have Apprehended an Assassination Network Working for Baghdad"]

[Text] London—An informed source in the Iraqi opposition resisting the regime of President Saddam Husayn announced the apprehension of the head and members of a network that Iraqi intelligence had enlisted to assassinate prominent Iraqi opposition figures, especially Major General Hasan al-Naqib, a member of the leadership council of the opposition Iraqi National Congress and leader of the independent Iraqi organization. The source, which spoke to AL-HAYAH in London, said that the group, which was led by a person from Irbil named Farhad, was apprehended after the opposition monitored the movements of Farhad, who was trying to penetrate the ranks of the opposition and recruit agents to bomb its headquarters and assassinate a number of the opposition's most prominent figures. His movements had been monitored for about two months.

The source explained that Farhad normally lived in Irbil, but made frequent trips to al-Mawsil, where he contacted the local Iraqi intelligence commander and received instructions from him. "After Farhad succeeded in recruiting agents, he was apprehended along with a total of 15 other persons. They were found to be in possession of hand grenades, time-bombs, and poisons." He added that Farhad also was in contact with the Ba'th Party's former official in Dahuk, 'Abd-al-Salam 'Annaz, one of the officials responsible for [assassination] attempts and bombing operations against opposition figures.

The source added that the Baghdad regime had directed many operations against the opposition since the latter began its activity in the north of the country. "It bombed an opposition office in Zakhu in January of last year and the office of the Iraqi Independent Organization in Dahuk last September. In February 1992, confrontations took place in which two agents attempting to break into an opposition office were wounded."

Al-Naqib: Civil War Not Objective

93AE0471B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Apr 93
p 4

[Article: "Opposition Leadership Council Member Hasan al-Naqib: 'We Do Not Want Civil War in Iraq, Oppose Carrying Out Operations To Strike Army'"]

[Text] London—Major General Hasan al-Naqib, a member of the Iraqi opposition's three-man leadership council, said that the opposition Iraqi National Congress wants "moral support from Washington" and will renew its request that Washington recognize it as "a legitimate

alternative" to the regime of President Saddam Husayn. Al-Naqib told AL-HAYAH: "We will not ask a foreign army to intervene to overthrow the regime. Change will come from within." Thus he indicated his opposition to intervention by a foreign force to realize this goal.

He declared himself opposed to launching attacks on the Iraqi army as a method of action by the opposition: "We do not want a civil war, but we want to win the Army over. It is not necessary to kill innocent soldiers. We approve of any operation that targets those who attack the people and who use the method of liquidation." The member of the conference's leadership council added that the opposition "relies primarily on the Iraqi armed forces to save our people." He indicated that "various communications channels with elements of the Army are open."

Asked whether the opposition would accept American aid, he replied: "We will accept any impartial foreign aid, but we will not ask for military intervention or a foreign force. We are responsible for saving our people. At our latest meeting, we decided to form an opposition military arm to support any move inside the country."

He emphasized that "change is coming and will be purely Iraqi." He called attention to "the critical conditions that the Iraqi people are suffering." He predicted "decisive steps" by the National Congress, which unites a basic force in the opposition.

Asked about renewal of the international sanctions in force against Iraq since August 1990 and their effects on the conditions of civilians with the survival of the current regime in Baghdad, he replied, "The issue has become an international matter, not merely Arab or Iraqi. The way out is by overthrowing the regime. Western coalition airplanes are present in the north and south of Iraq. The decision is not in our hands."

Maj. Gen. al-Naqib is expected to visit Washington as part of a delegation from the leadership council, which also includes Muhammad Bahr-al-'Ulam and the joint head of the Kurdistan Front, Kurdistan Democratic Party leader Mas'ud Barzani. The delegation will meet Secretary of State Warren Christopher on 27 April. On 30 March, British Prime Minister John Major and his foreign secretary, Douglas Hurd, met al-Naqib, Bahr-al-'Ulam, and the general secretary of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and joint head of the Kurdistan Front, Jalal Talabani.

As for reports that the leadership council delegation asked Hurd to work for an international resolution to bomb dams that Baghdad is accused of having built to withhold water from southern Iraq's al-Ahwar region, Maj. Gen. al-Naqib said that he had no knowledge of the matter. He thought that Major's reception of the delegation meant "recognition of the legitimacy of the Iraqi opposition." He said that the opposition had received an invitation to send a delegation to the capital of Jordan.

He again defended the National Congress's espousal of the federal principle for Iraq as proposed by the Kurdish

parties. He deemed that the principle "would remedy a chronic problem that had drained lives, resources, a money over many years. The legitimate rights of Kurdish brothers must be recognized as a step to entrenching Arab-Kurdish partnership."

He rejected what has been said about the "sectarian composition" of the three-man leadership council (Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish). He said: "There is a reality in Iraq. Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish representation is not division, but unification. It is a symbol of Iraq's unity that we uphold." On certain reservations that independent opposition figures alongside the national current continue to express concerning the proportions of representation in the conference, al-Naqib said, "Just as we demand democracy as a method of government, we consider it the best way to open positive, fruitful dialogue with all the opposition." He praised the contacts that Talabani made during his recent visit to Damascus to deal with the reservations of the nationalist current that had rejected the results of the Salah-al-Din conference.

He admitted that the United National Congress was not ideal, but that nothing better was possible.

KUWAIT

Communique Claims All Iraqi Terrorists Arrested

93WR0231A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 27 Apr 93
p 7

[Article by Hamad al-Jasir from Kuwait and AL-HAYAH correspondent from Jeddah]

[Text] The Kuwaiti Interior Ministry announced yesterday that the security authorities have arrested "all members of a terrorist network that the Iraqi regime sent in an attempt to carry out sabotage operations aimed at undermining stability and security and spreading fear among citizens" in Kuwait.

The ministry's statement said that the network was apprehended some time ago, but no announcement was made then for security reasons: "so that the state organs will be able to arrest the rest of the members and catch the fifth column collaborators."

The statement added that the security authorities "have learned about the criminal plan, its details, and the parties that stand behind it right from the beginning. The plan was going to be implemented in stages during the current month." It stressed that the security authorities "have taken all of the necessary measures to uncover the network's sabotage plan and its objectives."

The statement did not disclose the number of the network members or other details of the plan, but reliable sources told AL-HAYAH that the number of those arrested has reached 15, including Iraqis and persons of undefined nationalities (al-bidun [stateless individuals]). They stressed that a Kuwaiti citizen involved in the network was also arrested for providing shelter, although he denied knowledge of their intentions.

The sources said that shipments of explosives and booby-trapped cars were brought into Kuwait via Iraq and that the security agents "seized drugs and liquor with the Iraqis." AL-HAYAH last week exclusively reported the early details of the Iraqi attempt, revealing that it was decided that the first acts of bombing by the network were scheduled to take place during former President George Bush's visit to Kuwait, but that strict security measures prevented the execution of the plan.

Meanwhile, the Saudi Interior Ministry asked business owners and Saudi citizens whose property was damaged because of the Iraqi invasion to submit documents proving the damage they suffered to the Kuwaiti General Authority for appraisal of compensations incurred in Kuwait.

A statement issued by the Interior Ministry and distributed by the Saudi News Agency said: "The Interior Ministry wishes to inform business owners and Saudi citizens whose properties suffered damage because of the criminal aggression on the sisterly State of Kuwait that they must report to the General Authority in order to assess the damage they suffered in the state of Kuwait. They should bring with them documents proving validity of their claims in order to estimate the resulting damage and take the necessary action in this regard."

MOROCCO

Figures on 1992 Trade Balance Published

93AF0539A Casablanca LA VIE INDUSTRIELLE ET AGRICOLE in French 5 Apr 93 p 7

[Unattributed article: "Figures on 1992 Trade Balance: 5% Rise in Imports, 9% Drop in Exports, 8% Drop in the Coverage Rate"]

[Excerpt] The provisional figures on the trade balance for the year 1992 make it possible to make several observations:

- Imports, which reached 62,702 billion dirhams, increased by 5 percent whereas exports showed a 9-percent drop, earning only 33,910 billion dirhams, whereas they had exceeded 37,283 billion dirhams in 1992.
- It follows that the rate at which imports were covered by exports could only drop: it did indeed go from 62.4 percent in 1991 to 54.1 percent in 1992, or a drop of more than eight points.

Among the major categories in the trade balance, the contraction of sales by the Moroccan Phosphates Office [OCP] by 8,491 billion dirhams (-15.5 percent) should be noted, a fact which is borne out both by phosphate exports (2,621 billion dirhams, -13.1 percent) and those of phosphoric acid (3,424 billion dirhams, -7.8 percent). In the same vein, sales of products other than phosphates and derivatives also dropped by 6.7 percent. As to imports with the exception of petroleum, they rose slightly by 2.9 percent, reaching 54,695 billion dirhams as compared with 53,140 billion dirhams in 1991.

Furthermore it should be noted that the current account (after rescheduling) dropped by 6.6 percent, ending up at 3,400 billion dirhams, whereas private

foreign investments advanced strongly with 4,210 billion dirhams as compared with 3,269 billion dirhams in 1991.

	1990	1991	1992	Change, 1992/91, in Percent
Trade balance				
Imports (cost, insurance, and freight)	57,022.90	59,719.80	62,703.10	5.0
Free on board exports	34,857.60	37,283.30	33,910	-9
Balance	-22,165.30	-22,436.50	-28,793.10	28.3
Coverage rate, %	61.1	62.4	54.1	
Total, OCP group	9,855	10,047.60	8,491.70	-15.5
Phosphates	3,600	3,015.50	2,621	-13.1
Phosphoric acid	2,868	3,716	3,424.90	-7.8
NC fertilizer	3,387	3,316.10	2,445.80	-26.2
Exports other than phosphates and derivatives	25,002.60	27,235.70	25,418.30	-6.7
Crude petroleum oil	8,141.60	6,579.50	8,007.30	21.7
Imports other than petroleum	48,881.30	53,140.30	54,695.80	2.9
RME* receipts	16,537.20	17,328.10	18,527.70	6.9
Travel	10,548.30	8,822.10	11,701.70	32.6
Current account (after rescheduling)	-1.721	-3,639.90	-3,400	-6.6
Private foreign investments	1,872.30	3,269.20	4,210.50	28.8

* Moroccan residents abroad

The Balance of Payments in 1992

- Receipts from tourism soar (+32.6%): 11,701 billion dirhams
- RME transfers improve (+6.9%): 18,527 billion dirhams

The balance of payments for the year 1992 shows a recovery for the two major categories that comprise it. So RME receipts reached a record figure of 18,527 billion dirhams, a 6.9-percent increase when compared with 1991. As for receipts from tourism, they climbed considerably [text missing]

Women's Request for Peaceful March Denied

93AF0539B Algiers EL WATAN in French 10 Apr 93 p 24

[Unattributed article: "Morocco: Women's March Banned"]

[Text] The peaceful march that several Moroccan women's organizations were supposed to organize next Sunday in Rabat to protest "attacks on women and rapes" has been banned by the authorities, it was learned yesterday from a good source in Rabat.

The women's chapters of opposition parties and human rights organizations as well as several democratic women's associations had decided to demonstrate peacefully in Rabat as a sign of protest against "attacks, violence, and rapes perpetrated on Moroccan women and revealed in the so-called case of Tabet and his accomplices."

(Mohamed Mustapha Tabet is the main commissioner sentenced to death last 15 March by the Casablanca Appeals Court for the rapes of several dozen women.)

Opposition parties and women's associations denounced the authorities' refusal to authorize the peaceful women's march.

So on Friday the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP, opposition-progressive) expressed its "protest, its great amazement, and its support for the demands of women's movements." The USFP called the refusal an "arbitrary measure which prevents society from exercising its right to express its opinions responsibly."

For its part the journal LIBERATION, the USFP's organ, denounced this refusal, which put an end to the women's wish to organize a peaceful women's march for the first time in Morocco's history.

Book Review: 'Memoirs of a King'

93AF0512E Rabat L'OPINION in French 4 Apr 93 pp 1, 3

[The Spanish ambassador talks about His Majesty King Hassan II's book, *La Memoire d'un Roi* (A King's Memory): "Morocco-Spain: A Singular Coincidence"—first two paragraphs are L'OPINION introduction]

[Text] As part of a symposium on information and communication, a ceremony was organized Tuesday evening to present His Majesty the King's book, *La*

Memoire d'un Roi [A King's Memory]. During the ceremony, several personalities addressed the audience; one of them was the Spanish ambassador to Rabat.

Here is the text of his speech that, as is known, was made prior to the death, on Thursday, of the Count of Barcelona, father of King Juan Carlos of Spain.

I am very much honored to have been invited, as dean of the European Community diplomats, to say a few words during this presentation of the book *La Memoire d'un Roi*, a long interview of His Majesty King Hassan II with a French journalist, Eric Laurent.

Allow me first to mention a curious coincidence between our two countries. The fact is that this book was published at the same time as another similar book containing an interview of His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain with the writer Jose Luis de Vilallonga.

It is therefore also a book in dialogue form, which enables us to share the impressions, concerns, and hopes of the King of Spain during this singular period between the end of General Franco's regime and the consolidation of the constitutional monarchy in our country.

In brief, in this book, our King explains how he managed to implement the program drawn up by his father, Don Juan, Count of Barcelona, to restore a monarchy open to all the Spanish people. It is essentially a homage to the Count of Barcelona, and it is published under particularly moving circumstances, as our King's father is now at the Pamplona University Hospital awaiting, at any time now, the fatal issue of an incurable disease.

I am sure that you will forgive this short preliminary digression, but it will enable me to point out that, under the most diverse forms, monarchies all have basic traits in common.

Monarchy as an institution makes it possible to put a political reference point above the day-to-day debate even when, for material reasons, the individual who personifies the institution is called upon to play a direct part in managing political affairs.

I was talking about King Juan Carlos's homage to his father; we find the same characteristic in King Hassan II, who often talks about his father, the late Mohammed V, and always with emotion, reverence, and gratitude. That is because the reference element, beyond the immediate and concrete fact of the Monarchy, is in direct relation to the History of each country. Monarchy thus becomes an institution that brings History up to date.

I had this very vivid impression when I read *La Memoire d'un Roi*. One can feel how the King's exceptional experience is condensed in his answers to the questions.

That is for the content; as for the form, I was struck by the interview format, which is very vivid and very direct, and I think other readers will feel the same. It makes for more pleasant reading without reducing the intensity of the content.

The turns of phrases used are often hugely expressive; they contribute to emphasize the traits of a personality who allies strength of character with a sense for nuances and precision.

What we have, therefore, is a document that is extremely useful in allowing us to get more thoroughly acquainted not only with the statesman, but also with the political thinker and, of course, above all, with the man whose particularly intense and difficult role is to lead a group of people in fulfilling their destiny.

With respect to the latter point, I would like to emphasize a generally accepted idea, but one to which I keep referring when I attempt to describe Moroccan realities. This idea applies as well to His Late Majesty Mohammed V as to His Majesty Hassan II, and also to the Moroccan people as a whole. And it is a balanced mixture of tradition and modernity, of strict fidelity to the past and ability to adjust. This trait makes it possible to understand the ease with which the Moroccan people accept their deeper personality.

But when we speak of modernity we cannot fail to make reference to the idea of democracy, an idea which, as this century ends, stands out as the leading universal value with respect to the political organization of societies.

Democracy requires certain conditions. One of them, perhaps the most significant, is the sharing of common knowledge between the political leaders and the people. In Europe, we recently had an experience that gave us food for thought. The Maastricht treaty ratification showed that, in many countries, something that was clear to the political class was not that clear to the people at large. In this respect, we find in the book *La Memoire d'un Roi* a definite will to share knowledge, objectives, and ideals.

SUDAN

Al-Mahdi Reviews Islam's Trouble in Country

93AF0460A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
18 March 93 p 16

[Article by al-Sadiq al-Mahdi]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The Sudanese demographic map portrays ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity that does not end at the geographic borders of Sudan. This is because people in Sudan's neighboring countries share their ethnic, religious, and cultural affiliation with their close Sudanese neighbors. Therefore, Sudan has become a reflection mirror of the African region and the Asian southwest that surrounds it.

In addition to the diversity of the Sudanese demographic map, there is also diversity in the Sudanese political-cultural map, which could be summed up as follows:

- inherited Sufi and Mahdawi trends, as well as modern Islamic trends;
- trends that take the form of special African ideologies;

- leftist trends affiliated in some form to the Marxist ideology;
- liberal secular trends;
- Arab nationalism trends—both traditional and modern—as well as Ba'thist, Nasirite, and popular trends. [passage omitted]

The political-ideological leadership of the Ummah Party viewed the Islamization proposal as governed by four factors. These are:

- The Sudanese democratic majority is oriented toward Islam. However, differences in interpretation that exist among Muslims need to be discussed in order to reach consensus about important issues.
- Adherents to non-Islamic trends in Sudan, especially to African ones, are not confident that their religious, human and national rights are safeguarded under the Islamic directive. Therefore, this directive should be accompanied with a declaration of the legitimate rights of non-Muslim citizens.
- Islamic rules in different areas lack new elucidations that take into consideration present day developments. Therefore, the application of Islamic rules should not be done in haste. Their application should be preceded by new interpretations that, while following the teachings of the shari'ah, should also acknowledge present day circumstances.
- Whereas the rules that govern dealings with other sects and international relations, as set up in the inherited jurisprudence, are based on animosity and bargaining, definitive Islamic texts permit relationships based on peaceful coexistence and cooperation. Besides, current circumstances require it. Therefore, Islam-oriented adherents must be prepared to issue a declaration of their policies toward international relations.

The National Islamic Front party did not accept this simple procedure and decided that linking the Islamic program to the view of non-Islamic groups would lead to abandoning Islamic vows. The party thus foiled the 30 June 1989 coup d'etat and instead cooperated with the coup's instigators to establish the "rescue" regime. [passage omitted]

However, since January 1991, the "rescue" regime's top officials revealed and hurled their Islamic program. This program is partisan and oppressive, and although its contents are different, its launching method could be likened to that of the secular program that the 1 May regime launched at the onset of its rule. What are the chances of success for this Islamic program?

Before responding to this question, I record the following three facts:

First: The oppressive and partisan secular top-down program that the revolutionary 1 May regime tried during the first quarter of its rule was a complete failure. It led to the economic collapse, political disintegration, and foreign subordination of Sudan. This program ruined the country and destroyed the parties taking part in it.

Second: The individualistic and oppressive Islamization top-down program which the May 1 regime adopted during the last quarter of its rule, disrupted Islam, deepened civil dissension and finally brought about its operators' failure and loss.

Third: The third democratic program was about to succeed in unifying the Islamic view around an Islamic democratic program, as well as unifying the national view around a fair Islamic program that would reconcile Islamization with peace. [passage omitted]

The National Islamic Front in Sudan emphasizes democracy's correctness and effectiveness. It praises the national democratic program that it founded in Sudan and believes this program gives Sudan a good reason to have a front seat in the world Islamic movement.

Islamic Program 1991-93

[Passage omitted] Damage to Islam in Sudan during its difficult times include the following :

- As a student at Khartoum University, I witnessed the struggle between the Islamization and communist directives. It seemed to me that while the Islamists' program was oriented toward fundamentalism, it ignored modernism. [passages omitted]
- While the present regime expelled tens of thousands of professionals from the armed forces and civil service, it appointed others from the cadres of the National Islamic Front party. The regime's policy of expulsion and appointment, as well as its policy in other areas, had a limited partisan orientation which alienated the other Islamic powers such as Ummah and al-Ansar, al-'Tihadi and al-Khatmiyah, the Sufi sect, the Muslim Brotherhood, the Sunnis, the Socialist Islamists, and the unaffiliated Islamists. In this way, the unity of the people of al-Qiblah (direction to which Muslims turn in praying), as well as the suitable environment for the birth of the Islamic program were disrupted.
- The new regime provoked other Sudanese cultural groups, such as the African, leftist, secular, and national groups. Therefore, these groups united against the regime in an effort to protect their religious, political and economic rights. These groups were originally either hostile to Islam or wanted to keep Islam out of the political arena. However, if the legitimate rights of these groups were guaranteed and the legitimacy of the Islamic directive achieved through democratic means, most of the groups could have coexisted with the Islamic directive. This not being the case, the right environment for national concord that could have accompanied the Islamic directives was damaged.
- In view of the contemporary Islamic awakening, Islamic movements everywhere are confronted with three important problems. These are: —The problem of dealing with differences inside the Islamists' arena. —The problem of dealing with other national powers. —The problem of dealing with governing regimes. —Echoes of events in Sudan

accelerate the irritability inside the Islamists' arena and explode relations between the Islamites and other national powers. Besides, these echoes sow the seeds of doubt and suspicion in the relationship with the governing regime. Those who stopped the election process in Algiers in 1992 cited events in Sudan as very strong evidence that Islamic movements did not have any respect for democracy. There is an opinion that, even though the Islamic movement may reach the government through the democratic path, it would soon abandon democracy and repress the opposition view, as has happened in the Sudanese case. This means that the Sudanese experiment has endangered the Islamic movement everywhere.

- Some international powers try to link Islam to terrorism. They also try to tint Islam with the abuse of human rights and personal freedom. In fact, Islam is innocent of such accusations. [passage omitted]
- There are only two means to stop the civil war raging in Sudan at present. The first would be through a decisive military victory of one group over the other, with the victorious group dictating the peace conditions. The other would be through the two parties choosing to have a peace agreement.

Any prudent person would agree that the first choice is not applicable under present objective domestic and foreign affairs.

As for the second choice, one of its most important conditions is abandoning extremist stands and accepting to deal with the other view. One of the leaders of the present Regime described the November 1988 agreement between al-Mirghani and Garang by saying: "A religious leader kneeled and yielded to an infidel rebel in the land of the infidels. This act is an apostasy which is considered a complete defiance of religion." If this mentality prevails among the regime members, there would absolutely be no place for a peace agreement.

The continuation of the present civil war poses a danger to Sudan that threatens to completely disintegrate it. Ending it now is a great national and Islamic necessity. I have personally noticed, and my friends from the people of the South have also asserted, that while Islam continuously spreads in the South during periods of peace and stability, it continuously retracts during periods of fighting and confrontation. Fighting and disasters associated with the war drive the people of the South to take refuge in Christianity, not just as a religious refuge, but also as a social and livelihood one.

The strength of the Christian drive in Sudan at present was made clear through the visit of Pope Paul II to this country in February 1993. This visit also revealed the passive impact of the "rescue" policies.

Visit of Pope John Paul II in February 1993

[passages omitted] Pope John Paul II supports the Palestinian right more than any previous pope. For this reason, and in spite of the clamor that Israel raised against Yasir 'Arafat, the pope met with him twice (in 1982 and 1988) in the Vatican. Besides, though the

second Vatican Council denounced the killing of Jesus Christ as having been a communal crime by Jews, yet, Pope John Paul II has not recognized Israel as a state, thus differentiating between the religious stand and a political procedure.

The pope made a point not to visit South Africa as long as it applied fanatic apartheid policy.

Pope John Paul II is one of those concerned with relations between the rich North and the poor South. This concerned group is calling for reforms that would realize justice between the two halves of the world. In fact, the pope was one of the first to realize that the conflict in the world between the North and the South would be more important and dangerous than that between the East and the West.

Therefore, neither does endeavoring to achieve the best relations between Muslims and Christians pose any reservation for Islam, nor does the pope's visit to Sudan pose any political reservation. However, the pope's last visit to Sudan came at a time when the Muslims' word in Sudan had been divided as never before. It also came at a time when the "rescue" policy—particularly that of the media—created a very hostile feeling toward Christians in Sudan. For this reason, because Muslims' views of the visit differed, differences between them increased even more. As for Christians, some of them rejected the visit completely, saying that it came at the wrong time. Yet, the majority of Christians welcomed and enjoyed the visit. In fact, they regarded it as an indication that the regime's tolerance toward them was not authentic, but was only to get the support of public opinion provided by the pope's visit.

The "rescue" regime dealt with the visit of Pope John Paul II in a hazardous and superficial manner that is not in conformity with the present dangerous Islamic position and the dangerous downward trend that Muslim-Christian relations are passing through. [passages omitted]

The present Sudanese regime has been persistently declaring war on what it calls political sectarianism. However, Pope John Paul II is a symbol of the concurrence of the religious and political functions as he is both the president of the Vatican State and the head of the Catholic Church. He presides over a religious, cultural, political, economic and social institution served by mature people. The church is not reluctant to declare the pope's functions. Cardinal Ratzinger (the second man in the Vatican) said:

"The future of humanity is in danger. Therefore, the Catholic Church has to confront what is endangering humans' lives and souls. Subsequently, the pope's appropriations exceed church doctrines to include cultural, social and political matters."

What has Sudan prepared to argue with this declaration?

Spokesmen of the Sudanese regime and its media have burst enthusiastically to classify Muslims who do not

support the regime as apostates and Christians as blasphemers and fifth columnists. This attack, which has gone too far, terrified many Sudanese citizens, both Muslim and Christian, and led many to flee the country in great numbers. Many Christians asked me about the way to stop attacks against them because they were fearful that the regime's collaborators would attack them either in their homes or in the streets. This situation led the cardinals to issue a common pastoral message to believers in November 1991, in which they appealed to Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church, and the international family for rescue. Responding to these appeals and to others such as those from residents of ghosts' homes, the tortured and the displaced, the United Nations adopted its resolution condemning the Sudanese regime. To its astonishment, the regime became a target for international condemnation. Consequently, without addressing either Muslims or Christian victims, and with no prelude, the regime, quickly tried to hide its whips and show its tolerance.

The terror and deceit that the regime resorted to are by no means akin to Islam.

The people are asking for the preservation of human rights, political freedom, parliamentary rule, the independence of the judiciary system, and a just peace. Meeting these demands would put an end to internal polarization and to accelerating international condemnation.

Presently, what is happening in the name of Islam in Sudan only intensifies the calamities of Islam in that country, and deepens the sadness of the adherents of al-Qiblah who are observing conditions in Sudan.

Finally, what seems good for Sudan is for it to totally abandon the Islamic and oppressive program coming from the top, so that a democratic and civilized Islamic program bearing people's confidence in an atmosphere of a just peace could be established. [passage omitted]

Background of Hala'ib Residents Detailed

93AF0460B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
16, 17 Feb 93

[Article by Muhammad 'Alaam]

[16 Feb p 6]

[Excerpts] The inhabitants of the Hala'ib triangle do not believe a problem exists between Egypt and Sudan. They live on both sides of the political border between the two countries and have been crossing the 22d parallel for ages. They view issues very simply and also find that the Ritual Council, composed of tribal shaykhs, can solve these issues in just one meeting. This council had taken part in solving disputes over land between the tribes, to everyone's satisfaction.

AL-HAYAH visited the Hala'ib triangle, where people believe they have a common ancestry and that they live in Egypt and Sudan as one tribe on both sides of the 22d parallel.

Presently, starting from its northern entrance at Marsa al-'Alam, to Hala'ib, on the 22d parallel, big developments are taking place in the Hala'ib triangle. Markets are expanding, and car traffic does not stop.

The difference between the simple understanding of this problem and this vast development can be likened to the difference between two different views, with adherents in both countries. While one view ascertains that no problem should exist, the other is either talking about force or threatening to use it.

Umm-al-Tuyur and al-Dabka

The triangle has a very important strategic location on the western coast of the Red Sea in the southeastern corner of Egypt. Egyptians assert that the region belongs to Egypt and point to old border signs that date back to 19 January 1899, when these signs were placed on the 22d parallel according to the agreement signed on that same date. The Hala'ib region is composed of desert land flanked on the eastern side by the Red Sea mountain chain formed by Jabal 'Ilbah, Jabal Umm-al-Tuyur, Jabal (al-Dabka), Jabal Nurab, and (Barna Zuja). Passages link the region to the sea. The three major towns of Hala'ib, al-Shalatayn, and Abu Ramad are its most populated areas, while small villages with populations not exceeding 400 are spread along the eastern coast and the flat lands.

According to Egyptian studies, the triangle is very rich in minerals specially gold, phosphate, and magnesium. The same studies indicate that the probability of finding oil is meager. All explorations have been unsuccessful. [passage omitted]

Upon entering the triangle, which has an area of 18,000 square km, and up to Ras Hadrabah, at the very end of the political border, as well as on top of Jabal 'Ilbah, 4 km away from Abu Ramad, one notices active movement and work being done on the land according to some plan.

Trucks carrying goods, supplies, and drinking water from Qina and the al-Bahr al-Ahmar Governorates are seen all along the road. According to the residents, ever since warehouses and cold storage facilities have been established in the triangle, commodities have been continuously available; therefore, those trucks now come at longer intervals.

All along the political border line, it has become a familiar sight to see soldiers in uniform and Sudanese civilians arriving to purchase goods they need.

A border guard in the region told 'AL-HAYAH: "We have instructions from high authorities to allow our Sudanese brethren to cross and get whatever they want."

Residents asserted that much is happening in the region. The triangle is witnessing an effort to settle 3,000 families in the three villages of Hamatah, Barnais, and Abu-al-Hasan al-Shazli. Residential units have been established in Hala'ib, al-Shalatayn, and Abu-Radm to accommodate 5,000 families. Within the framework of

an unannounced plan, the goal is to settle 15,000 people, so that the population will reach 60,000 by the year 2000.

Many services have been established to accompany this settlement. Among these services are three new, small Islamic centers, one of which is for the teaching of Koran and for education of the illiterate; two health centers at Abu Ramad and Hala'ib; water storage towers; a water desalination plant (still under construction) on the sea coast; and an office for the registration of official documents because dealings between citizens are now registered. A traffic post, three police offices, three elementary schools (each of which can accommodate 80 students) have also been established in the region, as well as one post office and one telephone office in every town. The most significant service has been that of a civil and real estate registry for the registration of marriages, sales, purchases and other transactions. This is a new service for the people, whose dealings had been in the form of keeping promises and returning loans or had been just unwritten dealings based on good faith. [passage omitted]

Strangers' Culture

At the beginning of the 1950's and 1960's, letters directed from tribal shaykhs to Egyptian officials, such as heads of geological missions and those responsible for mines, centers for the authority and services, were headlined with the phrase "from the shaykh of the tribe to the chief of the strangers." Although triangle residents still show some doubt about the strangers' culture and conduct, there has been a very important development in their relations with "the sons of the valley" (meaning the sons of the Nile Valley, or the Egyptians). The residents think that this doubt is due to the fact that the urban population, both Egyptian and Sudanese, had very weak relations with the triangle's inhabitants until many more Egyptians came to live in the region more than 30 Arabic months ago.

Previously, seeing a car used to cause panic among the inhabitants of the region, but now they are living with Egyptians who wear shirts and trousers and have bright yellow strips on their shoulders. In spite of conflicting opinions about the origin of the inhabitants who belong to al-Bishariya and al-'Ababda tribes, the predominant opinion is that they are the descendants of al-Zubayr Bin-al-'Awam from Saudi Arabia. They comprise the four tribes of al-Hamdawat in the area lying between al-Shalatayn and the end of the old administrative borders in the North, (al-Albab) in the western part of the triangle, (al-Shintrat), and (al-'Amirat). Most of the members of the last two tribes live to the south of the 22d parallel.

Another view is that these tribes have pharaonic ancestry. This opinion is based on the hereditary features, and the fact that all tribes in the region are descendants of the one tribe, (al-Bija), which was an important element in the army of the Pharaoh Ramsis II, who drove the Hyksos from Egypt.

The origin of the word "al-Bija" is the word "Majwi", meaning "the fighter" in hieroglyphics. This is because al-Bija fought very well in the war. This belief is reinforced by the fact that there are inscriptions representing al-Bija beside Pharaoh Ramsis II in Idfu temple in southern Egypt.

Some of the al-'Ababda, most of whom live to the north of the 22d parallel and who are the original inhabitants of the triangle, have remained in the region. The rest, due to the hardships they faced, have moved to urban areas of Upper Egypt, with a few going to Cairo and the Delta. Al-'Ababda's major clusters are north of Hala'ib in the towns of Marsa 'Alam, Berenice and Ras Banas on the Red Sea coast. The percentage of the elderly amongst them is large; some are more than 100 years old. They are characterized by great physical vitality and an extremely quick walking step.

Al-Bishariya are composed of two major branches, Bishariyat-um-'Ali and Bishariyat-um-Naji. They are spiritually attached to Jabal 'Ilbah.

The tribes in the region speak an Arabic dialect that differs from one tribe to the other. Arabic has mixed more and more with local languages as one moves nearer to the political border, until one cannot communicate without an interpreter.

[17 Feb p 6]

Each tribe has a shaykh who keeps its documents and "administrative borders" using valleys, wells, and trees as border signs. Most disputes are about water wells, trees, camels, and financial matters. Both the council's and shaykh's rulings are accepted and obeyed, with no possibility of appeal. This perhaps explains the fact that no judiciary system (courts) has been established, though all other forms of Egyptian dominance over the region have been.

Until recently, herdsmen were also postmen. The herdsman was responsible for the delivery of letters among members of one tribe or between tribes, while he was moving. News about deaths were also known through the herdsman. The three towns now are linked with each other and with the governorates of Egypt by post offices. Telephone lines are to be installed in the mayors' residences.

Until a few months ago, citizens in Hala'ib did not carry any identity cards as lineages were preserved. Now each citizen carries an identity card in which he can only recognize his photograph (because illiteracy amounts to 95 percent). Each citizen also carries a ration card in order to get supplies. Hala'ib's residents earn their living by engaging in limited cultivation, herding, and bartering. They receive health services in centers equipped with electrocardiograms, radiology, and blood pressure apparatuses.

Very few of Hala'ib's inhabitants carry passports, and when they do, they show entry visas to Saudi Arabia. This is because a long trip for them is either to cross the sea in order to go on hajj, which is everyone's aspiration

in Hala'ib or to roam along the Red Sea coast and over plains on both sides of the political borders.

Herdling, livestock breeding (particularly camels), limited cultivation, and hunting are the major economic activities. Hala'ib represents a commercial center for goods such as grain, hides, coal, timber, cloth, rosaries, daggers, swords, natural herbs, and cattle. This commercial center is composed of wooden stalls. In addition to the two common markets at al-Shalatayn and Abu-Ramad, there are also moving markets and traditional street vendors who move among villages.

Some residents are permanently employed in the mineral projects, infrastructure, and services established by Egypt. They are eager to obtain this type of employment because they were only temporary employees until a few years ago. [passage omitted]

Besides the traditional community, a new community of those working in phosphate and manganese mines and in other projects in the region has sprung up. This new community has introduced its habits, rituals, and social activities into the region.

It is very noticeable that the "sons of the valley" are very careful in their dealings with local residents. Their conduct is characterized by noninterference in ritual councils. The shaykhs are respected and allowed to contribute to management, which allows for flexibility in the execution of laws. "Visiting" is the new community's most dominant social activity, and gathering around the television at somebody's house is its recreation.

Security personnel are called "guardians of the mountain" in the triangle. They have two jobs: providing security and guarding the borders from outlaws and those who smuggle drugs, weapons, goods,...and humans.

Egypt is eager to carry out a social survey that would study the nature of the citizens' life, conduct, and needs. A number of social workers have been dispatched from specialized centers in Cairo to do the survey. These social workers will prepare a report that will be useful to both the central authorities in Cairo and local authorities in al-Bahr al-Ahmar Governorate—in which the triangle is located—when these authorities prepare decrees for organizing life in the region. [passage omitted]

SYRIA

Analysis of Peace Talks, Preparation for War

93AA0036A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (Weekend Supplement) in Hebrew 23 Apr 93 pp 6-7, 21

[Article by N. Levitzki: "Heading for Peace, Preparing for War"]

[Text] It happened with the precision of a Swiss watch. The announcement of the Arab delegations regarding their return to negotiations was issued from Damascus at the same time as Katyusha salvo upon the Galilee. There is something ironic, yet, so typical, in this sad symmetry.

For, Syria is essentially responsible for both of them. On one hand, al-Asad pressured 'Arafat to return to the process and, on the other, he allows the Hizballah to operate in southern Lebanon.

This is how the man operates, "Asadologists" will say; one of his hands is extended in peace while his other hand squeezes the trigger. That is, he is heading for peace, but he is preparing his army for war. He wants a relationship with the United States, but maintain a dangerous and threatening partnership with Iran. All options are open—that is the name of the game.

This week, a senior military source defined it in this way: "The secret approach to the peace process is ambivalence. Al-Asad wants the Golan Heights. On one hand, he is trying to achieve, with peaceful means, that which he did not achieve in war; but, on the other hand, if he does not succeed through peaceful means, he definitely views the military options as one that exists."

It is true that, since the expulsion of the Hamas members about four months ago, the Palestinian matter has taken up most of the prime minister's time, but, it is now clear to Rabin, perhaps even more than ever, that it will be impossible without Syria. 'Arafat's invitation to Damascus, the meeting of the foreign ministers there, and, finally, the press conference there, in which the Syrian foreign minister announced the renewal of the talks, were clear signs that were also well understood in Washington: The truly important decisions are made in Damascus.

The Syrian Army Undergoes a Revolution

Shim'on Peres is accustomed to saying that Israel today is faced with two great perils. The Palestinian knife and the Syrian missile. For, in the same breath in which al-Asad made the political self-examination and decided to turn in the direction of peace, he has also been hollowing out a revolution in the military realm. What a revolution—the Syrian Army is simply not the same army.

The greatest change in al-Asad's strategy toward Israel came with the crumbling of the Soviet bloc. He very quickly read the map and understood that the world is changing to a single-parent family. Mother Soviet Union, the strategic back on which he leaned, began to fall apart. Al-Asad, a pragmatic leader, understood that the world was changing and hastened to seek a warm bosom in the United States.

The first sign had already come four years earlier, in July 1989, when al-Asad came to visit Mubarak in Egypt. Until then, he spoke of Egypt as one that was on the edge of the Arab world and had signed a peace agreement with Israel. In the atmosphere of general paranoia, it was then easier to believe that Mubarak was getting farther away from peace than that al-Asad was coming closer to it. But, when Syria joined the Western coalition in the Gulf War, even skeptics noticed that different music was bursting forth from Damascus.

Unfortunately, the closeness to the West also taught al-Asad a military lesson; his 9th Division was encamped on the Kuwaiti border in the war. The terrified officers learned there that they had not succeeded in learning, after many years, from the Russians. They learned communication and command, what a sophisticated air force looks like. They saw artillery systems moving easily in the field, they learned about fire control and, especially, about war materials, precise combat materials.

That was the moment at which the Syrian Army began to undergo a true turnaround. The Syrian Army includes 12 divisions, eight of them armored. The older tanks were replaced by the updated model T-72. Their towed guns, essentially a defensive weapon, were replaced by mobile guns, a clearly offensive weapon.

And just when Damascus lost its strategic support, Syria's economic state improved [as published]. It ceased repaying debts to the Soviet Union; Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states paid millions for their participation in the Gulf war, and even their oil is suddenly winning rejuvenation. They have money to buy whatever they can get. And they are buying.

Thirty percent of the budget, on the order of \$2.5 billion per year, is being devoted to the subject of defense in Syria. And the East European bargain basement is making completely new game rules possible for them, on a scope that they never knew before. At the price that they used to pay for an old T-72, they can now purchase six or seven of the updated models. Each of them is already equipped with all of the technological wonders.

Western sources estimate that the Syrian armored force now numbers 4,000 tanks, half of them already of the latest type. Only recently, they purchased 600 updated T-72 tanks, 300 from Czechoslovakia, and 300 from Russia. They purchased about 300 mobile guns from Bulgaria, and the deal has still not concluded. That is, more is on the way. Two years of massive purchases, something on the order of half a billion dollars in signed contracts.

The Secret of the Threat to the Israeli Rear

But the main lesson, perhaps, that al-Asad learned from the Gulf war, to our deep sorrow, is actually in the realm of aviation. He has suddenly discovered the secret of the threat to the Israeli rear. For 40 years all of the Arab air forces tried to strike the Israeli rear together and they did not succeed. Forty extremely primitive, improvised missiles, that were dispatched from Iraq, shattered, in one stroke, the myth that the Israeli rear is immune to attack.

And thus, with a background of intentional neglect of the air force, al-Asad made a sharp turn in the direction of ground-to-ground missiles. Among all of the deals that he made, those of the Scud-C with North Korea particularly stand out. Not only that he purchased missiles and buncbers, but also that he combined the purchase with the development of his own production line in Syria.

By making things themselves, al-Asad can avoid an inquiry over the storage of his missiles. This means that if he should wish, he could assemble unconventional warheads. Not a real pleasant thought, especially in light of the fact that he already has chemical capabilities and he is prepared to continue. It should be acknowledged that it puts the Israel Defense Force's (IDF) strategic importance for staying on the Golan Heights in a slightly different light.

Dani Leshem, until recently a researcher in the Institute for Strategic Studies, says that the situation in Syria is more troubling that it appears to the eye, especially in light of their collaboration with Iran. Leshem is very extreme on the subject, so extreme that he had to leave the institute because of strong differences of opinion with his research colleagues.

"In 1991," he says, "there was knowledge that the Syrians and Iranians had reached a collaborative agreement for strategic research. That is, research, development, and manufacturing of unconventional weapons. Chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. The Syrians are operating, a small nuclear reactor, with Chinese assistance.

"True, it is not a military reactor, but it has grave military significance. Because we are speaking of the training of manpower in the nuclear realm. They are sending delegations to Pakistan, China, India, and Western Europe for study. According to this list of countries, it can be seen—and how it can—that the Syrians have a military interest in the nuclear realm. They also had contacts for the purchase of a much larger research reactor."

Last year's scientific publications dealt quite a bit with the question of whether Damascus is developing a nuclear military foundation. A number of these publications answer the question in the affirmative. "The body that deals with this in Syria," says Leshem, "is the Center for Defense Research and Development, called 'Seres,' their own Combat Means Development Authority [REFA'EL]. They are doing this in collaboration with Iran."

When we speak of Iran, all of the red lights go on here. One only had to have seen the debriefing of "Panorama" that was broadcast this week on the television show, Moqed, in order to understand what is happening in Iran in the nuclear realm. It seems to me that no one would be surprised to discover that collaboration between Damascus and Tehran is now a main TZIH [mark of vital information] in the Intelligence Branch's order of preferences.

In the estimation of the Intelligence Branch, by the end of the decade, Iran will have nuclear capability. In contrast, Syria's nuclear program is still in diapers. A senior military source: "We do not see significant nuclear development in Syria before the end of this decade [as published]. As far as this relates to Syria, we are looking at much more distant ranges."

"But there is a different danger in the nuclear realm, and this is more real. The economic situation in the crumbling eastern bloc, the fear of the flow of intellect from there and of the flow of knowledge and weapons from within the bargain basement that was created there. A country that would be capable of purchasing something like this could take a short cut and make a serious shortening of ranges."

"The Americans say that the agreements that they have with those countries, and their surveillance over their warehouses would not make a flow of materials like these possible. They tell us all the time that they are quiet." Whoever recalls the level of knowledge that the Americans had regarding Iraq can really begin to worry now.

Except that not everyone interprets the military build-up of Syria as a direct threat to Israel. One of the members of the Israeli delegation to the talks with Syria recalled this week that precisely the same concerns accompanied the peace process with Egypt. "What did al-Sadat do in those days? He armed his army like a maniac."

"He transformed the Egyptian Army in those days into a modern, sophisticated army, comparable to the Israeli one. The most advanced tanks, the most updated aircraft. The best of everything. And for what? To quiet down his generals. So that they would let him make a quiet peace with Israel. The same thing is happening in Syria today."

The Jordanians Yes, the Syrians No?

If everything goes as planned, the talks will resume after [Israeli] Independence Day. Last week, Rabin called Ambassador Itamar Rabinovitch back to Israel. Together, they tried to find the redeeming formula. Rabin builds on semantics. A word here, a word there. If Peres were in his place, he would certainly be vague. Perhaps even pull out the government's decision from 1967.

For the Eshkol-Begin government had decided even then that they were willing to barter for peace with Syria based on the international border plus the needs of defense. Because Peres, like Begin and Eshkol before him, understood that the price was set and it was only possible to haggle over its essence. He and Rabinovitch would certainly easily find a common language.

Immediately after the upset, it seemed that the talks were really accelerating. Afterward they came to an impasse. Even when Israel had already spoken the specific word "retreat," the Syrians refused to define the essence of the peace. Only an agreement for total withdrawal would satisfy them, they said.

The head of the Syrian delegation, Muwaffaq al-Allaf, stated in one of the meetings: "It took you six days to reach the current border in the Golan; it will take you a little longer to retreat from it." Beyond the sense of humor of the head of the Syrian delegation, his country's position appears approximately as follows: Israel shall retreat to the 1967 borders and, in return, Syria will

rescind the state of war, will recognize Israel's right to exist, and will be prepared for equal defense arrangements on both sides.

By the simplest calculation, it comes out that, in return for the demilitarization of the Golan Heights, they are demanding the demilitarization of the Galilee. That talk would sound approximately like this:

[Rabinovitch] You are demand a withdrawal, but what of the normalization of relations?

[al-Allaf] The place to discuss the normalization of relations is in the multilateral talks, and not here.

[Rabinovitch] The place to discuss diplomatic relations is in the multilateral talks?

Al-Allaf had no answer for this.

The Syrians, as it turns out, are doing their homework. They are clarifying every detail with the Egyptians; in every stage they want to know how it was with al-Sadat. And al-Sadat, as is known, first received a territorial guarantee. Only afterward did he conduct two years of negotiations regarding the essence of the peace and defense arrangements. al-Allaf knows to remind Rabinovitch of this.

And if this were not enough, Elyaqim Rabinovitch reached a skeleton agreement with the Jordanians. In the office of the prime minister, there was a great shout of joy, until one of the members of the Syrian delegation said: "Why are you so happy. Look what you did. On the Jordanian paper, it is explicitly written that the basis is an international border. So everything was returned to Egypt up to the last inch, you are prepared to give to the Jordanians, and just not to the Syrians? This will not work." And, indeed, in the next meeting, al-Allaf nonchalantly pulled out the Jordanian-Syrian protected agreement.

And during all of this, all along the way, Rabinovitch tried to clarify whether al-Asad is willing to go with a separate agreement. Every time that he uttered the word combination "an agreement that stands on its own two feet," the Syrians hurried past it. And then, Warren Christopher, the new secretary of state, came from Damascus to Jerusalem, with an optimistic message.

For a moment, it appeared that the ice had been broken. Al-Asad told Christopher in Damascus, "everything for everything," and the secretary of state informed Rabin that al-Asad means business, he is willing to have a separate agreement with full peace, and there are people to talk to. There was great joy, and then came the disappointment. Al-Asad hastened to clarify to Mubaraq that "everything for everything" means the Golan, as well as Gaza, the West Bank, and Jerusalem."

At the moment the picture does not seem particularly joyous. Al-Asad is fortifying his position, Rabin, too; and the four-month break following the expulsion of Hamas activists have not made it any better. But optimism prevails among the delegation, in spite of everything. If

Rabin will become flexible, they think, al-Asad will surprise everyone. He wants to win Clinton's trust.

Until now, Syria has been on the U.S. black list, the list of countries supporting terrorism. The Syrians are willing to go a long way to rid themselves of this blemish. They are limited in economic relations with Western countries, they are limited in acquiring technology, and private American investment now seems like a distant dream. The fundamentalism spreading throughout the region also frightens al-Asad. Since getting closer to the West, a middle class has developed in Syria, perhaps separately supported. The sad thing is that it is beginning to grow beards. In order to strike a blow, al-Asad is dependent upon the Western economy.

A moment before Bush left the White House, a group in the State Department tried to convince him to take Syria off of the list. Now they are working on Clinton. The American president will not remove Syria from the black list without overwhelming compensation.

So, despite, and perhaps, because of the Scud-C missiles and the more precise, fixed SS21 missiles, and despite the development of VX nerve gas, an especially deadly gas, there is already someone who is telling Rabin openly that Israel must accept the danger, take the chance, and reach an agreement with Syria, despite the heavy price.

The head of the Intelligence Branch is considered the one who is leading the softened line opposite Syria. A number of other choice extremists are going along with him. Even Peres thinks so. He tells his friends that, just as Rimón was necessary in the 1950's to protect Israel, this is how much we need peace now, in order to continue to protect it.

TUNISIA

Factors Affecting Coming Elections Discussed

Voter Apathy Noted

93AF0559A Tunis REALITES in French 29 Apr 93
p 13

[Editorial by Moncef Mahroug: "Legislative Elections: Twelve Months To Manage the Turn"]

[Text] In twelve months, Tunisians will go to the polls to elect their representatives to the Chamber of Deputies. So this will be the second try since the 7 November 1987 change—and the fourth since 1981—to get pluralism to enter the Bardo Palace. The failure of all the efforts undertaken in 12 years to give the country a multicolor Chamber of Deputies for the first time in its history obliges every Tunisian to see to the success of this next attempt. And to prevent this long-pursued dream from becoming a heavy nightmare or a fleeting mirage.

However, making reality accord with the dream is not an easy exercise. Especially in this area. Because the interests of individuals and groups and their self-preservation reflex act as powerful brakes to change in behavioral patterns and the rules of the political game.

To be sure, in the life of a country, transition is a moment at which every break is possible. The examples—especially in Africa—of transitions that are poorly run, fail, or are simply blocked are not hard to find. However, the fear of a break or a skid can in itself become an obstacle to the transition.

In Tunisia discourse—especially the head of state's—is ahead of reality. However, the credibility of this discourse cannot adapt to a new transition adjournment, to the upcoming elections' being poorly run, and especially to outcomes, which do not come up to Tunisians' expectations.

It is true that the obstacles in the way of the success of the decisive test, which the upcoming elections will be are not hard to find. These range from the position of hegemony—against which President Ben Ali recently spoke and even in front of the central committee of the RCD [Constitutional Democratic Rally]—of the party in power to the weakness of the opposition parties, and including every difficulty inherent in learning democracy.

One year away from the elections, they seem in particular—no matter how odd it may seem—to be running into indifference on the part of major segments of the electorate. Indeed recently a secretary general of an opposition party worried that very few Tunisians bothered—despite the very major media attention that preceded the process—to check to see whether their names appeared on voter lists and, if not, to ask to be registered.

This disaffection is not surprising. Even in traditionally democratic countries, where the running and the outcomes of elections are not contested, the polls have lost a good deal of their appeal for the citizen. What then should one say of countries that are still building democracy, where electoral practices have still not emerged from the turbulent zone? But for this reason even abstaining has graver consequences in countries that are developing democratically, where it contributes in large measure to retard the blossoming of democracy.

However absentee voters are not always wrong in the sense that it is often unorthodox electoral practices on the part of the authorities that cause voters to withdraw into themselves. In that case, abstaining means sanctioning the devaluation of the ballot and of the polls.

Once the break has occurred between the citizen and the polls, reconciliation becomes a long-winded effort and requires shock therapy, which is the only step likely to restore lost credibility to the electoral exercise.

Since the reasons for the evil are known, representatives of the opposition and the powers that be, who will soon begin discussions on amending the electoral code, will have to come up with the magic formula which will make it possible to reconcile Tunisians with the ballot. And to avoid seeing voters who abstain from becoming Tunisia's top party.

Analysis of Political Process

93AF0559B Tunis REALITES in French 29 Apr 93
pp 14-15

[Commentary by Hatem M'rad: "The Legislative Elections: Electoral Choice and National Destiny"]

[Text] It cannot be said often enough: the choices in an election have long-lasting repercussions on the character and the development of the future political government. That means that you can give validity to or undermine a government merely by inoculating it with a procedure, whether fortunate or unfortunate. So through the "banal" or "innocent" choice of an electoral procedure, the entire political destiny of the nation is at stake. So the obligation to be vigilant should seize every liberal democrat in this area, at least all those who believe in the government that comes out of the polls following a disputed, nonplebiscite election.

Indeed, where electoral choices are concerned, we are in the habit of saying that on the one hand proportional representation favors justice in that it permits minorities to be represented, removes every oppression of the minority by the majority, and safeguards minority status and, on the other hand, a majority count favors stability in that it makes it possible to emerge with a comfortable majority, one that is necessary for the country's government. The quasitragic choice, then, is to be found between stability and justice.

This first reading, one that is true in broad terms, does however deserve to be refined by a second, more precise reading. Indeed, it is not impossible to see proportional representation lead to injustice through an excessive concern for justice, and to see a majority election lead to instability through an excessive concern for stability. Let us take some Tunisian examples.

When it comes to proportional representation, let us suppose that in a legislative election the RCD [Constitutional Democratic Rally] slate in a district wins 50 percent of the votes, the Movement of Socialist Democrats [MDS] 20 percent, the PUP [People's Unity Party] 10 percent, the Tunisian Communist Party [PCT] 10 percent, the RSP [Progressive Socialist Rally] 7.5 percent, and the UDU [Unitarian Democratic Union] 2.5 percent. For the proportional system to be truly equitable, it is necessary not only that it allow the representation of parties in proportion to their real strength but also that it turn into facts the real choices of voters who, need it be emphasized, when they vote under the proportional system, genuinely choose the elected officials who are the closest to them (unlike the majority system, in which they tend to vote the useful vote, elected officials being perceived as being more removed).

However, once they have been elected and ensured of being represented in the Assembly, minority parties are tempted to establish alliances with a view to offsetting the majority opposite them. In our example you can imagine an alliance between the MDS (20 percent), the PUP (10 percent), and the RSP (7.5 percent), or an

alliance between the PCT (10 percent), the PUP (10 percent), and the UDU (2.5 percent) or even a general alliance of all these minority parties.

Now in every democracy, by voting for the MDS, RSP, PCT, UDU, and the PUP, voters have not only voted for well-known values (social democracy, pan-Arabism, nationalism, egalitarianism, labor, etc.) but also excluded every future political alliance for their parties (and of their values) with other parties (and values). In that case the postelection alliance, which, though, is often necessary, between minority parties, is of such a nature as to make proportional representation unjust in that it does not translate voters' real choices but the choices of chief politicians. What you have is the rule of political sects—alliances and misalliances follow one another—and not justice. Worse yet, in its crude state, this system favors "particracy."

Looking now at majority voting, such as the system adopted up till now in Tunisia under article 88 of the electoral code (with one round), it favors political stability, they say, something which, furthermore, is necessary to a developing country such as our own. Alas, we can admit that the outcome of this voting has been devastating in practice. It has led not only to political stability but also to the paralysis of the government as embodied in a single party. In our country the one-round majority system (which is harsher than a two-round system), which in Great Britain has led to a balanced two-party system, has turned into an ultra-unanimous system. Because this voting requires the existence of a pluralist tradition in society. Now as it happens it has artificially perpetuated one party in power against the country's sociopolitical development.

These are the perverse effects of these two systems, which have led the political leadership to seek another way out and to choose a system, a so-called mixed system, which would bring together the virtues of the two classic systems. We are moving, it seems, in the direction of adopting a system that introduces "a dose of representative government" into the majority system. Thus there will be slates elected by majority vote at the district level and slates elected by proportional representation at the national level. This latter operation consists of proportionally distributing the unelected lists to majority voting at the local level throughout the entire country. Having said that, there are mixed votes and mixed votes. Everything depends on the dose. The "mixed" system envisaged by the new reform project might be termed an essential (majority) and accessory (proportional) system. The balance of the political system will certainly continue to suffer thereby. Because the new electoral reform, by maintaining the RCD's hegemony in political life, will not contribute to balancing a government that is excessively centered on central power. The fact that power is tied to a single-headed de facto executive, together with a vote dominated by the majority could unbalance the general political system with all the consequences that implies.

Now there is no democracy without offsetting powers, and the upcoming April 1994 Assembly which will emerge from elections based on an unmixed mixed system will most probably make up a counterpower. The reform will not make it possible for more than a dozen opposition deputies to get into the Assembly.

On the contrary, the mixed system whose superiority seems certain to us is without question the German system, which has been in force in the German Federal Republic since 1949. Because it is genuinely half-majority and half-representative. There are no doses here, just equal parts. The German Federal Republic set it up from square one, i.e., from the political vacuum left by the Nazis. Initially there was a void (neither majority nor opposition), at the end a solid democracy had arrived. It was the mixed voting, which finally made the difference and reestablished true stability, which means little else save a political and constitutional attraction to power.

According to this system, one-half of the deputies in the Bundestag are elected by a one-round, single-name majority vote, like the English model, but the sum total of seats is divided up by proportional representation of slates (496 seats assigned proportionally, but 248 deputies are elected by a single-round majority vote). However, and this is a requirement to avoid whimsical parties, parties only have the right to take part in the division of seats if they managed to win at least 5 percent of the vote or three seats under majority voting throughout the party. So the party is cut into two territories: a district reduced for the majority voting, and bigger districts for proportional representation. Voters vote twice, for the two types of district at the same time, one vote for a deputy under majority voting, one vote for a deputy under majority voting, and one vote for a deputy under proportional rules. The merits of such a system are many:

- At the vote level, first: As part of smaller districts, voters incline psychologically to the useful vote. The usefulness of such a vote is such that it manages to separate out the two most serious and important candidates. Better still, acting logically, voters continue to vote usefully in the larger districts despite the proportional system, the two votes being simultaneous.
- Then at the party level: On the one hand this mixed voting managed to reduce the number of German political parties from 12 in 1949 to two or three today. This shows that in a democracy, it isn't the political authorities who must recognize or not recognize the parties (with the exception of totalitarian parties) by handing or not handing over to them administrative visas according to the profile the powers that be want, but the electors themselves through their civic vote. This vote managed, on the one hand, to preserve the virtues of proportional representation and its equity while at the same time eradicating its major vice, the atomization of votes and the profusion of parties. And furthermore, it

allows voters to put together solid parliamentary and governmental majorities in their correct proportions. Last, as Jacques Cadart, a constitutionalist, put it so well, "this system removes the misdeeds of majority overrepresentation from the underrepresentation of majorities."

It should be strongly emphasized that demanding a mixed vote is nothing new in Tunisia. Beginning 1956, the weekly magazine *L'ACTION*, then run by Bechir Ben Yahmed, who was criticizing single-round majority voting adopted for the election of the Constituent Assembly charged with drawing up the constitution, in that it excluded the opposition, proposed adopting the mixed vote (see a report by Mr. Rafaa Ben Achour: "L'election de l'Assemblée constituante nationale et sa composition" ["The Election of the National Constituent Assembly and Its Makeup"] in 1984).

By adopting a genuinely mixed system in Tunisia, it could, as in Germany, bring out the concentration of political life around two huge groupings: on the one hand the RCD and on the other side a major opposition party. The latter can bring together either most of the opposition parties, or, as a quasifictional solution but one which is interesting for the development of the government, the Tunisian General Federation of Labor [UGTT] if it agrees to turn itself into a labor party.

In practice, given such a system, minority parties no longer have much choice. Because in this case, small parties are forced to ally themselves or line up at the sides of the big parties either majority or minority. So the first alternative available to the opposition parties is: either to regroup among themselves to counter the RCD's hegemony, or disappearance.

The second alternative, in the improbable likelihood of the UGTT's turning into a labor party, is: either regrouping around the UGTT or regrouping among themselves, or regrouping around the RCD.

So the mixed-vote method will have made the government's transition towards biparty democracy easy, or at least the regrouping at the two major poles. Now, if you look around you, the evidence convinces you that the best democracies operate quite simply with only two major movements (the other parties are insignificant); a major governmental movement and a major alternative protest movement (Great Britain, the United States, Germany, and France to a certain extent since there is generally a double alliance looking at one another, that of the right and that of the left.)

Voters will certainly gain in clarity and democracy will gain in depth. Because democracy needs not a small "dose" of representativity but a good dose of sunshine.

Ben Dhia Speaks on Human Rights Issues

93AF0542C Tunis *LE TEMPS* in French 1 Apr 93 p 2

[Article: "Mr. Ben Dhia: Democracy Means Scrupulous Respect for Human Rights"]

[Text] Mr. Abdelaziz Ben Dhia, member of the political bureau of the RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy] and minister of national defense, held a conference at Zaghuan on the theme of human rights, which he discussed in his closing address to the regional student seminar.

The minister began by reviewing the fundamental sources of human rights, before presenting a semantic analysis of human rights and the stages of their implementation in the new Tunisia. He noted there are three principal sources of human rights: intellectual and philosophical sources, domestic jurisprudence in some states, and international law.

The speaker first discussed the basic orientations of the intellectual and philosophical sources, orientations that have supported certain aspects of human rights since the time of Plato, the Carthaginian constitution, and various provisions of the Roman constitution. He then observed that some ideas concerning human rights made their appearance with the advent of monotheistic religions, singling out the contributions of Islam. The minister added that the modern concept of human rights began to crystallize through the theory of "natural rights," followed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his famous "social contract" and the theory of Montesquieu, when people began talking about balance between the three branches of government as a means of protecting the rights of man.

Regarding international juridical sources of human rights, Mr. Ben Dhia noted, contrary to what the United Nations believes, that the first countries to codify the principles of human rights were England, at the beginning of the 13th century, followed by the United States—both well before the famous "Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen" appeared in France.

Political Pressure

Mr. Ben Dhia then spoke of the international juridical sources of human rights, which he said are recent, going only as far back as the 1948 "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," subsequently reinforced by various other international instruments, all of which Tunisia has ratified.

The minister commented on violations of these rights in several regions of the world including occupied Palestine and Bosnia-Herzegovina, but even in advanced countries that are subject to bitter upwellings of racism. He also denounced the use of human rights by certain powers as a means of exerting political pressure under the guise of a "new international order".

In the second part of his discourse, Mr. Ben Dhia discussed human rights conditions in Tunisia in the new era. He noted that human rights represents, at the highest levels of the state, a fundamental and principled choice constituting the very basis of President Ben Ali's philosophy of government, because he knows Tunisia cannot advance on the path of democracy without scrupulous respect for human rights.

The minister added that the way power is exercised in the new Tunisia represents a veritable revolution, in the sense that human rights constitutes the cornerstone of the edifice and pervades all decisions affecting the life of the nation.

Mr. Ben Dhia analyzed the profound dimensions of this quiet revolution that rests on four main points, beginning with the fact that President Ben Ali has devoted himself to establishing a climate of consensus inspired by the national pact to serve as the foundation for the building of a democratic Tunisia.

Promotion of Human Rights

The minister reiterated that this philosophy for the conduct of affairs of state is based in equal parts on protection of the physical integrity of the individual, special attention to political rights, and the great importance attached to cultural, economic, and labor rights. He enumerated the many measures taken over the past 5 years, particularly the establishment of organs to monitor the human rights situation.

In that connection, the speaker advocated human rights indoctrination at every level, beginning with students, teachers, and the news media.

He concluded by calling on all Tunisians to dedicate themselves to defending their rights and to assume their responsibilities as citizens, failing which social equilibrium could be impaired.

Following the conference, there was an exchange between the minister and the students, who asked for clarifications on several points.

The conference was also attended by several regional officials from Zaghuan.

MDS Congress, Relations With RCD Reported

93AF0554A Tunis REALITES in French
2-8, 16-22 Apr 93

[Article by Moncef Marouf: "MDS (Movement of Socialist Democrats)"—first paragraphs are REALITES introductions]

[2-8 Apr pp 12-14]

[Text]

Congress Marks a Break

The Sfax Congress marks a turning point in the life of the MDS [Movement of Socialist Democrats]: this movement, which turned a new leaf after the Mestiri era, now has ambitions to become a genuine party and no longer a mere lobby.

Had he accepted Mohamed Moaada, the MDS chairman's invitation to attend the opening session of the fourth MDS congress, Ahmed Mestiri would certainly not have recognized himself in it, although he was the movement's founder. In fact, the movement that he left one year ago no longer looks much like the movement he created some 15 years ago with a group of about 10

militants. Moaada's MDS will also look less and less like Mestiri's, because the movement's fourth congress, which was just held in Sfax, marked a clean break between the two eras.

At the congress, from the platform, Mohamed Moaada took a stand right from the start: "Our congress is the congress of a new birth. The MDS must be a party, not a lobby (as some intended it to be) within the leadership. We must achieve credibility because it is the basis of our demand that others should be credible."

After criticizing his predecessor, without naming him, Mohamed Moaada, who wanted the congress to be "a congress of self-criticism" without turning into "self-flogging," made a critical review of the MDS's past efforts.

The MDS where "we discussed politics in coffee shops" made the mistake, he said, of believing that "a press release can generate change and that a chief of state's or a minister's decisions cannot be questioned." The MDS chairman is now convinced that a guideline from above can be stopped in the middle or at the bottom of the ladder. Yet, right after the 7 November change, no one doubted that one of the two scenarios considered possible would be followed: "Change at the top of the hierarchy, which would (again) become undemocratic; or change in the apparatus, which would become democratic. None of these two scenarios was followed." It is a long time since the MDS, through Mohamed Moaada's pen, asked "What is left of the 7th of November?" Since then, the MDS chairman has considerably toned down his position. Whereas, in the past, he considered that the government—as a whole—was alone to blame for the difficulties encountered by the democratization process, he now presents a more finely shaded analysis, and the congress gave him an opportunity to explain it in greater detail. Today, Mohamed Moaada puts President Ben Ali—whom he trusts "because of his determination to get rid of the one-color Parliament"—above the fray, and blames the deadlock to various degrees on "the apparatus" and on the opposition.

In history textbooks, the Sfax Congress will be justly associated with the MDS's break with the reasoning and practice that were current until recently, and with the development of theoretical foundations for the movement's new strategy.

At first a proponent of radical opposition, Mohamed Moaada gave it up because "tension will benefit those who can engage into confrontation"; which implies that this is not the MDS's case. Today, the MDS chairman and his movement are attempting "to establish a pluralistic society through the government" that "should not be used as a target." Because "in the Third World the only possible way to get in touch with society is through the government, and by maintaining normal relations with it."

However, if the process of change has experienced some failures, it is because "our apparatus and those of the government and the RCD [Democratic Constitutional

Rally] have made absolutism a habit. We have become used to categorical refusals. We must, for our part, free ourselves from this reflex in order to help the others to free themselves from their absolutism. We must train ourselves while attempting to train the others."

What part will the MDS play in the process of change? To this crucial question, Mohamed Moaada offered an answer that will serve as the movement's new strategy. According to the MDS chairman, "in the past, our role consisted in publishing press releases and waiting for change to happen." Mohamed Moaada's ambition today is to free his movement from this "wait-and-see and reserved" attitude and to "engage in a dynamic process" because "change must not occur without us."

Now, participation in the process of change requires an active presence in the field—"the only way to ascertain the sincerity of the official democratic reasoning" which, the MDS chairman acknowledged, "the movement currently lacks" in many parts of the country. Active involvement in the field is all the more necessary as "the responsibility for spreading democracy is incumbent upon those who believe in it."

Full of this new vision of, and approach to relations with the government and the process of change, the MDS chairman had to draw on all his inner resources to convince the congress, where there was no lack of critical and discordant voices—even though some of them expressed themselves behind the scenes rather than from the congress platform.

Several participants at the congress expressed reservations and fears concerning the movement's new strategy, although some of them believe that the MDS has no other choice. Reservations were expressed concerning the MDS's decision to announce, already now, its decision to take part in the March legislative elections (an action which they feel entails some risks and which some participants at the congress compare to giving a "blank check" to the government), its lack of commitment on human rights matters, and the movement's internal operation.

Concerning the latter point, a voice was raised to state that "we need different wings and opinions within the movement" and to declare itself against "the cult of personality, because that leads to a 'leader's party' and to dictatorship." This alarmist opinion, however, was counterbalanced by the speeches of two MDS personalities—Khemais Chammari and Sahbi Bouderbala—who tried to dispel the impression, created by the exclusion of Ben Jaafar's group, that dissenters could no longer speak up within the MDS.

Addressing the congress participants, Khemais Chammari stated that "your speeches of yesterday and today are the best proof that there is an ongoing debate and different opinions (within the MDS). I owe it to myself to say so in order to answer what some are saying concerning 'the lack of democracy' in the MDS. That is not true." For Khemais Chammari, the exclusion of Ben

Jaafar's group was due to "lack of respect for a minimum of principles and basic rules."

In full agreement with him, Sahbi Bouderbala recalled that "he who claims to support democracy must accept its results and its consequences" and that "all decisions within our movement are made by a majority. The minority continues to discuss, but it must not interfere with the majority's decision. And, unfortunately, this was the mistake made by the group that is now absent."

In addition to "glasnost"—the MDS congress was wide open to journalists, who could follow it from end to end—Mohamed Moaada wanted the MDS congress to be also marked by "perestroika." That is because implementing his broad program and achieving his ambition (of becoming the RCD's alter ego) will require an instrument capable of shouldering that responsibility. The creation of an "executive secretariat fits into that framework." This nine-member structure—members of the outgoing political bureau—will manage the movement's day-to-day affairs—down to the most minute details. It will meet at regular intervals and will constitute the link with the movement's regional and local structures, which are now urged to show constant activism in the field.

The MDS chairman put it plainly: all structures, regional (federations) or local (sections), must achieve the goals (and figures) that they will set for themselves jointly with the movement's leadership, or be dissolved.

The MDS, which availed itself of its congress to try and formulate a genuine program—because an opposition party "can no longer be content with shouting slogans"—will endow itself with permanent structures, the mission of which will consist in formulating an "MDS policy" in all fields. Through these intense efforts, the MDS intends to prepare adequately for the March 1994 legislative elections and, eventually, to acquire the influence and the knowhow required to become a party that could aspire to govern the country. The MDS—which (to quote its chairman) considers itself as "the leading opposition party"—now openly acknowledges that it has that ambition.

As it is no longer an opposition party according to the traditional model (Moaada considers that the opposition's role must be redefined) and not yet a government party, the MDS wants to be both at the same time. According to Moaada, what the MDS wants is "as a national organization, to continue the struggle to establish a pluralistic society; as a political party, to participate in the government in order to implement its programs."

[16-22 Apr p 12]

[Text]

Understanding, to What Extent?

For more than one year now, relations between the government and the MDS have intensified. Will they lead to the MDS's entering the government, as the development of their relations would seem to indicate?

"The chief of state consults me, and not just on domestic policy matters." These few words, which Mr. Mohamed Moaada, the MDS chairman, let slip almost furtively from the platform of the MDS congress—which was held on 26-28 March in Sfax—tell a lot on the nature and strength of the relations between the government and the MDS. After being at daggers drawn, especially after the April 1989 elections, about two years ago the two parties turned the page of a not so distant past that was difficult and unstable because made of ever renewed tensions; since then, they have become acquainted little by little and therefore learned to understand each other better. Relations between the government and the MDS have even become such in the past year that their alliance, which seems to be one of "unlimited responsibilities" must now be reckoned with.

To the traditional players on the political scene, we should actually now add this government-MDS alliance, which is taking on a prominent role because—as the MDS chairman emphasized in the interview he gave us last week—the two parties now fully trust each other and share the same views, which provides a solid basis for their close collaboration. Officially, their collaboration aims mostly to continue and promote the democratization of political life. That subject is always on the agenda of the (often unannounced) audiences given by the chief of state to Mr. Mohamed Moaada. The past two years, however, have shown that collaboration between the government and the MDS covers a much larger domain. As you will recall, President Ben Ali entrusted the MDS chairman with missions, official (university, relations with Iraq during the Gulf war) as well as unofficial. As a result, the MDS chairman's personal attitude toward the government changed progressively before he asked his movement's congress to approve this new line.

Mr. Mohamed Moaada—who in the past severely criticized the government, blaming it for the failures of the democratization process—nowadays no longer questions the chief of state's determination to democratize political life, and never misses an opportunity to emphasize, as he did in Sfax, "the strength of President Ben Ali's commitment" in this respect. Now convinced that democratization is not the government's exclusive responsibility, and that the opposition must take on its share of responsibility to ensure that democratization succeeds, the MDS chairman caused his movement to change its course and its strategy, and this was made official at the Sfax congress.

After choosing radical opposition for a time, which tended to impose democratization on the government from the outside, the MDS gave it up and adopted a strategy of partnership-opposition, the goal of which is to associate the MDS with the government in the democratization process. This change of strategy—introduced very progressively—was rewarded by government's gestures designed to help the MDS consolidate its position as the leading opposition party and the second largest political force in the country—after the RCD.

These gestures were first of a financial nature. For over one year now, the MDS has received financial assistance provided in installments and amounting, according to our sources, to several tens of thousands of dinars. This assistance—the largest given to an opposition party, as the MDS chairman confirmed in Sfax—enabled the MDS to finance the relaunching of its publication *AL MOSTAQBAL* and the movement's many activities, in particular the constituting congress of the Democratic Youth Organization (OJD). This assistance also included—probably as a gift—a building in downtown Tunis, where the MDS is expected to move its headquarters.

These gestures, finally, are and will be of a political nature. First, the government has already taken the MDS for its leading partner among the opposition parties: the MDS chairman is the opposition personality with whom President Ben Ali meets most often. By giving Mr. Mohamed Moaada the opportunity to announce future political measures ahead of time—in Sfax, for instance, the MDS chairman announced the forthcoming organization of televised debates designed to enable the opposition to state its position on current national issues—and in particular the revision of laws “tailor-made” in the past for the ruling party, the government strengthened the MDS's position and gave substance to the idea that the MDS helped work out these measures.

The entente between the government and the MDS might however go still further politically. In fact, when Mr. Mohamed Moaada announced at his movement's last congress that the MDS wanted to share in the country's government, it did not sound like a mere pious wish, but rather like a possibility that is increasingly taking shape day after day. Have the government and the MDS already come to terms in this respect? That cannot be ruled out, especially considering that, recently, the MDS chairman often explained that “every political party is a candidate to govern the country” and that his party's goal is not “to remain forever in the opposition.”

Therefore, it is not preposterous to assume that the MDS is now at the gates of power and that it is just a matter of time before it enters the government.

Background on UGET, Education Officials Dispute

93AF0544A Tunis LE TEMPS in French 8 Apr 93 pp 10-11

[Article by Lotfi Ouajah: “Reform of Higher Education: Just a Flash in the Pan?”]

[Text] Have these strikes been the result of a misunderstanding? Is Article 17 really only a trial balloon? Is it too late to rectify the mistake? The university seems at a loss how to manage the situation. Going on the attack, UGET [General Union of Tunisian Students] has been beset increasingly by internal differences that could have a major impact on how the crisis unfolds.

Tensions are as high now as they were after the cancellation of the general strike scheduled for 17 March. The

student body and the ministry are geared up for more polemics. Here is an update.

When the new academic year opens at the university, the higher education reform will go into effect, though only “in principle” for the most part. The project has entailed a great deal of bargaining with the students, who have seen it as a threat to them and to what they consider the university's achievements. Numerous meetings between the different sides have been held to discuss the substance of the reform, rectify its imperfections, and plan how best to implement it. The Ministry of Education and Sciences, for its part, has insisted the plan be as credible as possible, and above all consequential, with specific objectives. The students, during these preparatory deliberations, expressed through UGET their rejection of a reform the great majority consider a “broadside attack” and another effort to “scuttle an already troubled institution whose potential has been curtailed.” In January 1993, the pace of events began to pick up. Both sides became more entrenched in their positions, and the ministry and UGET began heading for open confrontation. After a 2-year lull, the university was waking up to a situation as potentially explosive as past eruptions of faculty unrest. UGET cast off its moorings and called on supporters to demonstrate their total rejection of the proposed higher education reform. No sooner said than done. The order was given, and things were soon at an impasse. One by one, faculties around the country began holding sporadic one-day strikes. In some areas there were confrontations (albeit minor) with security forces. In February, events moved into high gear. A wave of mass meetings and protests were staged to denounce the proposed reform as “far from innocuous.”

A meeting described as a last chance for compromise was held between Mr. Mohamed Garfi, the minister of education and sciences, and UGET representatives. Once again, no agreement was reached. This was enough to trigger a wave of weekly one-day student strikes, most recently on Tuesday 9 March 1993.

Article 17

It might be said that what really instigated these last few months of extreme agitation was Article 17 of the reform decree. In its original version (the one that angered the students), it laid out a series of measures governing the new academic regime and requirements for obtaining first-cycle and masters' degrees. Students saw this as completely reversing gains the university had already made. According to Article 17, students enrolled in the second cycle would be subject to a sanctioned evaluation system based mainly on counting “cartouches”. At their rallies, UGET members insisted it was a discriminatory approach, a further step in the erosion of the public sector. One even described it as punitive to the general public. “As citizens see it, the public has always paid for education, through taxes. Does the reform mean the state can no longer support the cost of studies and citizens must foot the bill?”

For its part, the ministry states categorically: "The contents of Article 17 of the reform are merely proposals. Nothing has been decided officially..." (see our most recent issue).

Thus it seems the whole affair has been based on a misunderstanding. The students find it unacceptable, since in their view even if nothing has been decided it is still a "trial balloon." It is easy to predict what would happen next.

But returning to this notorious Article 17: A circular from the Ministry of Education and Sciences dated 11 March announced the article would be amended forthwith, so that students would be allowed the same number of annual enrollments and examinations in the first year of the second cycle (i.e., the third year) as in the second year ("...Students are authorized two annual enrollments and an unlimited number of enrollments for examinations in the first and second year of the second cycle..."). What these provisions really mean is that students can spend a total of six years in first cycle and an unlimited number in second cycle. Of course, all this is still only a proposal, and final approval is up to the academic councils and the Ministry of Education and Sciences.

The former version of that article—the one that triggered student protest—provided that third-year students (those in the first year of second cycle) would be under a special regime, limited to two annual enrollments and one examination. Students in the second year of second cycle were permitted two annual enrollments and could sign up for an unlimited number of examinations.

The second version of Article 17 grew out of proposals from the academic councils of the various schools. Will it be implemented? It is too early to tell. At all events, students have been urged to make their views known via the academic councils.

Divisions

But are these the real problems behind the "malaise" at our university, and is Article 17 thus the sole cause of the crisis? An affirmative answer would doubtless make life simpler for some parties to the conflict. But certain behind-the-scenes factors make the situation in reality more complex. UGET, currently the students' sole representative, is obviously having a hard time with its role. The reasons behind this are multiple. The student syndicate's operational style, the way it organizes its activities, and its internal divisions have clearly contributed to putting it in a situation where options are few. The latest crisis is a prime case in point. Although some consider the series of strikes a total success, the haggling that preceded them brought more divergences to light. The cancelled 17 March strike was one a moment when those differences broke out into the open. Fissures within the executive bureau itself were becoming increasingly pronounced, and two opposed factions emerged. The first, which viewed student activism in political terms, urged that all efforts be focused on holding the line against any compromise. The second considered UGET's objective should be to protect the

university from any form of outside pressure or control. So, was the 17 March strike intended to further reduce the tutelary authority of the ministry?

The negotiations led to cancellation of the strike, in part because signs of flexibility began to appear at the Ministry of Education. But that did not resolve the issue definitively, and the dispute is merely on hold. There may be a number of surprises in the days ahead. UGET is not in the best of shape. Serious accusations have been raised against it by students. Even some members of the executive bureau are lifting the veil on questions previously shoved aside due to the press of more urgent events. There is more and more talk of poor management, especially on the financial side, and of exclusionary practices limiting rights to participate in UGET.

Conflict Postponed

All of which brings us back to square one, and particularly to UGET's real role at the university. Accustomed to exploiting conditions for its own advancement, UGET now sees itself forced to adapt somehow to those conditions. Handicapped also by internal divisions, it runs a greater risk than ever of increasingly losing its credibility with a student constituency that expects more of it.

The resumption of classes after the spring break should offer a propitious moment for assessing the situation and re-evaluating the positions it has taken with the Ministry of Education and Sciences, not only on the question of higher education reform but also on all the other issues still in suspense.

Administrative Reform Issue Discussed

93AF0542A Tunis LE TEMPS in French 1 Apr 93 p 2

[Interview with Nouredine M'rabet, director of CREA (Administrative Studies Research Center); place and date not given: "Solutions Must Contend With Realities on the Ground"]

[Text] In an effort to analyze impediments in the relationship between government and its subjects, we have interviewed a well-known administrative reform specialist, Mr. Nouredine M'rabet, general director of CREA [Administrative Studies Research Center].

[LE TEMPS] What do you have to say about current plans for administrative reform?

[M'rabet] While it is a bit early to draw accurate conclusions about the administrative reform projects instituted by the Secretariat of Public Service and Administrative Reform, it is nonetheless true that a number of indicators of the approach being pursued already can be and are being analyzed.

Administrative reform projects have long erred through excess of ambition incommensurate with realities on the ground. A certain "vagueness" has marked their terms of reference and implementation. Any "realistic" plan for administrative reform must first meet certain technical

specifications. It includes both financial clauses (cost) and procedures (specifications and details of implementation).

It follows a logical progression of achievement in stages:

- The timeliness of the program, i.e., in political and consensual terms the program is ripe to be launched;
- the procedural definition of the plan, in such a way as to have a concrete budgetizable operation that is technically feasible.

The approach followed by the Secretariat of State for Public Service and Administrative Reform is consistent with these principles. It has aimed at generality, pragmatism, and consensus.

Generality, in that it proposes to act both on the way the bureaucracy functions and on its exterior environment, which is the public. Towards that end, three principal foci of intervention have been defined:

First the citizen, to respond to his immediate expectations.

Second, the public servant, the primary instrument of the reform, to make him the mainstay of reform.

Third, modernization of the work tools employed, notably data processing and electronic communication technologies. This "demarcation" of the foci of reform is judicious, because without marginalizing any aspect of reform it clearly identifies their focal points.

Pragmatism: Identifying these foci is not enough to accomplish reform. There remains the sheer work of "marking out" the actual terrains of intervention. The real chance for success in this operation depends on translating these foci into so many "small" concrete projects clearly identified both as to their objectives and as to procedures for implementation. Therein lies the novelty of the approach adopted by the Secretariat of State for Administrative Reform. In identifying some 30 specific projects, of which about 10 are well on their way to successful completion, the secretariat of state has committed itself irreversibly to the path of pragmatic action.

Consensus: A successful reform is one that is widely accepted. A reform designed and carried out solely by government officials cannot succeed.

The setting up of working groups of diverse make-up for each of these projects helps to ensure success.

[LE TEMPS] How do you propose carrying the reform through to a successful conclusion, and where are the remaining obstacles?

[M'rabet] There is no miracle recipe. Everything depends on knowing how to define clear and measurable objectives and assure continuity of implementation. The idea is to create an irreversible tide of reform. There must be an ongoing concern for continual improvement. Most obstacles are psychological and attitudinal: [government employees] not believing in what they are doing and selling themselves short. To speak of reforming the

bureaucracy does not mean getting rid of a bad bureaucracy. To the contrary, the Tunisian bureaucracy has always been an important anchor for the state, helping it avoid drift and softening adverse repercussions.

Reform by "half-measures" is to be avoided, because the phenomenon of erosion of reform can enter into play, eventually driving one back to square one. The simplest solutions are the most effective.

Administrative reform projects nowadays are increasingly technical in nature; one must avoid any political or journalistic manipulation of them.

[LE TEMPS] The administration and the citizenry blame each other for the weaknesses that are constantly being discovered. How can one bring about a permanent reconciliation between these two parties?

[M'rabet] Government is a provider of services to the public. These services are paid for, directly or indirectly, by those who use them. The user is within his rights to demand that government services be of good quality. Government in turn should be creative enough to win over its "customer." Spectacular actions with high impact on the public are needed. In addition, a permanent channel of information between the public and government should be established.

All services that can be provided without inconvenience to users should be identified and set in motion. Current policies on dealing with the public and provision of information need to be completely revised and integrated into an overall government public relations policy.

UGTT Secretary Defends Ties to Government

93AF0542B Tunis LE TEMPS in French 1 Apr 93 p 2

[Article by Mouldi Mbarek: "Mr. Sahbani Warns UGTT Hardliners"]

[Text] Starting next Monday, management and labor will tackle the delicate issue of the complete revision of pay scales. The UGTT [Tunisian General Federation of Labor] insists on integrating bonuses and overtime pay into base salary and aligning rural with urban minimum wage [SMIG] levels.

During the Sfax regional congress, the secretary general of the UGTT issued a strong warning to union hardliners, appealing to workers for moderation and reasoned debate. The trade union spokesperson advised us sectoral negotiations could be close fought, especially starting next Monday.

The trade union is demanding alignment of the agricultural minimum wage with the SMIG, which could give rise to heated negotiations next week.

Flexibility

The employers' syndicate and the union also seem to be at odds over another important issue, job flexibility in industry.

Some employers are believed to favor wage increases on condition the labor codes could be revised. According to the UGTT spokesperson, "The UGTT is willing to discuss any problems of concern to Tunisian industry, but in an objective and rational manner, because rolling back gains of the workers damages the company itself. A worker without job security produces less, and the enterprise is the loser. Over the long term, people are the company's most important 'capital'," the trade union spokesperson said.

UGTT Hardliners

We have also learned that: "Mr. Ismail Sahbani was ferociously criticized by the left extremists at the Sfax regional UGTT congress, which lasted from noon until 2200 last Tuesday."

The left wing of the Sfax regional union "criticized the UGTT secretary general for a certain complaisance vis-a-vis the government and the employers."

Mr. Ismail Sahbani's response was blunt: "Our relations with the government and the employers are civilized. We have never been complaisant. The trade union is independent. We can only rejoice that respect and mutual understanding characterize relations between the UGTT and the government, which has worked unceasingly to strengthen workers' rights and our autonomy as a trade union," the UGTT secretary general said.

Warning

"Be warned: We're making no deals," warned Mr. Sahbani. The hardline wing of the Sfax regional union suffered total defeat, since none of the five "left-leaning" candidates was elected to the union's executive bureau. Rather, the union reelected nine ex-members of the old executive bureau from the list of 14 candidates presented by the Sfax regional bureau.

The UGTT secretary general expressed his satisfaction with the framework agreement signed between labor and management, citing the important gains workers had made while also delivering "a strong warning against elements that constitute only a tiny minority within the trade union. Extremism is dangerous, both for the working class and for the country. We lost our autonomy before the Congress of Sousse in April 1989 because of excesses.

"We must avoid excesses and rationalize our demands. The interests of the nation must come before any other consideration," the secretary general of the UGTT warned.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Election Winners, Affiliations Announced

93LH0005A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
2 May 93 pp 1,4

[Article: "Names of Winning Deputies"]

[Text] Following is the official list of names of winners of the Yemeni elections:

Ahmad 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Ruqayhi, GPC [General People's Congress]; 'Abd-al-Malik Ahmad Hasan al-Wazir, GPC; Ahmad Muhammad 'Ali Lansi, GPC; Yahya Yahya Muhammad al-Shami, Reform [Reform Grouping]; Ahmad Muhammad Yahya al-Kahlani, GPC; 'Abdallah 'Ali 'Ali Sa'tar, Reform; 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Akwa', GPC; Ahmad 'Ali 'Abdallah al-Sunaydar, GPC; Muhsin Rajih Muhsin Abu-Luhum, GPC; 'Abbas 'Ali Hasan al-Mu'ayyad, Reform; Ahmad 'Abdallah al-Hujri, GPC; 'Abd-al-Rahman Yahya al-'Imad, Reform; Ahmad Hammad Qa'id Hammad, GPC; 'Ali Muhammad Sa'd 'Athrab, GPC; Hasan Muhammad Maqbuli al-Ahdal, Reform; 'Abd-al-Wahhab Muhammad 'Ali al-Ruhani, GPC; 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abdallah Ahmad al-Rammah, Reform; Muhammad al-Sadiq 'Abdallah Thabit al-Mufliis, independent; Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad 'Amayisah, YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party]; Zaki Muhammad Hasan Khalifah, independent; Qasim 'Abd-al-Rabb Salih 'Afif, YSP; 'Uthman 'Abd-al-Jabbar Rashid 'Ali, YSP; 'Abdallah 'Ali Salih Khawbani, YSP; Khawlah Ahmad Sharaf Ahmad, YSP; Anis Hasan Yahya 'Awad, YSP; Muhammad Sa'id Muqbil Salih, independent; Ahmad Nasir Fadl 'Aqrabi, independent; 'Abdallah Salih 'Umar al-Musaybili, YSP; Salim Dahiq 'Ali Mubarak, YSP; 'Abdallah Sinan Sayf-al-Jalal, Reform; 'Abd-al-Rahman Qahtan Qayid Isma'il, Reform; Muhammad Yahya 'Ali al-Mutahhir, Reform; Isma'il Muhammad Ghalib Mallah, GPC.

'Abdallah Sayf Salih al-Haydari, Reform; 'Abd-al-Habib Salim Muqbil al-Zubayri, independent; 'Abdallah 'Ali Sarhan Mahyub, Reform; 'Abdallah Farhan Khalid al-Humaydi, reform; Mahfuz 'Abd-al-Rabb Hasan al-Dukhayni, GPC; Ahmad 'Ali Haydar Salih, Reform; Ahmad Salih al-Faqih, Reform; 'Ali Ibrahim Hamim al-Sururi, independent; Ahmad Hamud Muflih al-Jamidi, Reform; Tahir 'Ali Sayf 'Abdan, independent; Muhammad 'Abduh Sa'id al-Nasm, GPC; Yasin Husayn Ahmad al-Najashi, YSP; Ahmad Hamud Tahir Hasan, Reform; Ahmad Qayid Salih Suwaylih, YSP; Mansur Ahmad Sayf Mas'ud, independent; 'Abd-al-Sattar 'Abd-al-Ghani Muhammad al-Shumayri, GPC; 'Abd-al-Wali 'Abd-al-Warith Farhan al-Shumayri, GPC; Muhammad Muqbil 'Ali al-Humayri, independent; 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud 'Abd-al-Hamid, Ba'th; 'Abd-al-Wali Hazza' Munassar al-'Amiri, Reform; Sadiq 'Ali 'Abdallah Yahya al-Dabab; independent; 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Abdallah Abu-'Awf, YSP; Nayif Muhammad Mansur al-Humayri, Reform; 'Abd-al-Hamid Muhammad Farhan Qahtan, Reform; Muntazar Muhammad Ahmad al-Mikhlaifi, Reform; 'Abduh Muhammad Ahmad al-Jundi, Democratic Nasirite; Yahya Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Ahdal, Reform; 'Ali Muhammad Ahmad al-Wafi, Reform; Sultan Mahyub Mujahid al-Sufyani, GPC; 'Abd-al-Rahman Ahmad Muhammad Nu'man, independent; Sultan Sa'id Haydar al-Suraymi, YSP;

Ahmad 'Ali Muqbil al-Shallali, YSP; 'Abd-al-Jabbar 'Ayid Thabit Rabbash, GPC; Sultan Sa'id 'Abdallah al-Burkani, GPC.

'Abd-al-'Aziz Mansur Yahya Muhammad al-Zubayr, YSP; Sultan Hazzam Shamsan al-'Atwani, Unionist Nasirite; 'Abd-al-Wadud Sharaf 'Abd-al-Ghani, Reform; Muhammad Lutf Ahmad al-Sami'i, independent; Qasim Qasim Muqbil al-Zubaydi, Reform; Mahdi 'Abdallah Sa'id Banasir, YSP; Zayd Ahmad Muhammad Taha, independent; 'Abduh Muhammad Ahmad Hazza', YSP; Salih Naji Muhammad Harbi, independent; 'Ali Munassar Muhammad Muqbil, independent; Muhammad 'Uthman Muhsin Husayn, YSP; Yahya 'Abdallah Qahtan 'Abdallah, independent; Muhammad Ahmad 'Ali Salman, YSP; 'Abdallah 'Ali Qasim al-Rabawi, YSP; Muhammad Ghalib Ahmad Qasim, YSP; Sha'fal 'Umar 'Ali Bin-'Ali, YSP; Muhammad Naji Sa'id 'Ali, YSP; Muhammad 'Ali Hasan al-Riyadi, independent; 'Ali 'Ali 'Abduh al-Bu'dani, independent; 'Abd-al-Rahman Yahya 'Ali al-Humayri, Reform; Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman Mansur Darmus, GPC; Ahmad 'Ali 'Abd-al-Baqi al-Shahari, YSP; Yahya Mansur 'Abd-al-Hamid Abu-Isba', YSP; 'Ali Ahmad Muhammad al-Warrafi, Reform; 'Abdallah Hasan Muhammad al-Du'ays, GPC; 'Ali 'Abd-al-Latif Qayid Rajih, GPC; Sayf 'Ali Salih al-Sari, independent; Muhammad Ahmad Qasim al-Surri, GPC; Muhammad Hamud Murshid al-Rassas, GPC; 'Ali 'Abdallah Ahmad Abu-Haliqah, GPC; Ahmad muhammad Isma'il al-Nuzayli, independent; Muhammad Najib Ahmad Sayf, GPC; Hasan 'Abd-al-Rabb 'Abduh al-'Adufi, GPC; 'Abd-al-Raqib Qa'id 'Ali Muhsin Basha, GPC; 'Abdallah Sharaf Murshid Qayid al-Humaydi, Reform.

Nabil Sadiq 'Ali Muhsin Basha, GPC; Rashad Lutf Hamid al-Shammuri, GPC; 'Abd-al-Karim Muhammad Muqbil Abu-Ra's, GPC; 'Abbas Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Nahari, Reform; Muhammad muhammad ahmad Mansur, GPC; 'Ali Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad al-Sa'idi, independent; Ahmad Yahya al-Hajj Muhammad 'Ali, Reform; Muhammad Hamud Qayid al-Zuhayri, Reform; Muhammad Naji Salih al-Ruwayshan, independent; Nu'man 'Ali Muhammad Salih al-Bida', GPC; 'Ali Rashid Hasan al-Wadi'i, GPC; 'Abd-al-Wahhab 'Abdallah Muhammad 'Ali al-Kabsi, Reform; 'Abd-al-Rahman Muslih 'Ali Salih 'Uwaydayn, Reform; Muhammad Husayn Tahir Muhammad, Reform; Muhammad Mas'ad Ahmad Muhsin al-Farah, Reform; Husayn Muhsin Naji al-Madhaji, GPC; Muhammad Ahmad Hasan Afandi, Reform; 'Ali Ahmad Hamud Salih al-Shami, Reform; 'Abdallah 'Ali Muhammad Salih al-Maqalih, Reform; Hazzam Naji Muhammad Muslih Fadil, GPC; 'Ali Salih 'Abbad Sinan, YSP; Zayd Ahmad Muhammad Sulayman, YSP; Mahmud Husayn Thabit 'Ali Basmah, YSP; Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad al-Qayrahi, YSP; Ahmad Muhammad 'Umar al-Hayyal, YSP; Salim 'Umar Muhammad al-Musaybili, YSP; Husayn al-Siddiq

Ahmad al-Jaffah, YSP; Mahdi Abu-Bakr 'Umar al-Hamid, GPC; Nasir 'Abduh Ahmad 'Araman, independent; 'Abd-al-Qawi Husayn al-Humayqani, independent; 'Umar 'Abdrabbuh 'Abdallah al-Farawi, YSP; 'Ali Ahmad Muhammad al-'Umrani, GPC; 'Ali Ahmad Nasir al-'Awadi, GPC; Jamal Mas'ad Ahmad 'Abdallah Ahmad, YSP; 'Ali Ahmad Nasir al-Dhahab, Ba'th; Ahmad 'Abd-al-Wali al-'Azzi al-Tashi, Reform.

Muhammad Naji Salih 'Allaw, Reform; Ahmad 'Ali Salih al-Salami, YSP; Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad Bamuslim Abu-'Asqan, YSP; Sali 'Ali 'Abdallah al-Labani, YSP; Salih 'Ali Mubarak 'Ulaywi, YSP; Salih Nasir 'Abdallah Nasran, YSP; Ahmad Salim Yaslam Khayran, YSP; Hasan 'Abdallah Hasan 'Abd-al-Haqq, GPC; Salih 'Abdallah Muhammad Baqays, GPC; Muna Salim Bakkar Basharahil, independent; Muhammad 'Umar Karamah, YSP; Ahmad Sa'id Muhammad al-Muhammadi, independent; 'Umar Ahmad Salim Juban, YSP; Salim Muhammad 'Abdallah Jubran, YSP; Salim 'Umar Muhammad al-Jawbahi, independent; Ahmad 'Ubayd Mubarak Bin-Dhu'r, YSP; Mahmud Sa'id Mubarak Mudahha, YSP; Muhammad Husayn Ahmad al-'Aydarus, YSP; Faysal 'Uthman Bin-Shamlan, independent; Muslim Mabkhut 'Aydah al-Minhali, independent; Muhammad 'Ali 'Abbud Bashimakh, YSP; Jum'an Salimayn 'Ali Barabba', YSP; Haydar Abu-Bakr 'Abdallah al-'Attas, YSP; Salim Ahmad Sa'id al-Khunayshi, YSP; Nasir Salim Sulayman 'Ali Balkhaysh, YSP; 'Ali Salim Sa'id Bakurayt, YSP; Muhammad Salim Khamis Badinar, YSP; 'Abdallah Hasan Ahmad Muhammad Khayrat, independent; 'Abd-al-Wasi' Ha'il Sa'id An'am, GPC; 'Abd-al-Jalil Rudman Ahmad Qasim, GPC; 'Abdallah Ibrahim 'Abdallah al-Dahawi, GPC; Muhammad Qasim 'Umar Mu'awwadah, GPC; Muhammad Abkar Muhsin Hajjam, Reform; Muhammad Salih 'Ali Muhammad, GPC; 'Abdallah Mahdi 'Abduh 'Ali Mahdi, independent; Shu'ayb Muhammad Hasan al-Fashiq, GPC; Munassar 'Abdallah Yahya Muntasir, GPC.

'Ali Futayni Yahya Ghallab, independent; Sulayman Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ahdal, GPC; Muhammad 'Abduh Hasan al-Fashiq, GPC; 'Adil 'Abduh 'Ali Ahayaf, GPC; Sakhr Ahmad 'Abbas al-Wajih, GPC; Mansur 'Ali 'Abduh Wasil, Reform; 'Abduh Muhammad Rudman Rafi', GPC; Muhammad Talib Muhammad Muyammarah, GPC; Mahmud Qayid 'Awad al-Dayyashi, GPC; Ahmad 'Ali Muhammad Sultan, YSP; Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad Maqrani, GPC; Hasan 'Ali Hasan Muhammad Tahir, GPC; Muhammad Qasim Qaz'ah Maf'al Reform; Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad 'Ajlan, Reform; 'Abd-al-Bari 'Abduh Muhammad Jaylan, GPC; Ahmad 'Ali Ahmad Buwayrik, Reform; 'Ali Nasir Salih al-Sanami, Reform; Husayn Mutahhir Muhammad al-'Ansi, Reform; 'Abd-al-'Aziz Muhammad ahmad al-Hadarani, independent; 'Abd-al-Latif Muthanna Nasir al-Shandari, GPC; Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad al-Sulaymani, Reform; Hamud Sa'd Salih Ziyad, GPC; Salih 'Abdallah Naji al-Dubayyani, reform; Hasan Husayn 'Ali 'Akrut, Reform; Yahya 'Ali Ahmad al-Ra'i, GPC; Muhammad

Ahmad Muhsin al-Miqdad, GPC; Mani' 'Ali Ghalib al-Sayh, GPC; Mujahid Husayn 'Abd-al-Razzaq Ghashim, independent; Yahya Husayn Ahmad al-Bariq, GPC; Isma'il 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Samawi, GPC; 'Adil Muhammad Muhammad al-Samhi, GPC; Mabkhut Salih Yahya al-Bu'aythi, GPC; 'Abd-al-Wahhab Hilal 'Abbas al-Kabbudi, Grouping (for Reform); Nasir 'Ali Sinan Muhammad al-Kalbi, YSP; Muhammad al-Hajj Salih Sa'd al-Salihi, Reform; 'Abdu Hashim Hamid al-'Alawi, GPC; Muhammad al-Khadim al-Wajih, GPC; Naji Muhammad 'Abdallah Qayid Abu-Ra's, GPC; Muhammad Naji 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sahyif, GPC.

Amin Husayn Qa'id Muhammad al-Shayif, GPC; Muhammad Muslih Salih al-Shahwani, independent; Sadiq 'Abdallah Husayn al-Ahmar, independent; 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, Reform; Hamud Hamud Yahya 'Atif, GPC; Jubran Mujahid Yahya Abu-Shawarib, Ba'th; Ahmad Ahmad Muhsin al-'Uqari, GPC; 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad Salih al-Hamdi, independent; Hazzam 'Abdallah Hazzam al-Samar, Reform; Mujahid Mujahid 'Abdallah al-Qahhali, Nasirite Correction; Husayn Hadi 'Ali Jibarah, GPC; 'Abdallah 'Ali Salih al-Khalqi, GPC; Muhsin Sari Muhsin Sari, GPC; Ahmad 'Ali Salih Shayban, GPC; Hasan Muhammad 'Ali Hasan al-Matari, GPC; 'Abdallah 'Abdallah Muhammad Qadi, GPC; 'Abdallah Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Kabsi, GPC; Muqbil 'Ali 'Abdallah al-Fil, GPC; Yahya Muhammad 'Ali Ghawayr, GPC; Ahmad Muhammad Ahmad al-Dubaybi, GPC; Yahya Muslih Mahdi, GPC; 'Ali 'Ali 'Ali al-Qusay', Reform; Mahdi Salih Ghalib al-Jamadi, independent; Muhammad Mahdi 'Abdallah al-Kuwayti, GPC; 'Abdu Muhammad Murshid Muhammad, YSP; Hamid 'Abdallah Ahmad al-'Udhri, Reform; Muhammad 'Ali 'Abdallah Abu-Luhum, Reform; Husayn Ahmad Husayn al-Qadi, GPC; Muhammad 'Abdallah Isma'il al-Kabsi, Ba'th; 'Ali Sa'id 'Ali Muhammad al-Qushaybi, GPC; Ahmad Isma'il Abu-Khuriyah, GPC; Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Ali al-Sharif, Ba'th; Naji Muhammad Jam'an al-Jadari, GPC; 'Ali Ahmad Ahmad Hubaysh, GPC; Muhammad Bakir 'Umar Salah, independent; Muhammad 'Ali al-Ruzayqi Salih al-Ruzayqi, independent; Hazzam Hazzam Hazzam Hayjan, GPC.

'Abd-al-Rahman 'Ali Fathallah al-Mushabbi, GPC; Muhammad Yahya Muhammad al-Sharafi, independent; Zayd Muhammad Yahya Abu-'Ali, GPC; Husayn Husayn Khamis, GPC; 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad Hadi 'Abdallah Hamid, Ba'th; Ahmad 'Ali Dirham Da'il al-Shawmi, GPC; Ahmad Muhammad 'Abdallah Sawfan, GPC; Muhammad Mashli Zayd al-Rida, Ba'th; Hamid 'Abdallah Ahmad al-Jabarti, independent; Husayn Sawd Ahmad Yahya 'Afaj, GPC; Yahya Suhayl 'Ali al-Harjuj, GPC; 'Abd-al-Karim Muhammad Mushwif al-Aslami, Reform; Ahmad Muhammad 'Ali al-Harib al-Shumayri, GPC; Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad Qahm, GPC; Muhammad Yahya 'Abdu Yahya Abu-Hadi, GPC; Muhammad Yahya Husayn al-al-Mudawwami al-Sharafi, independent; Yahya Nasir Salih Yahya al-Asadi, independent;

'Abd-al-Razzaq Yahya Qutran, Reform; Yahya Muhammad Ahmad Nasir al-Khayyari, independent; Hamid 'Abdallah Husayn al-Ahmar, Reform; Muhammad Mansur Salih Yahya al-Bakri, GPC; Muhammad Muhammad Hazzam Mas'ud, GPC; 'Ali 'Ayid Muhammad Mashhal, GPC; Muhajjab 'Uthman Ibrahim Muhajjab, GPC; Husayn Muhammad Shaw'i al-Jama'i, GPC; Muhammad Sabbar 'Ali al-Hamami, GPC; Qa'id Shuwayt 'Ali Shuwayt, Reform; Faysal 'Abdallah 'Ali Manna', GPC; Hasan Muhammad Yahya Muqit, independent; Ahmad Dahbash Salim Matari, GPC; Hasan Muhammad Husayn Muyassar, GPC; Dayfallah Yahya Husayn Rassam, GPC; Husayn Badr-al-Din al-Hawshi, al-Haqq Party; Salih Hindi Qayid Daghsan, GPC; 'Abdallah 'Ayzah Salih al-Ruzami, al-Haqq; Husayn 'Ali al-Zamin, GPC; Amin 'Ali Muhammad al-'Ukaymi, Reform; Sultan 'Ali Mabkhut al-Marradah, GPC; Ja'bal Muhammad Salim Tu'ayman, Reform; and 'Abdallah Ahmad Dayfallah Mujaydi', YSP.

It should be noted that these are the result of 298 districts, out of a total of 301 districts. The three districts where results have not been announced are District 169 in al-Hudaydah, where the vote counting is still under way because it is the biggest district (25,000 voters); District 281 in Hajjah, where vote counting did not start until yesterday because of floods; and District 192 in al-Hudaydah, where voting was suspended because the YSP candidate was killed on the eve of the elections.

Salih on Presidency, Reaction to Elections

93LH0005B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
4 May 93 p 6

[Interview with Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Yemeni Presidential Council Chairman, in Sanaa on 2 May: "Yemen's Presidency Will Be Limited to Two Five-Year Terms"]

[Text] Sanaa—Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, the Yemeni Presidential Council Chairman, said in an interview with AL-HAYAH that the country's proposed constitutional amendments, which are expected to be passed by the New Chamber of Deputies, call in part for limiting Yemen's presidency to two five-year terms. He also expressed the belief that relations between the country's three major parties, namely the GPC [General People's Congress, the YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party], and the Reform Grouping are a "national necessity." He asserted that the GPC seeks to unite with the YSP.

The following is the text of the interview that was conducted with 'Ali Salih in Sanaa two days ago, just after the official election results were announced:

[AL-HAYAH] Generally, how do you view the election results and how do you evaluate them? Don't you think that they contain some negatives? Or do you see nothing but positives in them?

[Salih] We view the successful election process with admiration and appreciation because it has taken place peacefully. All the credit for this goes to our people, to

the national awareness of all our citizens, and to the interaction of all the influential political organizations and parties in the arena which have cooperated to make the elections successful. Moreover, competitors in the elections have had a level of awareness that has protected the sound character of the experiment and has made it successful. There have been some violations, of course. But regardless of the negatives or violations that have materialized in this experiment, the positives outweigh the negatives. The negatives that have materialized are the result of inadequate preparations. As to what is being said about challenges, I said last Tuesday (election day) that every party or candidate who is not fortunate enough to win will challenge the integrity of the elections, and this is what has actually happened. I have learned that there is more than one challenge from more than one party. One party hears that such and such a party has filed a challenge, and so it proceeds to file a challenge itself so that it will not be said that it is the cause of the violations. From what I understand, there has been no more than seven basic cases. The rest are challenges made on political decisions by some political parties. This is detrimental to the parties that file the challenges because they distort the successful elections, certified by international organizations and the world press to be correct, successful, and honest.

[AL-HAYAH] There is an observation, which I believe is significant, regarding the results. This observation concerns fundamentally the fact that the YSP has won the majority of seats in the southern and eastern governorates. In other words, the YSP has practically swept these governorates whereas it has not been able to permeate the north at all. Moreover, the GPC and the Reform Grouping have not been able to go too far in achieving results in the south and in the eastern governorates. What is your assessment of this situation, which, some people say, entrenches partition instead of eliminating it?

[Salih] We regret that the YSP has not been fortunate enough to gain numerous seats in the northern governorates. We also regret that the GPC has not gained most of the seats in the southern governorates. We wish the YSP could gain more than 50 percent of the northern governorates, and vice versa [for the GPC]. It is certain that some hostile forces and press will interpret the results actually achieved as negatives to national unity. But basically, we consider Yemen a single district. No north and no south. We are not annoyed. The success of the elections is a good start. It is regrettable that there has been no coordination between the YSP and the GPC. Before the general elections, we called for coordination between the YSP and the GPC in a manner that would not undermine the march of democracy and of general elections and would not undermine or influence the voters' freedom.

[AL-HAYAH] The YSP called for coordination, but you called for merger or unification.

[Salih] We have a document called "Coordination, Alliance, and Unification." This document continues to be

discussed by the GPC and the YSP. However, we in the YSP and in the GPC are not worried about what has happened or about the results. We expect the enemies of freedom, democracy, and Yemeni unity to use these results as an opportunity for confusion and distortion. You can check the total number of votes the YSP has gotten in the northern governorates and the total number of votes the GPC, the Reform Grouping, and the other parties have gotten in the southern governorates. Regardless of the results and of who has won, we are not upset. The votes are numerous and positive. We know how many votes the YSP got in the north, even though it has not won in Sanaa, for example, and even though the other parties have not won in Aden. The YSP has its votes as the others have their votes.

YSP and Utilization

[AL-HAYAH] How do you think the YSP will utilize what it has accomplished in the south in the future and in what direction will it utilize it?

[Salih] It will utilize it to strengthen national unity. Every patriot must inevitably work accordingly. The GPC must also work to strengthen national unity.

[AL-HAYAH] How do you envision the new relationship between the YSP and the GPC in wake of the elections?

[Salih] There is discussion on an alliance and on forming a parliamentary bloc of the YSP and GPC while giving the other influential parties, particularly the Reform, the opportunity to consult on forming a parliamentary bloc on the basis of constants, principles, and starting points whose nucleus is created by the political action pact concluded between the GPC and the YSP.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you think that such an alliance can be reflected in the government, i.e., could the government be a coalition government formed with the YSP and the Reform Grouping?

[Salih] This is what will happen.

[AL-HAYAH] There will be a government in which the Reform Grouping is also represented?

[Salih] Both the Reform Grouping and the YSP, if they adhere to the principles and starting points I have mentioned. As to those who want to join the opposition, they are entitled to do so. But we will not agree to partnership on the basis that any party can be a partner and an opponent simultaneously. Therefore, whoever wishes to join the coalition has to withdraw from the opposition, and whoever wishes to join the opposition has to withdraw from the coalition.

[AL-HAYAH] Don't you think that such a coalition government will make it unlikely that notables and capabilities needed by the country will be enlisted to help in the coming phase because each party will try to impose certain candidates, thus reducing the number of capable elements who can be utilized in certain sectors?

[Salih] We will certainly be eager to supply the technical elements and the basic cadre with which the government cannot dispense, meaning the government's technical cadres.

[AL-HAYAH] How do you envision the new government? Will it include new faces?

[Salih] Change has to be made, certainly, and new faces have to be brought in.

[AL-HAYAH] Will the new government be formed before or after the constitutional amendments are passed?

[Salih] We will act in accordance with the Constitution primarily, and we cannot swerve from the Constitution.

[AL-HAYAH] Government before the amendments?

[Salih] If we agree on the constitutional amendments and if they are passed by the first meeting of the Chamber of Deputies, the government can be formed afterward. If no agreement is reached on the amendments, the government can be formed and then the constitutional amendments can be made.

[AL-HAYAH] Can you give us a general idea on the constitutional amendments?

[Salih] The main features of the constitutional amendments are:

- defining the form of the presidency;
- ending duality of the executive, judiciary, and legislative authorities concerned;
- introducing a new consultative assembly to which representatives are elected from the governorates in equal numbers and to which a number of capabilities and influential figures in society are appointed.
- establishing local government; this is an important aspect that will make it possible to elect governors and district officers.

[AL-HAYAH] How do you envision the peaceful rotation of power? Do you believe that controls must be established, even for the presidency?

[Salih] In our bill, we have limited the presidency to two terms only so parties and leaders can become eligible for the rotation of power.

[AL-HAYAH] How long is each term?

[Salih] Five years.

[AL-HAYAH] Which means that you could depart the government in 10 years.

[Salih] I may depart the government soon.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you think that the relationship with the Reform Grouping will be easy?

[Salih] The relationship between the GPC, the Reform Grouping, and the YSP is a national necessity. It must be within the context of coalition, and the three parties must be united by certain principles and constants. There must be common denominators that unite all,

meaning the GPC, the Reform Grouping, the YSP, and the other influential political parties that feel a sense of national responsibility. This is because the country needs a strong domestic front and needs to avoid all the negatives that have accompanied the transitional period's procession. I am optimistic that all the parties are optimistic [sic] and that everybody will evaluate himself properly. There are now three major forces in the country, namely the GPC, the Reform Grouping, and the YSP. The other parties will take their natural place with these parties. Some will be with the Reform Grouping, others with the GPC, and still others with the YSP. We continue to seek to merge with the YSP and we continue to discuss merger with the YSP to serve the national interest. We in the GPC continue to exert efforts with the YSP to unite the two parties and to create strong opposition. Let us assume that the opposition will be represented by the Reform Grouping, considering that it can form the main part of the opposition.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you see improvement in Yemen's Arab relations?

[Salih] As usual, we make efforts to strengthen Yemen's relations with its brothers. Because of the Gulf crisis, inter-Arab relations have been tepid recently. But things are improving and moving toward the better now that the clouds have vanished and that the positions are becoming clearer.

[AL-HAYAH] Why haven't you made your visit to Egypt, and why hasn't President Husni Mubarak visited Sanaa?

[Salih] Since May 1990 (date of the unity), I have declined to make visits outside Yemen because of the domestic circumstances that have dictated that we stay at home. Since creation of the [united] Republic, the burdens have been heavy and they are embodied in ending the partition and in devoting the efforts to build and strengthen foundations of the new state. The interest has been focused on putting the internal affairs of our house in order. But now that the elections have been held, that the constitutional reforms have been made, and that the institutions have performed their duties, we will respond to invitations and we will not hesitate to visit our brothers and our friends to strengthen bilateral relations and to enhance joint interests and mutual benefits.

[AL-HAYAH] What is your interpretation of the U.S. interest in the elections and in Yemen's democratic experiment? Did this interest precede the elections, or has it been some form of encouragement which materialized after the elections became a fait accompli?

[Salih] There have been some unfair foreign media which continued to cast doubt on the Yemeni citizens' ability to hold elections, as they had cast doubt on the Yemeni citizens' ability to achieve unity.

As for the Americans, they have encouraged our country's democratic course from the outset. They have welcomed the elections and their success in our country.

Their support for the elections and for democracy in our country has been moral and informational, not material, support. Generally, we are pleased, and we are very proud of the world interest, including the U.S. interest, in our democratic experiment. We feel that the world will receive with satisfaction the successes our country has achieved in the field of democracy. This will be reflected on our relations with numerous countries.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you make a distinction between the way President Clinton deals with Yemen and the way former U.S. President Bush dealt with Yemen?

[Salih] We see no difference. The U.S. policy is constant and is based on mutual interests and benefits. We are

optimistic that our dealing with the Clinton administration will be completely positive and advanced, exactly as cooperation existed with the Bush Administration.

[AL-HAYAH] In the final period of the Bush Administration, the relations with Washington were tepid.

[Salih] The Gulf crisis had its negative effects on and ramifications for Yemeni-U.S. relations. But the situation is better now than in the past when the Yemeni position was misunderstood. We adhered to all UN resolutions, and we expressed reservation on the war decision because we were proponents of an Arab solution.

IRAN

Invitation Extended to 'Afghan Arabs'

93AS0773C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
15 Apr 93 p 1

[Article by Amir Tahiri: "Special Pakistani Court To Consider Afghans' Conditions; Iran Offers To Host Them, Along With 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman"]

[Text] Islamabad, Cairo—Pakistan has formed a special court to speed up the deportation of "Afghan" Arabs whom the Pakistani authorities consider a threat to "state security," according to what was reported yesterday by sources in the Pakistani Foreign Ministry.

The Pakistani initiative comes in response to claims by a number of international organizations, accusing the Pakistani Government of deporting the "Afghans" coercively and without any consideration, not even to Pakistani legal procedures.

A spokesman of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry has said that the court will consider each case in accordance with three principles: Pakistani national interests, friendly countries' interests, and human rights.

Pakistani sources pointed out yesterday that they have received valuable information from a number of Islamic countries and from the United States regarding the identities and activities of the "Afghans" who, it is believed, are still in Pakistan.

The sources noted that a number of "Afghans" had agreed to return to their countries and that they have actually been returned to Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. However, the governments of these countries have either denied the Pakistani reports or kept silent about them.

In a related development, security reports received by high-level Egyptian authorities reveal that Iran has invited the "Afghan Arabs" to leave Pakistan and go into Iran for fear that the Pakistani and Afghan Governments will be subjected to pressures to extradite them to their countries. The reports point out that Tehran's invitation to the "Afghan Arabs" and to Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, mufti of the Egyptian Jihad Organization, to come to Iran fall within the context of the Iranian plans to overthrow the Arab regimes—plans that have been altered in order to begin with Egypt instead of Algeria.

Traffic Accidents Second Cause of Death

93LA0033D London KEYHAN in Persian 22 Apr 93 p 2

[Text] At the World Health Day ceremonies held in Tehran in the middle of the month of Farvardin [21 Mar-20 Apr], Malekzadeh, minister of health, said that various kinds of accidents are the leading cause of death in Iran after heart and circulatory diseases. He said that in the first half of last year alone [21 Mar-23 Sep 1992] there were more than 78,000 urban and nonurban traffic accidents in Iran in which almost 2,000 people were killed and 28,000 were injured. On the other hand the

Office of Driving and Traffic Control announced that the number of traffic accidents last year was 210,000 and said that 5,200 were killed in these accidents.

In view of the light intercity traffic in Iran compared to nations with large networks of highways operating at high capacity, this is a disproportionately high figure. Experts on the causes of traffic deaths in Iran cite the worn condition of the roads themselves, technical malfunctions in the roads, the shortage of aid and emergency equipment, poorly equipped hospitals and also the failure to observe traffic and driving regulations, especially in the major cities with Tehran foremost among them.

Technical problems, even in automobiles newly built in Iran, are so numerous that the Ministry of Heavy Industry has created authorized repair shops for post-sales service, and along with the vehicle's documents of sale it gives the customer a questionnaire called the "Vehicle Quality Questionnaire" along with a list of authorized repair stations. This ministry has required the repair stations to obtain a "Statement of Satisfaction" from customers after the first service to automobiles and to present it to the ministry if necessary. It has been announced that the correction of these defects is free.

Bill Attempts To Separate Velayat, Marja'iat

93AS0773B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
9 Apr 93 p 4

[Article: "Iranian Deputies Move to Separate Religious Authority From Government Authority"]

[Text] Tehran, London—The Iranian Government plan to spread government authority over the higher religious institution suffered a setback when a group of Majles deputies decided to submit a bill making a distinction between two fundamental things, namely marja'iat and government authority [velayat]. The sources preoccupied with drafting the bill have said that 18 deputies have agreed to adopt it to date. But unofficial opinion polls show that the majority of the parliament's 270 deputies could support the bill.

This step seeks to foil the attempts of Supreme Leader 'Ali Khamene'i to entrench himself in a way that enables him to describe himself as the "supreme authority," as Khomeyni was.

Khamene'i has been trying to gain support for this plan which means putting the traditional Shiite organizations under government control and reorganizing religious study groups so they will come under government control, meaning that he will be able to appoint teachers and approve curricula.

Parliament Approves 'Immense' Nuclear Program
93AS0773A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
14 Apr 93 p 1

[Article: "Iranian Parliament Approves Development of Nuclear Program in Cooperation With Russia, China, and North Korea"]

[Text] Tehran, London—Yesterday, Iran's parliament approved an immense nuclear development program, despite world fears of the possibility that Iran will use it for military purposes.

The Iranian program, whose costs are estimated at \$2.2 billion, calls for the construction of no less than four nuclear plants with the technical assistance of Russia, China, and North Korea. It is expected that the project for the four plants will increase Iran's electric power production by 1,200 megawatts.

The program also seeks to set up two research centers and to modernize and expand two other centers. Hundreds of Iranian nuclear scientists will be trained in the three countries contributing to the program.

The International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna has expressed its fears that it is possible Iran will employ the program for military purposes also. The agency has expressed fears of the Iranian-North Korean cooperation in this area. As soon as the current projects are completed, Iran will be able to produce enough enriched uranium to produce a number of nuclear bombs.

Iran has repeatedly denied that it plans to develop nuclear capabilities for military purposes. Iranian leaders point out that Iran wishes to acquire the technologies necessary to develop nuclear weapons but it will not develop such weapons unless they are developed by another country in the region first.

Inauguration of the Iranian nuclear program comes in the wake of leaked reports that Iran is in the process of developing a ballistic missiles system with the assistance of North Korea. Medium- and long-range missiles under development will be able to carry nuclear heads for a distance of 1,100 km, according to Western experts.

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