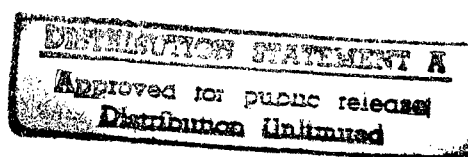


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CONTENTS

29 August 1991

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Chinese Intentions Toward Tibet Viewed [New Delhi JANSATTA 8 Apr] 1

NEAR EAST

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

- Jordan Severs the Iraqi Connection [Cairo AL-AHRAM 5 Jul] 3
 Israeli Intelligence on Syrian Air Power [Tel Aviv BITA'ON HEYL HA'AVIR Jun] 4

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

- Zakariyya al-Agha Details Talks With Baker [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 9 Aug] 5
 Longstanding Water Shortage in Jannin Discussed [Jerusalem AL-NAHAR 2 Jul] 9

ALGERIA

- Political Figures Discuss Crisis, FIS Role 11
 FLN Secretary General Mehri [ALGERIE-ACTUALITE 13 Jun] 11
 Hamas Leader Nahnah [EL MOUDJAHID 28 Jun] 13
 Sheikh Hachemi Sahnouni [ALGERIE-ACTUALITE 20 Jun] 15
 Commentary Views Madani's Role in FIS [Paris LE MONDE 29 Jul] 16
 RCD Leader Criticizes Fundamentalists, Government [Paris AL-DUWALIYAH 17 Jun] 17
 Commentary Describes Roundup of FIS Activists [Paris LE MONDE 4 Jul] 19
 Progress Reported on Italian Pipeline Negotiations [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 17 Jun] 20

JORDAN

- Limited Number of Parties, Coalitions Encouraged [JORDAN TIMES 20 Jun] 21
 Concept of Political Pluralism Under Islam Examined [AL-DUSTUR 26 Jun] 21
 Labor Minister Provides Unemployment Figures [AL-RAY 5 Jul] 23
 Official Comments on Drop in Wheat Production [AL-DUSTUR 26 Jun] 23
 Impact of Drought on Industry, Villages 24
 Industrial Production Affected [JORDAN TIMES 11 Jul] 24
 Deteriorating Conditions [JORDAN TIMES 21 Jul] 24
 Japanese Government Aid Agency To Open Office [JORDAN TIMES 3 Jul] 25
 Tribal Law To Be Abolished Soon [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 6 Jul] 26
 New Private University To Open in Amman [JORDAN TIMES 3 Jul] 26
 Writer Urges New Water Policy [AL-DUSTUR 13 Jun] 27
 Voting Rights Urged for Soldiers [AL-DUSTUR 26 Jun] 29

LIBYA

- Justice Committee Responds to 'Inexact' Amnesty Report [JANA 26 Jun] 30

MAURITANIA

- ADB President Comments on Economic Development Aid [CHAAB 15 Jun] 31
 Airport Security Project Completed [CHAAB 12 Jun] 32

MOROCCO

- Istiqlal Party Plans Demonstrations, Meetings [L'OPINION 17 Jul] 33

Investments Drop 14 Percent First Four Months [LA VIE ECONOMIQUE 28 Jun]	34
Commentary Considers Sahara Part of Colonial Struggle [L'OPINION 18 Jul]	35
Mrs Serfaty Describes Tazmamart Prison Conditions [Paris LE MONDE 27 Jul]	35

SAUDI ARABIA

Requirements for Gulf Security Discussed [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 16 Jun]	36
Saudi-Soviet Bank Established in Kazakhstan [ARAB NEWS 10 Jul]	37
Military Base Planned for Empty Quarter [London AL-HAWADITH 28 Jun]	37
Water Used in Fish Industry, Irrigation [AL-RIYAD 20 May]	38
SABIC Declares Cash Dividends for 1990-91 [AL-SIYASAH 29 Apr]	40
SABIC Exports Iron Products to Asia [ARAB NEWS 2 Jul]	41

SUDAN

Opposition, Government Leaders Comment on U.S. Policy [London AL-MAJALLAH 12 Jun]	41
NDA Issues Statement; NIF Said Increasing Night Watches [Cairo AL-AHALI 12 Jun]	42
Finance Minister Discusses Currency Exchange, Rebels [Cairo AL-SHA'B 4 Jun]	43
Ambassador to Egypt Discusses Famine, Iraqi Scuds [Cairo AL-AHRAR 10 Jun]	44
Government Begins To Sell State-Owned Companies [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 18 Jul]	45
Oil Production To Begin in Western Regions [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 23 Jul]	45
New Prison Complex To Be Built in Omdurman [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 21 Jul]	45
Tension Returns to University of Khartoum [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 6 Aug]	46
Schools Reportedly Open Late Due to Clashes [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 21 Jul]	46

SYRIA

Columnist on al-Asad's Calculations [Tel Aviv MA'ARIV 19 Jul]	46
Effect of Changes on Public Sector Assessed [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 21 Jul]	48
Islamist Cases' Impact on Human Rights Record [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 8 Jul]	49

TUNISIA

RSP Secretary General Comments on Opposition Status [REALITES 26 Jul]	51
Unionist Democratic, Communist Parties Form Front [Tunis Radio]	54
German Investment in Economic Sector Detailed [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 4 Jul]	54
Measures To Reduce Unemployment Detailed [LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE 22 May]	55
Italian Investment in Tourism Industry [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 23 Jun]	56
Efforts To Remedy Economic Situation Reviewed [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 7 Jun]	56
First Trimester Trade Statistics Reported [LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE 5 May]	58

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Government Budget Procedures Criticized [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 31 May]	58
State Budget for 1991 Described [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 6 Jun]	60
Dams, Water Storage Projects Funded [AL-BAYAN 6 Jun]	61
Women's Group Initiates Door-To-Door Health Programs [AL-BAYAN 10 Jun]	61

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Increasing Disillusionment With Unification in South [Paris LE MONDE 10 Jul]	62
YGR Speech Upon Opening Headquarters in Ta'izz [AL-SAHWAH 13 Jun]	64
Leader of Grouping for Reform Interviewed [Cairo AL-SHA'B 11 Jun]	66

SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

Guerrillas Offer POW Swap With Soviets [Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL 10 Jul]	69
Scientific Cooperation Discussed With Hungary [THE KABUL TIMES 5 Jun]	69
Women's Council, Soviet Delegation Sign Protocol [THE KABUL TIMES 29 Jun]	69

Soviet Delegation, YUA Sign Protocol [THE KABUL TIMES 20 Jun]	69
Technical Cooperation Protocol Concluded With Soviets [THE KABUL TIMES 29 Jun]	69
New Governor Appointed in Badakhshan [THE KABUL TIMES 5 Jun]	70
Government Encourages Private Enterprise [THE KABUL TIMES 25 Jun]	70
Three New Power Stations Installed [THE KABUL TIMES 25 Jun]	70
Reconstruction of Qandahari Bridge Finished [THE KABUL TIMES 17 Jun]	70
Promotion to Rank of Major General Announced [THE KABUL TIMES 29 Jun]	71
Election of New Mayor Reported in Kunduz [THE KABUL TIMES 2 Jul]	71
Sheberghan Elects New Mayor [THE KABUL TIMES 29 Jun]	71

NEPAL

Consolidation of Democracy Viewed	71
Prime Minister's Speech [THE RISING NEPAL 11 Jul]	71
Difficulties Detailed [THE RISING NEPAL 19 Jul]	74
Opposition Role [THE RISING NEPAL 13 Jul]	76
Cooperation Given Grudgingly [THE RISING NEPAL 15 Jul]	77
Paper Reports New Budget Figures [THE RISING NEPAL 12 Jul]	79
Budget Speeches, Reaction Detailed	79
Royal Address Summarized [THE RISING NEPAL 2 Jul]	79
Full Text of Speech [THE RISING NEPAL 2 Jul]	81
Call for 'Team Work' [THE RISING NEPAL 3 Jul]	85
South Asian Market Seen [THE RISING NEPAL 4 Jul]	86
Call for Export Promotion [THE RISING NEPAL 4 Jul]	87
Devaluation of Rupee Viewed	89
Move Defended [THE RISING NEPAL 5 Jul]	89
Called 'Hasty Measure' [THE MOTHERLAND 4 Jul]	89
Termed 'Disconcerting' [THE MOTHERLAND 4 Jul]	90
To Harm the Poor [THE MOTHERLAND 4 Jul]	90
Escalating Social Violence Decried [THE RISING NEPAL 5 Jul]	90
Choice of Language Becoming Hot Issue [THE MOTHERLAND 5 Jul]	92
Editorial: Regrets Bhutan 'Ruled So Mercilessly' [THE RISING NEPAL 26 Jun]	93

Chinese Intentions Toward Tibet Viewed

91AS0843A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi
8 Apr 91 p 6

Article by Ray Singh: "The Chinese Celebration of Tibet's Destruction"]

[Text] Chinese officials in Lhasa have already started repairing their burned down houses and broken windows in order to be ready for the May festival by the end of April. The burned down houses and broken windows had resulted from the anti-Chinese riots of March 1989. Processions were taken out in Lhasa and other Tibetan cities and towns to express anger against the Chinese occupation of Tibet. When the Chinese officials had tried to disperse the crowd forcibly, the Tibetan youth had pelted government buildings with rocks breaking windows and also set fire to many buildings. According to Chinese official, the Chinese Government is planning to have parades and several public meetings on 23 May to celebrate Tibet's liberation from the peaceful fundamentalists in 1951. The main purpose of this celebration is to make the Tibetan people recognize the basic fact that Tibet is an integral part of China now and the Tibetan people, just like other Chinese people, are Chinese citizens. There is a hidden purpose behind it. It is being made known that Tibet now has nothing to do with the Dalai Lama.

That is the reason why not only the Tibetans living in Tibet, but also Tibetan refugees living in New Delhi, the hill town of Dharamsala, or in the greenery of Karnataka, are showing signs of tension. Neither the Indian radio stations nor the television have discussed anything or shown any picture to give an indication about the Chinese activities in Tibet. However, the Tibetan refugees living in India acquire such information about these activities through their own sources, which are unknown even to the Indian Foreign Ministry. Therefore, the restlessness felt by the Tibetan refugees living in India is natural.

It is surprising that the Chinese Government did not celebrate the peaceful liberation of Tibet in the past. Even Li Peng, the Chinese prime minister, did not make any mention of Tibet in his 25 March 1991 report to the People's Congress. What are the reasons behind this sudden decision to have these ceremonies? One reason is that China wants to make it clear that according to its new foreign policy geared to improve relations with countries in the Atlantic does not plan to give autonomy to any of its provinces and Tibet the way the Soviet leader Gorbachev is doing. It should be noted that China has reestablished diplomatic relations with Indochina which it broke 25 years ago. Brunei is the only country in southeast Asia with which China has no diplomatic relations. The second reason, which is even more important, is that China wants to prove that it is the leader of the communist countries after the decline of the Soviet Union. It is important to mention here the China has not only gained economic stability, but also achieved its

production goals during the last decade. The prime minister announced their achievements in 1990 on 8 March this year. One of the 10 achievements is the production of 339 million tons of grains. According to Li Peng, China profited over \$13 billion from foreign trade. Foreign investors recognized this profit and invested over \$10 billion and China managed to increase foreign investment in agriculture, transportation, and communication areas from 41 percent in 1989 to 77.3 percent this year. China also achieved new milestones in the areas of oil, coal, cement, and natural gas production. The claims that China is making now are based on solid facts.

According to a Chinese diplomat, Chinese leaders are angry at the Dalai Lama's efforts to get foreign sympathy and support. When he was told that the Dalai Lama, who lives in India, visits many countries on invitations from foreign organizations and that China should not have any objections to his foreign trips this year, he replied that the Chinese Government received full details of these visits and the government has taken necessary action.

The Dalai Lama had fled Tibet in March 1959 and took refuge in India. He won Nobel Peace Award in 1989. China had limited its activities against the Dalai Lama to some political action, however, the Chinese Government has become very alert after the 1989 riots in Tibet. China has started to request presidents and prime ministers of various countries not to meet the Dalai Lama. That is why the British prime minister, John Major, had declined to meet the Dalai Lama. Meanwhile, Czechoslovakian President Havel had invited the Dalai Lama to Prague in 1989 and talked with him.

The fact is that the Dalai Lama has challenged China by declaring 1991 as the Tibet year. The Dalai Lama has visited several countries in this context and is trying to get popular support to loosen the Chinese hold on Tibet. He knows well that China will never give full autonomy to Tibet. The Dalai Lama believes that if China gives self-rule right to Tibet, it can later get full independence. The leaders of the Tibet Youth Congress are against it. They believe that the Tibetan people will not be independent even after getting a self-rule. They want the Dalai Lama to demand full independence instead of self-rule. They have threatened that if the Dalai Lama did not agree with them, they will start their own campaign for independence. Perhaps, the Dalai Lama has given the Chinese Government four months to meet his demands because of this pressure. The Dalai Lama has demanded that the Chinese Government recognize Tibet as an independent province under China. He said that the Chinese leaders would be responsible for any violence and other incidents in Tibet that might take place if these demands are not met.

It should be remembered that the Dalai Lama had declared in 1988 in Strasburg that he was willing to accept Chinese sovereignty over Tibet if China was willing to recognize Tibet as a separate province. Most of

the leaders in Europe had endorsed Dalai Lama's demand. However, now with his four month ultimatum, the Dalai Lama has asked the Chinese leaders to do something which they will never accept. The Chinese leaders are responding to this demand by announcing a peaceful parade in Lhasa on 23 May to celebrate Tibet's liberation. The Chinese officials are working hard to make sure that this celebration is successful. Thousands of Chinese military officers are training Tibetans daily for the 23 May parade. It is said that the Tibetans may not have witnessed such a large parade ever before. The Chinese authorities are building a 70-meter tower to commemorate the 1959 peaceful liberation of Tibet. Its metallic pinnacle will be higher than the Novolinka palace. The Dalai Lama used to live in this palace during the summer months until 1959. Thus, the Novolinka palace as the tallest building reminds the Tibetan people of the Dalai Lama. According to Chinese diplomatic sources, the Tibetan people will be assured on 23 May that they can make progress only by being an integral part of China and that Tibet has been a part of China since the 13th century.

The present Tibetan people cannot tell what happened in the 13th century. However, they know that it is imperative that they get out of the Chinese control if they want

to maintain their own existence as a nation. The Tibetan Youth Congress leaders accept neither the Chinese sovereignty over Tibet since the 13th century nor the Chinese claim that it had liberated Tibet in 1951. This confrontational attitude shows that soon there will be clashes between China and the people in Tibet and we will witness anti-Chinese demonstration here led by the Tibetans living in India.

It is true that the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had declared during his 1988 visit to China that India considered Tibet an integral part of China. His own grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru, had recognized this in the 1954 Indo-Chinese pact. Actually, India had recognized Tibet as an autonomous region under China under this pact. However, the Tibetan autonomy has gone since then and Tibet has become a Chinese territory or a province. China has given Tibet a Chinese form of government under the guise of reorganization and the policy to make the Tibetans a minority group by rehabilitating Huan people in Tibet is being implemented vigorously. This would be achieved within the next few years. When the people living in Tibet are Chinese, then the problem would be solved permanently.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Jordan Severs the Iraqi Connection

91AA0540A Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Jul 91 p 5

[Report by Ahmad Nafi']

[Text] Recent events in Jordan have aroused the interest of observers, in view of their consequences in the Arab world. The cabinet reshuffle of Tahir al-Masri, the successor of Mudar Badran, is no fleeting event in the political life of the country, whose borders form the longest front with Israel, and which endured, with its people, the burdens imposed by the geographical composition of its population and its responsibility for liberating Arab land and realizing the national hopes of the Palestinian people. Many minds have leaped ahead to the long-term consequences of the cabinet reshuffle, which occurred—contrary to custom—on the evening of 'Id al-Adha, and there was near unanimity that the reshuffle was a clear message with regional and international dimensions: that Jordan is capable of radical change.

That is, the new cabinet was formed amid important Arab developments, most notably Arab efforts to heal the rift left by the Gulf crisis and the stance of some Arab countries—Jordan among them—towards Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. These efforts still lack a formula to help them go beyond Arab horizons; it is not easy to precisely define what is needed to open a new chapter in inter-Arab relations, but clearly the Gulf countries are absolutely entitled to ask the countries that supported the Iraqi regime to admit—explicitly or implicitly—their policy error, which appeared to endorse the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. That policy brought disaster to Kuwait and led to the humiliation of Iraq, which saw its achievements destroyed by the hand of the regime that guided it into the abyss.

The cabinet was also formed amid Jordanian developments which complemented the democratically-oriented political journey that began with the legislative elections of November 1989. Most eagerly awaited is the passage of laws embodying provisions of the National Charter established by diverse political movements and parliamentary groupings. The cabinet was also formed in the midst of a severe economic crisis that underscored Jordan's dire need for wide-ranging foreign aid to face the calamitous losses incurred by the crisis of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait—a loss compounded when when we consider that about 60 percent of Jordan's population is of Palestinian origin, and influenced what happened as a result of the PLO leadership's support of Saddam in his occupation of Kuwait.

The establishment of the charter itself brought on the cabinet change by events that helped to disqualify the Muslim Brotherhood [MB] from taking part in the new cabinet. Most people ascribe this gap to a variety of causes, most notably the one the movement's spokesmen confirmed: They oppose the comprehensive peace

option, and the reason for their non-participation in Tahir al-Masri's cabinet is that they see it as being preparatory to a peaceful settlement!

However, its is obvious that strong criticisms were aimed at practices of the MB's ministers (in Mudar Badran's government), and that it was the movement was being alluded to in King Husayn's letter to Tahir al-Masri to form a new cabinet when he said: "We are an Arab Muslim people which is proud of its mission and heritage, and clings to both. Our Arab Islamic values teach us love, friendship, responsibility, and brotherhood, and forbid us to sow spite, hatred, disunion, dissension, or disparity. We must, from the various pulpits for guidance—mosques, schools, the press, and the other media—work together to do what God commanded us to do: dispute wisely and spiritually with the noble Arab morality we have inherited; disdain invective, slander, and intellectual and psychological terrorism; refrain from inciting the young and pushing them towards ruin by lying to them that suicide is martyrdom. By God, this is an unforgivable crime, and has nothing to do with religion, responsibility or morality."

In the course of discussing the peace option in his letter of authorization, he also said, "Jordan supports a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question. We have no love for bloodshed, for we are a community to spread love, goodness, and peace among the peoples of the earth, but we seek a peace that would preserve our rights and assure a free and honorable life for our future generations."

Thus, it is clear that the cabinet change in Jordan was a message to the Arab nation and to concerned world powers, whose import—in the final analysis—is that Jordan has learned the lessons of the crisis and the war and is striving for new communication with the Arab countries, especially the Gulf countries upon which it depended in the past for assistance required for stability and development. This type of message constitutes an "admission of error," as proof that the cabinet change took place in a difficult domestic situation loaded with danger, but at the same time, it confirmed that Jordan, in choosing an eminent Palestinian personage to head a cabinet that includes persons with strong PLO ties, aims at an Arab and international opening at a time when the Arab region once again stands at a crossroads: either progress towards a peaceful settlement or the escalation of tension resulting from Israeli policy, whose results cannot now be foreseen.

The change means, in sum, that Jordan has "severed the Iraq connection" irrevocably. Many developments in Jordan in the last three years took place out of that connection, which came about because Jordan (among others) believed that a strong Iraq would support the Arab nation and strengthen efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Those who follow Arab politics know that the Jordan-Iraq connection was reinforced by major Israeli threats against Jordan, arising from the outbreak of the

Palestinian intifada in the occupied territories and the focusing of Arab efforts, at that time, on stopping massive Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. King Husayn voiced these fears openly at the May 1990 Arab summit conference held in Baghdad, in a speech which included an admission of weakness and of economic deterioration. This is unusual for a political speech.

On that occasion the king said, among other things, that "The danger is not limited to the swallowing of Palestine and the swallowing or dispersal of its people—it goes beyond that to threaten Jordan's national security, and by extension, the security of all Arabs." In the course of his discussion of Jordan's situation, he said—to the surprise of many—that "Jordan, with its limited human and natural resources, and its long Israeli border, is unable to bear the burden of this danger alone, especially since the danger emanates from a country supported by arms and men from many countries of the world. All we ask is that we provide Jordan with the means for strength and stability so that it may establish the bases of its social and economic security and be able to build Jordanian military power on Jordanian territory, enabling it to resist militarily, upon the outbreak of hostilities, until Arab military support arrives."

On close scrutiny of these words, we see that Jordan is still in the same situation that it was then; that its new message to the Arab countries and concerned international powers requires a speedy positive response, especially since it has truly severed the Iraq connection. As proof, Jordan did not follow Iraq's lead in clashing with international legitimacy, and abided by the imposition of economic sanctions against the Iraqi regime in spite of the massive losses sustained by the Jordanian economy. Further proof: The American government, which closely monitors countries' policies toward the Iraqi regime, has supported the change taking place in Jordan relating to the Arab and international openings, and the correcting of past errors.

With the coming of the rift-healing cabinet, we must wonder: Will we see a speedy Arab response to its message, based on candor and honesty, and at the same time bear in mind Jordan's delicate situation and the critical need for solidarity in present Arab conditions in order to give an impetus to efforts for a comprehensive peace settlement? The Arab countries must not forget for a moment that the situation in the Arab world, and the existence of its unsolved major problem, was a leading factor in the region's recent tragedies, particularly the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. It is a fact that a positive Arab response to Jordan's message will embolden America and other Arab parties to deal with the new Jordanian and Arab realities. The success of Tahir al-Masri's government depends on new indications coming from the Arab countries, especially the Gulf countries, which now have the most to gain from reviving relations among the Arab family.

Israeli Intelligence on Syrian Air Power

91AE0532A Tel Aviv BITA'ON HEYL HA'AVIR
in Hebrew Jun 91 p 6

[Article by Anon.: "The Syrians Are Investing 2 Billion Dollars in the Air Arm"]

[Text] "Since the Gulf war, the Syrian Air Force has sought to become stronger and to acquire weaponry to an extent not seen since the mid-eighties. The billion dollars that Syria received from the Gulf states in return for its support of the countries of the coalition will be directed towards an increase in military power and, mainly, to building the strength of the Air Force," says the chief of the Intelligence Wing, Brigadier General Y.

"The Syrians are already operating Sukhoi 24's and MiG-29's, although in limited numbers," adds Brig. Gen. Y. "No air force can be satisfied with such a small quantity. According to the estimates that we have, the Syrians will receive at least another several tens of advanced planes, so that the power of the advanced component of the Syrian Air Force will be doubled in the coming years. Until 1987, all of the Syrian planes were of the previous generation, and the Israeli Air Force had a clear superiority from the viewpoint of the quality of the airplanes. Today, the situation is different. The Syrians are about to enlarge the order of battle of the advanced planes in their possession in the coming years. The MiG-29, for example, belongs to the generation of the F-16. This aircraft is equipped with air-to-air missiles that are among the best in the world, and has radar and superb maneuverability. The Sukhoi-24 is an advanced long-range attack plane with a large payload capacity and designed to fly at low altitude, at night and in bad weather."

Brig. Gen. Y. believes that the Syrians will also try to improve the air defense system. Today, the Syrians have SA-5 batteries, long-range, surface-to-air missiles, and it is hard to believe that the Syrians will seek additional missiles of that type. Instead, Brig. Gen. Y. estimates that the Syrians will seek to purchase from the Soviets the advanced model SA-10 surface-to-air missiles.

"The Syrians tried in the past to request the SA-10 from the Soviets, but were refused," explains Brig. Gen. Y.

The Syrians are also working on the project to develop surface-to-surface missiles, which could be the answer to the inferiority in air power. The Syrian surface-to-surface missile project is much more serious than the Iraqi's. It is a diversified project, next to the Israeli border and with unconventional armament capability. In recent months, the Syrians purchased the Scud-C. This missile can be launched from longer distances and has a larger warhead than the Al-Huseyn.

Brig. Gen. Y. spoke about the reasons that allow the strengthening of the Syrian Air Force: "In the second half of the 1980's, Syria suffered from a budgetary crunch. The small budgets that went to the Syrian Air

Force did not allow it to become stronger. But even in that difficult period, the Syrians allocated over 80 percent of the budget to strengthening the Air Force. In that period, the policy of the Soviet Union concerning arms sales also changed. The Soviets were no longer willing to grant the Syrians easy credit terms as they had given them in the past. The economic aid that Syria received following the Gulf war is allowing it to purchase arms again from the Soviet Union. But the Syrians are not stopping at that, and they are also purchasing arms from Third-World countries, such as North Korea. These countries, in contrast to the USSR, are not subject to diplomatic pressures, and they are selling weapons to the highest bidder.

"The Syrians are allocating most of the money to the air arm [of the Air Force], and there is no doubt that this principle will be followed in the future, as well. The system of military ties that existed between Syria and Egypt and Saudi Arabia during the Gulf war was good. The Syrians understand well the centrality of the air arm [of the Air Force] in everything related to achieving a decision in battle. Syria, less than any other country, needed the lesson that the Americans gave to the Iraqis in the Gulf war."

The operational ability of the Syrian Air Force, says the chief of the Intelligence Wing, was demonstrated last October, when the Syrians used their Air Force to bomb Beirut. In this attack, the Syrians used their best planes in a relatively complex operation that the Syrian Air Force had not carried out in the past.

"In the past year, Syria strengthened its hold over Lebanon," adds Brig. Gen. Y., "but there is no change in the Syrian behavior as concerns the air activity over Lebanon. The Syrians understand that in the air, the rules of the game are completely different, and that the risk is greater."

[BITA'ON HEYL HA'AVIR] Has the level of the Syrian pilot also risen over the years?

[Y.] This activity could also have a positive impact on the basic qualities of the Syrian pilot. In addition, it should be remembered that the acquisition of advanced weapons systems such as the MiG-29, the Sukhoi-24, and advanced attack helicopters exposes the pilots to modern systems and confronts them with intellectual challenges that have a positive impact on the level of the pilot. There is no doubt that with Syria being a member of the coalition that includes the United States, Britain, and France, there is a potential for cooperation and the imparting of lessons, which also can involve a contribution to the raising of the level of the Syrian pilot."

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Zakariyya al-Agha Details Talks With Baker

91AE0559A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
9 Aug 91 p 8

[Interview with Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha by Huda al-Husayni: "Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha Recounts Some

Details of What He Heard in Last Meeting With James Baker: Admission That East Jerusalem Is Occupied Territory, But Negotiations Will Take Place at Later Stage; Confederation With Jordan Preferred Over Establishment of Independent Palestinian State"; date and place not given]

[Text] Three Palestinians have held frequent meetings at the American consulate in Jerusalem with American Secretary of State James Baker. They are Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, and Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha. Al-Husayni and 'Ashrawi do not hesitate to make statements or give press interviews to express their opinions. As for Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha, he heads for the Gaza Strip after every meeting without meeting with the press or voicing his opinion. He returns to immerse himself in his medical practice without neglecting his duties as a Palestinian wishing to get rid of the yoke of Israeli occupation.

This week, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT held its interview of the week with Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha. He talked about the particulars of the American-Palestinian memorandum of understanding: what it contained, the American viewpoint on Jerusalem, the interpretation of Resolutions 242 and 338, the settlement policy, and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

Dr. Zakariyya explained where the Palestinian and American points of view agreed and where they differed. The most notable difference was over the fate of Jerusalem. Secretary of State Baker asked that it be left until the beginning of the third year of autonomy, so that it would not undermine the first round of negotiations, while the Palestinians insisted that it be raised at the onset of negotiations because it is an occupied Palestinian territory. Consequently, the disagreement over Jerusalem is still standing.

Dr. al-Agha is approaching the age of 50. He is chief of the gastroenterology department at al-Ahali Hospital in Gaza and president of the Gaza Strip Medical Association since 1985. He worked at the state Nasir Hospital in Khan Yunis until he was fired by the military governor in 1987 for political reasons. In 1975, he was detained for several weeks on security charges, but was released without trial for lack of evidence. In 1988, he was put under administrative detention and he is still not allowed to travel abroad. Dr. Agha went to school in Cairo and finished his medical studies in 1971. He says he is Palestinian first and foremost. His positions are clear and his tendencies are neither leftist nor rightist. He adds that he is like all other Palestinians inside the occupied territories who represent the centrist current.

In the interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha said that he was not very optimistic and expects the peace conference to be held with or without the Palestinians, but he hoped that the Arabs and Palestinians would adopt a unified position before the conference gets underway so that the Palestinian people would not be put in a corner.

Following is the text of the interview:

[al-Husayni] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi said that the draft of the memorandum of understanding that you discussed with Secretary of State James Baker would be ready within two days. The two days are up. Is everything ready now?

[al-Agha] She did not mean exactly two days, but rather within a short period of time. We hope it will be ready in a few days, since the outlines have been discussed with Secretary Baker.

[al-Husayni] What are the memorandum's outlines?

[al-Agha] I do not wish to go into detail, but the memorandum talks about the American position on certain issues that need to be clarified.

The first point is the interpretation of Resolutions 242 and 338 and the American position on them. Secretary Baker indicated that Resolution 242 means the exchange of land for peace, Israeli withdrawal, and an end to occupation. The second point is the Jerusalem issue. This is the issue that is very important to us, and we focused a lot on it. They (the Americans) want to expound, in this memorandum, on their position on the status of Jerusalem. They consider Jerusalem an occupied city and, therefore, part of the occupied Palestinian territories, and its future must be determined by negotiation among the concerned parties. Notwithstanding the fact that they do not endorse the redivision of Jerusalem into West Jerusalem and East Jerusalem, they do not recognize Israel's annexation of the city and feel that the fate of Jerusalem as a whole ought to be determined through talks between the Palestinian side and the Israeli side.

[al-Husayni] Is this what Secretary Baker made clear in person?

[al-Agha] Yes, in addition to the fact that the Americans recognize how important this subject is to us. Secretary Baker, however, says that to make things easy, and in order not to create a problem before the conference gets underway, we (the Americans) believe that discussions on the fate of Jerusalem must be put off until the second phase, or, when a final settlement is discussed, at which time the delegation negotiating final phase would include Jerusalem and Palestinian diaspora representatives.

[al-Husayni] In other words, discuss the fate of Jerusalem after autonomy, after three years?

[al-Agha] As of the third year of self-administration, as well. In confirmation of the American position on Jerusalem, they propose the inclusion of a Jerusalem or a Jerusalem-born notable in the Jordanian delegation that will negotiate during the first phase, provided that the residents of Arab Jerusalem be given the right to vote in the transitional phase. This is roughly the total sum of American assurances regarding Jerusalem. Our position

was that Jerusalem is a key issue that is important to us, be it in terms of representation or the future of Jerusalem.

[al-Husayni] This means that Arab Jerusalem will not be within the areas of autonomy?

[al-Agha] No, it will not be in the area of autonomy. The other point in the memorandum of understanding pertains to the right of self-determination. They reaffirm the right within the scope of confederation between Palestine and Jordan, but do not reaffirm the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. However, they do not object to such a situation should it come about as a result of negotiations.

[al-Husayni] The confederation with Jordan, will it come about after the establishment of an independent Palestinian state?

[al-Agha] I will not go into detail, but it is common knowledge that confederation means union between two independent countries. This is different from federation.

The other point had to do with the peace conference's point of reference, namely UN Resolutions 242 and 338. There is also the American position on settlement, by which they are going to do everything in their power to freeze the construction of settlements before negotiations get underway. These are the most important matters to be included in the memorandum of understanding.

[al-Husayni] Did Secretary Baker try to persuade you to offer other concessions?

[al-Agha] He did not do anything to persuade us in this direction, but he said the following: "The Jerusalem question is a thorny issue that could undermine the negotiations, especially in view of the almost unanimous Israeli position on Jerusalem. If we start with it now, we will face difficulties, but with the start of negotiations and the conclusion of the transition phase, a change could take place, be it in the Israeli position at the public opinion level or at the American level, in which pressure could be exerted in this regard." There is another matter related to the transitional period. The Americans support the establishment of a self-administration in charge of both land and populace.

[al-Husayni] Are you convinced of Secretary Baker's viewpoint on Jerusalem?

[al-Agha] With regard to Jerusalem, we came out unconvinced and in disagreement because the subject of Jerusalem is fundamental and we cannot show any laxity. The mere acceptance of the broached point of view, which is closer to the Israeli viewpoint, means that we concede from the outset that Jerusalem is outside the negotiations, and we do not know, especially if settlements are not halted, where it will be after the transitional phase. Therefore, we believe that Jerusalem ought to be there from the outset, at least with regard to representation. This is fundamental and necessary if we are to assert that

Jerusalem, like the rest of the occupied territories, must be subject to the same things as the entire occupied territories.

[al-Husayni] Secretary Baker urged you to agree to attend the conference on the grounds that we will be the major gainers, and if you refuse, you will be the major losers. Did he tell you what you would gain?

[al-Agha] This is what he said: "Your staying out of the conference means that Israeli designs, the policy of settlement and land requisition in particular, will persist, and, after a while, there may not be any land on which to negotiate."

Entering into negotiations, in Baker's opinion, may change this perception and could yield positive results for the Palestinians because, at the very least, an agreement may be reached to put a stop to settlements, and a partial relaxation in certain issues may come about.

[al-Husayni] Israel built settlements in Sinai and pulled out of them later. Why the threat of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza?

[al-Agha] Settlements in Sinai represented a small percentage of Sinai's area. In numerical terms, 60 percent of the West Bank area and 35 percent of the Gaza Strip have been requisitioned.

In terms of the design drawn by the Israelis, we find that, by the year 2000, the West Bank will be strewn with settlements within three cantons: the Nablus canton (a small one, including Nablus and part of its environs), the Ramallah canton, and the Hebron canton. Settlements will also be strewn among these cantons. With respect to Gaza, the design includes the establishment of two cantons: one in Gaza, and then settlements followed by one in the southern region in Khan Yunis, and from there to the Egyptian borders, where more settlements will be established. These are the maps they are drawing for the year 2000.

Therefore, the settlement issue is important to us, so we focused on the need to put a stop to settlements before or at least at the beginning of negotiations, so that we would not be faced with the time factor, since negotiations could stretch out for many years. If settlements are not halted, it means that, on the one hand, I am negotiating with them, and, on the other hand, I am according them legitimacy to go on with this policy.

For that reason, I consider the settlements a second red line and, consequently, they must be halted as negotiations get underway. When I say settlements, I mean those in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and in Jerusalem as well.

[al-Husayni] If settlements continue to be built, how would you exercise self-rule?

[al-Agha] From their point of view, self-administration includes only the settlements. As far as we are concerned, there has to be Palestinian sovereignty during this

period. If political settlement is reached and followed by a transition period, there must be, during this period, full Palestinian sovereignty over the occupied territories with regard to land, water, and population, to make certain that there will be no land requisition.

[al-Husayni] Are you now coordinating with the PLO?

[al-Agha] The meetings we have held with Secretary Baker were at the request and with the approval of the PLO, and there is full coordination. We are not negotiators and our aim was only to explore, to inquire and to brief the PLO on all political developments and American positions. We tried to obtain all the necessary information to present it to the leadership so that it may adopt the appropriate decision based on true, available data.

[al-Husayni] During the first meeting between a Palestinian delegation in Jerusalem and Secretary Baker, Mr. Faysal al-Husayni tried to tell Secretary Baker that he drew his legitimacy from the PLO, but Baker told him: "You draw your legitimacy from me." Is this true?

[al-Agha] I was not present at the first meeting and, therefore, I cannot answer this question.

At any rate, in every meeting with Secretary Baker, we conveyed to him a message from brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], and we made it clear to him at the outset that our presence was by decision and with the approval of the leadership. Through the message Abu 'Ammar addressed to Baker, he made it clear to him that the PLO was not blocking the peace process and, therefore, he had allowed the Palestinian notables to meet with him.

[al-Husayni] Did Baker receive 'Arafat's messages?

[al-Agha] The messages were part of the memorandum, and he did receive them.

[al-Husayni] Why did he refuse to answer them, for 'Arafat has protested that he had not received any reply from Secretary Baker to the questions he raised via the messages?

[al-Agha] Their positions (the Americans) showed how close they are to the Israeli positions with regard to the PLO, by which indirect contacts may be held, but at this stage, they refuse to have a direct dialogue. We know the reason for suspending the dialogue and failing to respond directly to Abu 'Ammar's messages. It is part of this policy that we think is so wrong that we told Secretary Baker it would be much easier for the Americans to contact and negotiate with the PLO than with us inside the occupied territories, because the PLO would certainly be more flexible and more capable of adopting a decision, since leaders in the occupied territories are trying to adopt unwavering and hardline positions, so as not to be accused by the public of being easy and lax.

[al-Husayni] 'Arafat also said that he had not been officially asked to offer concessions on the Palestinian delegation. Did you bring this up with Secretary Baker?

[al-Agha] Baker literally said that the formation of a Palestinian delegation was a purely Palestinian action and internal concern, adding: "We cannot force you or the Israelis to sit with people you refuse to sit with or they refuse to sit with you, but we do believe that neither side has the right to veto." He emphasized that he was convinced that the formation of a Palestinian delegation was a purely Palestinian question.

[al-Husayni] Is there a contradiction in these statements?

[al-Agha] He says, suppose that the Israeli side formed its delegation and you, as the Palestinian side, objected to it. You would have the right to say you do not wish to sit with this delegation. Similarly, we cannot force any side to sit with a person they do not wish to sit with, but this does not mean that we are giving the objector the right to veto or any other right.

Of course, there is a measure of contradiction, but he feels that we must form a delegation taking into account Israel's wishes and they must form their delegation taking into account our wishes.

[al-Husayni] Did Secretary Baker give any justification for the shift in their position on the participation of an East Jerusalem resident. They had accepted this. Are they now reneging?

[al-Agha] Without giving any justifications, it is perfectly clear that 1989 is different from 1991 in terms of the Arab position, the international position, and the strength of the American position. The American position is stronger than it was in 1989 and, consequently, the Israeli position has grown stronger as well, while the Arab position has grown weaker since 1989, therefore it is natural that the United States should reap the fruits of the Gulf war.

[al-Husayni] 'Arafat thought it unlikely that the other sides would accept the participation of al-Husayni and 'Ashrawi in a Palestinian delegation because they are from Jerusalem. Does this mean that you will be part of the anticipated delegation?

[al-Agha] The truth is that I have not heard such a statement by Abu 'Ammar. Furthermore, those who met with Baker do not necessarily have to comprise the delegation. However, should the PLO take part in this conference, those Palestinians who are selected must perform their role without any sensitivities. As for myself, I am a Palestinian soldier carrying out the mission that I have been given by the leaders and people. If an agreement is made on participation in the conference, and the leadership commissions me to be in the delegation, then it is my duty to agree to that.

[al-Husayni] Were there any questions that you asked Secretary Baker that he refused to answer?

[al-Agha] He did not refuse to answer any questions. However, there were some questions he answered very clearly, and there were some questions that he answered

very clearly in the negative, and the answers to some questions were unclear and cloaked or diplomatic.

[al-Husayni] Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, while in Cairo, stated that the peace conference's aim would be to reach an agreement on the interpretation of Resolution 242, while the Arabs say that its aim would be to implement the resolution. Have you discussed the subject of interpretation and implementation with Secretary Baker?

[al-Agha] The conference will not be a forum for the interpretation of Resolutions 242 and 338, for they are clear. As Secretary Baker said, Resolution 242 means Israeli withdrawal, the end of occupation, and the exchange of land for peace. This is the opinion of the entire international community.

[al-Husayni] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir says that Israel implemented this resolution when it withdrew from Sinai.

[al-Agha] We do not care what they say. The important thing is what the international community says, what the UN resolutions say, and what the conference's chair, the United States and the Soviet Union in particular, say. The position is clear: withdrawal and the exchange of land for peace. There is no room for personal interpretations. The Israelis are trying to overstep this point and, therefore, it is important that the memorandum include this clear explanation to avoid any doubts in the future.

[al-Husayni] During your meetings with Secretary Baker, did you get the feeling that the Palestinian people will be sacrificed?

[al-Agha] The truth is that we sensed how weak we are. Weak at all levels. We felt that had we been in a different situation, we would not have been taking such a position.

[al-Husayni] Do you expect the Palestinians and Jordan to agree on a joint delegation for negotiation?

[al-Agha] This matter calls for a Palestinian decision ratifying the formation of the delegation. Should the leadership decide on a joint delegation, contacts with Jordan will be made to form such a delegation.

[al-Husayni] Did you prefer to take part in a joint Arab delegation?

[al-Agha] Our priorities are as follows: an independent Palestinian delegation, a joint Arab delegation, and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

[al-Husayni] Some Palestinians recommend that, since the Arab countries, and not the Palestinians, lost the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza in the 1967 war, the Palestinians ought to refuse to take part in this conference, leaving this matter to the Arab countries that lost these territories, on the grounds that when this land is recovered, the Palestinians can negotiate with the concerned Arab countries. What do you in the occupied territories think of the proposition?

[al-Agha] We respect this point of view, which has its advocates. We had hoped, however, that the Arab countries would be in a position to recover these territories upon which we would hold talks with them. But now, and I beg the forgiveness of all the Arab brothers, the Arab countries would like to bring this problem to an end as soon as possible, hence the pressure on the Palestinians not to block this matter. We had hoped that the Arab countries would undertake this mission to recover the occupied Palestinian territory, upon which we would get it back from them. But things are not the way we would like them to be.

[al-Husayni] Are you afraid that an Arab-Israeli conciliation or peace may occur before the Palestinian question is settled or before the fate of the occupied Palestinian territories is determined?

[al-Agha] We hope that this will not happen, but we do not rule it out. I would like to make it clear, and this is not only my personal opinion, but that of every Palestinian as well, that peace in the Middle East can only be achieved via the Palestinian people, who must be a key party to it. Even if peace is achieved between all the Arab countries and Israel, there will be no peace in the Middle East, because the Palestinians are Israel's bridge to the Arab world and are the basis for peace. Peace can only be achieved through them, whether they attend the conference or not.

[al-Husayni] You are speaking from a position of strength?

[al-Agha] I am speaking from a position of self-confidence, confidence in my Palestinian people and their ability. Notwithstanding all the tragedies we have endured and all the suffering and pressures we are facing, our self-confidence has not wavered, and we still believe we are the difficult number in the equation. You on the outside may hear about the tragedies and suffering that people on the inside are facing, and you may think that we have reached the stage of despair. I would like to reassure you that we have not, and will not, reach the stage of despair. We may, at some point, be in a weak position, but we will not lose our self-confidence and we will not lose our mind.

[al-Husayni] When will the Palestinians stop killing Palestinians on the inside, and is it right to execute people without a trial or the benefit of legal counsel?

[al-Agha] We seem to be captives to Zionist and colonialist propaganda and to the Western media that blows this matter out of proportion. There may be some excuses now and then, but they are minor infractions and the situation is much better than it used to be.

[al-Husayni] Do you think that Israel is killing the Palestinians and accusing other Palestinians of this deed?

[al-Agha] This is a complicated subject. There are many fingers and many interrelated factors at play here. One

must not concede everything written or published in the press. What I am saying is that this matter is blown out of proportion and is being used to justify crimes committed against the Palestinians.

[al-Husayni] How do you explain the threat issued by Hamas to kill anyone who joins the negotiations, and are you scared by such a threat?

[al-Agha] First, we are not scared, and I personally am not scared for one very simple reason: I believe that life is in God's hands. Furthermore, it is natural and healthy to have differences of opinion. There may have been a third party, however, that wanted to interfere and use this kind of threat.

[al-Husayni] Do you mean to say that Hamas did not make the threat?

[al-Agha] Hamas did not make the threat. A leaflet in the name of the Islamic Jihad was circulated and its style was suspicious. At any rate, I hope all Palestinians of various opinions will be up to the task.

[al-Husayni] Last question: Some Palestinians are trying to get the PLO to make public the names of National Council members from the occupied territories—there are 188 of them—in an effort to affirm the legitimacy inside and outside the occupied territories, and to enter into a democratic battle with Israel should the need arise. Some factions, however, are resisting this trend on the pretext that it will lead to Palestinian conflicts on the inside over the names. How do you feel about making the names public, and will it lead to conflict if approved?

[al-Agha] Every point of view has its pitfalls and its vision. However, if an agreement on the names is reached within the framework of the National Council to announce them within the council, there is no objection to making them public. Pitfalls come to light when those on the outside fail to agree, in which case such disagreement can make its way to the inside. But, if an agreement over the names is reached among the various Palestinian factions and the occupied territories within the framework of the National Council and the Palestinian leadership, there is no objection to making the names public.

Longstanding Water Shortage in Jannin Discussed

*91AE0516A Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
2 Jul 91 p 3*

[txt] Janin—For years, the Janin area has suffered from a strangling water crisis that has impeded many of its vital projects. Although Janin has long been known to be situated on top of an aquifer, it now suffers from a shortage of drinking water.

What are the reasons for this crisis? How can it be solved? Who is responsible for it, especially if we know that the city's population approaches 33,000 and the

population of its one [refugee] camp is 11,000, all of whom share the water resources of the municipality of Janin.

We met with the director of the municipality's water department, Engineer Kamal Abu al-Rabb, who spoke about Janin's water shortage problem and its causes, and recommended several solutions to it. He stated:

As of the end of last month, 4,868 homes, workshops, and offices were subscribing to the services of the water department. The municipality obtains its water from two sources. The first is local—the municipality's well. About 25 percent of the water consumed is obtained from this well. The capacity of this well, which pumps 21,000 cubic meters per month, is limited by the fact that it is only 19 meters deep, old, and dug manually. The municipality's other source of water is external—it purchases about 75 percent of its water, about 58,000 cubic meters per month, from the Israeli Meqorot Company through the 'Arrabah well.

Thus, 79,000 cubic meters per month are consumed, while subscribers require 300 cubic meters per hour in the summer, resulting in a gap between supply and demand of one-third. Therefore, the water department is forced to supply water to some lines to the exclusion of others on a rotating basis, to ensure the supply of water to the largest possible number of subscribers.

The city requires close to 230,000 cubic meters per month and it obtains only 79,000 cubic meters, although meter readings show that consumption does not exceed 42,000 cubic meters. Here, the dimensions of the problem emerge, i.e., the theft of water by irresponsible persons, which adversely affects the water situation in Janin and causes problems for others.

The municipal water department faces a number of problems caused by citizens or technical matters related to the water system:

1. A leading problem is the theft of water by irresponsible persons, who deactivate meters or place pumps to draw water before it reaches the meter, at the public's expense.
2. The use of municipal water to fill household wells, which denies water to other citizens.
3. The problem caused by a number of citizens—who receive water continuously because of the location of their homes—undertaking [word missing] at the expense of drinking water. In most cases, these are "water thieves."
4. The most serious problem is financial, i.e., the failure of citizens to pay their water bills. Citizens owe 7 million shekels to the municipality for different services, including water. It is worth noting that the municipality suffers from a financial deficit and is experiencing financial straits. Consequently, it has stopped paying its obligations. The Meqorot Company is demanding that the municipality pay 300,000 shekels, which is four months worth of bills. If the current situation continues,

Meqorot will stop supplying water to the city. If the city repays its debts, the municipality will be able to purchase greater amounts of water, which will help solve the problem.

5. The obsolescence of the water system in the city, especially in the old city, where the water system is 50 years old. This system, which serves about 1,000 subscribers, is partially corroded, resulting in the leakage of some water. Also, the city's lack of pumps means that different areas in the city are not supplied with water. The municipality owns eight five- to ten-horsepower pumps, which ease this problem in elevated areas where the pumps are located.

Several Recommended Solutions:

1. Efforts to collect outstanding water bills through insistent urging or other measures, so that the municipality can pay its obligations to the authorities and buy greater quantities of water from the Meqorot Company.
2. The upgrading of the water system in the old city. However, this requires money, and the municipality is currently suffering from financial straits. We hope that this money will become available as soon as possible to enable the municipality to take this action.
3. The creation of indigenous water sources for the municipality by modernizing the existing well or digging a new artesian well, which requires the consent of the pertinent authorities.
4. The construction of a large reservoir with a capacity for more than 2,500 cubic meters in the elevated area of Jabal Abu Zahir to ensure the provision of water to all elevated areas without exception.
5. Citizens must not tamper with water valves and must not use private pumps. Such actions impede the flow of water to other citizens.
6. Elevated areas should be equipped with water pumps to ensure the supply of water, especially since the water pressure is too low to supply all elevations, e.g., the eastern quarter, which suffers from an almost continuous interruption of water.

Another problem of concern is the municipality's provision of water, at its own expense, to the area of Wadi Burqin, the Sabah al-Khayr suburb, and [al-Almaniyah]. Al-Almaniyah and Wadi Burqin were recently incorporated within the municipality's boundaries. Sabah al-Khayr remains outside the municipality's boundaries. Even though the municipality supplies water to these areas, it has not [been] provided additional quantities of water.

Eng. Abu al-Rabb reported that studies have proven that Janin is located above an aquifer. However, it suffers from a water shortage. People call attention to the springs for which Janin is famous, such as the spring of [Ninah], and the spring of al-Sharif, from which water

flows during certain years. This means that water is present, but needs to be extracted.

Regarding measures taken by the municipality to stop the theft of water, Abu al-Rabb emphasized that the municipality has not taken any punitive measure such as cutting off the supply of water to violators, as some are demanding, because this is not the solution. He advocates cutting off violators' electricity and fining them.

ALGERIA

Political Figures Discuss Crisis, FIS Role

FLN Secretary General Mehri

91AA0536A Algiers ALGERIE-ACTUALITE in French
13 Jun 91 pp 3-4

[Interview with Abdelhamid Mehri, FLN, National Liberation Front, general secretary, by Fatiha Akeb; place and date not given: "The FLN Is Leaving the Government; Abdelhamid Mehri to ALGERIE-ACTUALITE: 'This Is Not a Handicap'"]

[Text] [Akeb] Mr. Mehri, how could a fizzled strike bring about a state of siege?

[Mehri] Because of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] strategy. Unlimited strike was not the only weapon in their arsenal. Even when they cannot manage to mobilize the masses, they will mobilize certain groups that will go all the way, including confrontation with the police. Obviously, these groups come prepared. Therefore, the obvious failure of the strike drove the FIS leadership to other means which, throughout the world, are a traditional challenge to any democratic regime. Under these conditions, we can say that the FIS was ready to go all the way, to force a bloody confrontation with the government, in an attempt to gain the support of certain social strata, and to risk their all.

[Akeb] Yet, a few hours before the state of siege, Mr. Mohammedi, the interior minister, was saying that the situation "could be handled"?

[Mehri] I don't know what information Mohammedi had then. But the situation was relatively calm throughout the country. Algiers was just one case. Then, in a few hours, the situation deteriorated at an accelerated pace. Mohammedi was probably expressing an overall assessment, whereas the FIS focused on a point where it would cause the situation to worsen: the capital!

[Akeb] Mohammedi also stated that the demonstrators component changed: they were no longer just FIS militants?

[Mehri] Clearly, other organizations, other disinherited fringes, acting with different motivations, joined the ranks of the FIS supporters. After all, this is something to be expected whenever social troubles last and fester....

[Akeb] The Hamrouche government is said to have resigned at 1430 on Tuesday because, it is said, it was opposed to the state of siege.

[Mehri] No, it was not like that....

[Akeb] Mr. Hamrouche's government, then, agreed to the state of siege?

[Mehri] The government merely pointed to the fact that it could not handle the new situation, which made the state of siege necessary....

[Akeb] The state of siege is a failure for the FLN, for democracy? Your point of view?

[Mehri] Civil peace had to be safeguarded, and the deterioration of the situation stopped. Using the state of siege, in any democratic state, is a defeat for democracy, especially in a country that is undergoing the transition from a single party to a multiparty regime.

[Akeb] Does the resignation of the Hamrouche government mean that the FLN is no longer ruling the country?

[Mehri] To say that the FLN is ruling the country implies several types of relations between the party and the government. Until now, the government derived most of its policy from the guidelines approved by the FLN central committees. This is true of the main lines of its overall policy. As far as the strategies used to implement this policy are concerned, there can be—and there were—differences of approach or appreciation. Now, we are faced with a new situation. Mr. Ghazali was called to form another government with no partisan overtones. We agree with the concept. We estimate that the FLN has paid, sometimes heavily, for the responsibilities it took up in governing the country. The recent crisis, unfortunately, has shown that many so-called democratic political formations would agree to, or approve of the most questionable excesses and courses of action, as long as these would hurt the FLN. This is a bitter realization. But it is true.

[Akeb] Is it that democratic parties are lacking political discernment?

[Mehri] I would prefer not to dwell on explanations that might appear subjective....

[Akeb] All that the FLN has left is the People's National Assembly [APN]?

[Mehri] What we have left, first of all, is the Algerian people. Our supporters and sympathizers are very numerous. That is a considerable political force. This force may well struggle relentlessly to bring about the triumph of the political, economic and social changes that are consistent with the FLN principles. I do not believe that the FLN force will decrease when it no longer rules or when it no longer fulfills the direct responsibilities of government.

[Akeb] What about the reforms?

[Mehri] Reforms represent the essential part of the FLN program. At present, they are widely shared, even outside the FLN. Reforms, in their main lines, are unavoidable, and it is around these reforms that the country's sound political forces can rally to rid the country of the problems that are now perturbing it.

[Akeb] You have defended the electoral law and the distribution of constituencies on television, against Abassi. These laws now seem in jeopardy!

[Mehri] No matter how imperfect these laws voted by the APN may be, I don't see who could challenge them?

[Akeb] The FIS!

[Mehri] Of course, this is the demand they used as a pretext to start the general strike. This raises one question, and it is of vital importance: Are the FIS challenging just the election laws, or are they challenging the Law with a capital "L"? Another question, equally decisive: Should we ask the APN to redo their assignment because a political party has flouted all laws in an attempt to bring the country on the verge of ruin. Some said that the laws voted by the APN were not valid because the deputies came from a single party. Would these laws be any more acceptable if they were dictated, instead, by another, far more radically single party? Isn't that a precedent that might prompt other parties or organizations to take to the streets, too? Can you imagine all the impact, and the frustration of the people who get the impression that today, under pressure from one party, they are being denied what a sovereign assembly granted them.

[Akeb] If these laws are not amended, how would you explain the FIS objectives with respect to the strike and the events that followed?

[Mehri] I am convinced that the FIS did not want an assembly, nor the continuation of the democratic process.

[Akeb] What did they want, then?

[Mehri] A regime that will not obey democratic rules.

[Akeb] Has Mr. Hamrouche still a future within the FLN?

[Mehri] He is an FLN militant. In my opinion, he has served the country well. He belongs to the generation younger than mine, among which he counts many sympathizers. The future does not belong to anybody.

[Akeb] The Central Committee is scheduled to meet soon; what will be on its agenda?

[Mehri] An evaluation of the situation to make the necessary decisions and to adopt the party's line of conduct for the next few months.

[Akeb] Are you not afraid that the FLN will split now that the Hamrouche government has resigned?

[Mehri] I always wanted to work for a united but rejuvenated FLN. That is, a FLN that will take care of the problems resulting from the considerable changes occurring in Algeria and in the world. But I cannot rule out the possibility of negative phenomena, which are to be expected under such circumstances.

[Akeb] Some suspect President Chadli of suffering from the Bourguiba syndrome, i.e., he sacrifices his prime ministers whenever there is a political crisis.

[Mehri] Heads of state always bear a heavy responsibility when it comes to handling serious situations.... Of course, governments can be changed easily, not heads of state. Yet, I do not believe that, in our country, changes of government are merely the result of a syndrome.

[Akeb] Many thought that his speech on 2 June was not very clear. He didn't use once the words "presidential election."

[Mehri] In this connection, the president of the Republic is called to make a decision that will affect the country, but that will also affect him personally. It is clear that the president wanted to avoid at all costs to personally be the cause of a rift in the country. Politically, however, if one follows the process of democratic change in Algeria, the stages must be managed with considerable insight, tenacity, and patience. The president took both concerns into account in his approach of the problem.

[Akeb] Except that, since then, everything has been blurred. Abassi is talking of early presidential elections within six months; Ghazali is not on the same wavelength. Your opinion?

[Mehri] An early presidential election should be neither improvised nor rushed. Objectively, and overlooking the impatience of some political party leaders, Algeria would do well to consider a presidential election only after the National Assembly has been installed and has got the way of things, and after the government issued of this APN has been set up and has started to work on the country's real problems. Mr. Ghazali expressed the president's will to call for an early presidential election. But, in my opinion, he cannot handle this election on his own because, after the legislative elections, another government will emerge and it will be for them to organize an early presidential election. I wish this government to be in a position to approach the question of an early presidential election with more serenity.

[Akeb] Along this line of reasoning, what would you say the FIS won?

[Mehri] From my point of view, the FIS could not win in the process they started. Not, as they said, for lack of a dialogue, but because the demands they made could not be met, except at the expense of legitimacy and democracy. But I am sure that many FIS militants feel that strengthening the democratic process is the best way to militate against the institution of an Islamic state. It marks the failure of some of the FIS methods.

[Akeb] Ghozali is talking about clean elections; what does that mean?

[Mehri] In my opinion, this refers more to what is happening in the country than to polling operations proper, since the elections did not take place.

[Akeb] Isn't there a risk that Hamrouche's departure will affect the morale of FLN militants?

[Mehri] The fact that the FLN are distancing themselves from the government is not always a handicap.

[Akeb] Could it be that, even within the FLN, some would rejoice that Hamrouche has resigned?

[Mehri] The internal life of the FLN, too, is marked by a change toward a democratization of the party. But there are always those who do not make a difference between democracy and fight between clans.

[Akeb] In his press conference, Mr. Abassi stressed the fact that the government must have drawn a lesson from the confrontation that was forced upon them. That is somewhat disturbing.

[Mehri] At the start of the road that will lead us to multiparty democracy, we must question this precedent, which amounts to allowing the country's institutions to be blackmailed by a party or an organization intent on implementing irreversible changes.

Hamas Leader Nahnah

91AA0536B Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French
28 Jun 91 p 4

[Interview with Sheikh Nahnah, by Amar Aouimer; place and date not given: "To Privilege Dialogue and Consultation"—first paragraph is EL MOUDJAHID introduction]

[Text] Sheikh Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of the Islamic movement, stated that, in the nineties, Algeria must live in civil peace, political stability, and complete harmony with its principles of November 1954, and that it is urgent to safeguard the higher interest of the Nation.

[Aouimer] How do you assess the present situation, following the political strike started by the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS].

[Nahnah] Whenever there is a historical mutation, in any society, sacrifices and "martyrs" are unavoidable in order to ensure the democratic process. We must privilege dialogue and common sense, not the struggle between "antagonistic forces." National unity could crumble, as well as peace and the country's stability, which is thus sorely tried. This situation might result in a dislocation of the Islamic project.

Unfortunately, in neither of the two parties, FIS and FLN [national Liberation Front], have we found individuals in a position to advise us and to anticipate events beyond repair. All problems must be solved through dialogue and serenity.

We should all have gone, of necessity, through the election of 27 June 1991. We should have provided for security and brotherly coexistence instead of destroying families, laying off workers, making orphans, bleeding the economy, and exposing Algeria to an explosion. We thank God, the Almighty, who spared Algeria this tragedy.

[Aouimer] Is the state of siege necessary and useful at this juncture?

[Nahnah] Undoubtedly, for the state of siege has been imposed in other climes, in countries with more experience of democracy. For instance, Great Britain, France, the United States have cleared a path through democracy; nevertheless, when they see that their integrity and the unity of their people are about to be torn apart, the state of siege is also imposed, to forestall any trouble or danger that might arise.

We were against politics in army barracks and against political parties in mosques, the universities and Algerian Government departments. Now, we must find a way to solve this situation, and I like Palestinian president Abou Amar for saying that "the army went into Algeria to protect democracy, whereas in other countries armed forces are mobilized to eradicate democracy."

[Aouimer] Recently, we have witnessed violent clashes during which gunfire spread panic around Bab El-Oued, Bachdjarah, and Blida. How do you interpret these operations?

[Nahnah] It seems that the progress of democracy does not satisfy certain parties, within the country as well as abroad, because democracy is one way to expose usurped positions, and one way to judge the affluent and the corrupt who became rich illegally. For this reason, they saw democracy as a danger, because it was practiced under clean, not bloody, conditions.

If mistakes were made, they will not be fixed with Sidna Souleimane's ring, but through dialogue, and we noticed that some partisans were searching for the path of good.

[Aouimer] What do you think of Mr. Sid Ahmed Ghazali's government?

[Nahnah] No one has a right to pass judgment on a government that was formed only four or five days ago, because they have not yet presented their program and they have not submitted the main lines of their strategic policy to the People's National Assembly [APN]. We cannot make a value judgment on their persons, and we must wait for the program on which Hadj Sid Ahmed Ghazali's government is based.

Concerning government members belonging to Hamas or close to it, during the consultations we expressed the wish that there should be no ministers from political parties. And it seems that this recommendation was not scrupulously complied with, as some members are "from the FLN." This could probably lead to misunderstandings and differences. However, we shall say that our intuition tells us that this government works for the well being of the people and for the implementation of clean elections and ballot boxes, and any electoral problem or cheating could lead the country to another uprising.

[Aouimer] How do you explain the statements made by Sheikh Sahnouni and some members of the Madjless Echoura [advisory council], Tuesday evening on television?

[Nahnah] This speech was expected; it was marked by the exemplary courage that animated certain good members of the Islamic Salvation Front; their bravery is appreciable, and a return to reason is necessary.

[Aouimer] As the leader of Hamas and as a man of peace, have you taken steps to mediate and offer your good offices between the government and the parties in conflict?

[Nahnah] Yes, this is our responsibility in our "daawa" to God, the Almighty, and in our love for Algeria and our homeland, our devotion to national unity, and our fear to see Algerian blood being shed for no reason at all; we are in contact with our brothers of the "rabita islamia" to act as mediators between the FIS and the presidency of the Republic, in the interest of all. The presidency is inclined to dialogue, but certain segments of the FIS continue the escalation, refusing any mediation and reconciliation; and, through some individuals, the "rabita" maintains that good offices go beyond parties and everybody else, hence many notable questions.... And the truth will become known in the future....

[Aouimer] What would you recommend Algerians should do to cease hostilities and recover serenity and peace?

[Nahnah] The answer lies in the question itself: what it takes is dialogue and consultation based on an understanding of what brings us together and what separates us. There should be no influence of the single thought on conscience.

We must work together for our Algeria, one and indivisible, which has made huge sacrifices.

[Aouimer] The restoration of the State motto on APC [People's Communal Assembly] pediments has caused a stir and some clashes. What would you say about it?

[Nahnah] The authorities must take steps against any operation contrary to the Nation's constants, and not just restore republican values in the APC. There are also those institutions that work in a language that is not Arabic; why do officials use languages that have not been approved by the people? We are in favor of complying

with the rules of the political game, and applying the provisions of the Constitution. Our religion teaches us that we should not start marginal struggles or an insignificant and worthless war. The Prophet (may God's salvation be with him) said: It is not allowed for a Muslim to bother his Muslim brother, for the Muslim must be the Muslim's brother, helping each other and fraternizing with each other; and God, the Almighty, said: "The faithful are brothers." The Algerian people is composed of brothers; this is why we will not tolerate that even one drop of Algerian blood be shed. Who decides on this: the soldier, the son of Algeria and a Muslim? Or the youth or the woman whose blood was shed? Who can go to hell by preaching this "fatwa." God save us from "destructive fatwas."

[Aouimer] The other parties currently keep a low profile in the face of what seems to be the beginnings of a civil war?

[Nahnah] These are the beginnings of a civil war, God save us! The forces of evil in the world want to "Lebanize" Algeria and make it like Iraq. The Algerian people reject Lebanization. They want to be a united people throughout History [word as published]. A surgical operation was needed; it took place on 27 June and could have ensured the well-being of the Algerian people, but.... That was not to be, because of certain parties who thought that events (which are now known) were going the right way. We were spared events like those of Egypt in 1956 and Algeria in 1962. We must protect the Algerian people; all parties must get together to promote Islamic and democratic values and help workers and children; we must stop the bloodshed and face the new world order.

[Aouimer] Mr. Mahfoud Nahnah, does the FLN central committee meeting make you think?

[Nahnah] The FLN party must revise its positions; it played an important part during the liberation struggle, but during the years of independence it was unable to give liberties to individuals. It should grant liberties and remain like the other parties, without distinction, and remain respectful of the Nation's constants, and get rid of its errors, which will require surgical solutions. A government should not retain power based on bloodshed, and an opponent should not aspire to power [with] dead bodies on his conscience; dialogue and kindness are necessary if we are to have stability.

[Aouimer] How do you interpret the position of the presidency of the Republic?

[Nahnah] They were able to install a buffer: the government preparing the elections.

[Aouimer] What message would you send to the Algerians, governing and governed?

[Nahnah] Only one word: "The weak man" asks the Algerian people to be watchful and conscientious.

Watchfulness consists in knowing the truth and in overcoming, and in being aware of injustice and keeping away from it; this requires much faith in justice, not in people. Political leaders are present. Ask the people: Do you follow programs in which individuals may be wrong? The people must be with the unifying program that associates and unites, that leads to dialogue and to the Islamic Republic that guarantees liberties, rights, dialogue, justice to overcome economic me-tooism and (civilization-related) defeatism.

Sheikh Hachemi Sahnouni

91AA0536C Algiers ALGERIE-ACTUALITE in French
20 Jun 91 p 5

[Interview with Sheikh Hachemi Sahnouni, by Larbi Oucherif; place and date not given: "Sheikh Hachemi Sahnouni: Another Voice"—first two paragraphs are ALGERIE-ACTUALITE introduction]

[Text] The man is said to be the leader of the extremist Islamist group "El Takfir Oua Hidjra" [Repudiation and Renunciation]. Hospitalized, he declined to receive any journalist during the "period of troubles." As troubles receded in the past, he agreed with simplicity to an informal interview, in the presence of a young and faithful companion. Apparently, Sheikh Sahnouni continues his various activities without being affected by them. In addition to a categorical denial concerning his relations with the small group mentioned above, he discussed at length events and protagonists.

Sheikh Hachemi Sahnouni is a man in his prime, with the measured movements and low voice of leaders at rest. Speaking about the events and his political assessment, he explained quietly: "The FIS [Islamic Front for Salvation] decided on a peaceful unlimited strike. The excesses are to be blamed on Mr. Hamrouche's government, who answered us with violence, creating a climate of insecurity, hence the state of siege."

What does he think of the president's decision to proclaim the state of siege?

[Sahnouni] I believe that it is a mistake. He did not look for a dialogue; it would have been better to dismiss the government and convene the parties for a consultation that would consider only the nation's higher interest. We went from a situation in which the Hamrouche government's responsibility was sufficiently clear, to a more complex situation resulting from Mr. Chadli's decision. If Ghazali is intelligent and chooses the right men, he may take the country out of the crisis. I trust him.

[Oucherif] Did the FIS reach all of its objectives?

[Sahnouni] No. Not all. Hamrouche is gone; an early presidential election has been agreed to. That leaves the revision of the electoral law and the distribution of constituencies.

[Oucherif] This, therefore, is an objective, but how will it be achieved?

[Sahnouni] We are waiting for the new government's presentation. We are waiting for an in-depth dialogue. We are in favor of a one-round system, with the elections checked by all the parties involved.

Concerning the state of siege, Sheikh Sahnouni asked that "prayer and the Muslim's obligations be respected. That is, they should not be performed under military supervision. Wisdom is required. Because this constant presence may bring irritation to a peak."

[Oucherif] Sheikh, you are said to be responsible for acts of violence and sexual assaults against members of the police.

[Sahnouni] I categorically deny that FIS members committed, could commit acts of such a nature. However, ill-considered individual acts are possible, as the people, not just FIS members, were joining the movement.

[Oucherif] Mr. Ben Bella asked FIS leaders for a solemn declaration that the so-called "uncontrolled" individuals were not yours.

[Sahnouni] Mr. Ben Bella is not our political advisor. However, for a moment we thought that these individuals were government thugs. We stopped people in a car. They were policemen. On Place du 1er Mai, we overpowered a gendarme who had several different identity papers. Good. Either they did it on their own, or they were ordered to do it, which would be very serious, as it would denote a desire to throw the entire country into anarchy. Besides, these "uncontrolled" individuals already acted up in 1988.... What I can tell you with certainty, is that these people were handed over to the authorities....

[Oucherif] In exchange for what?

[Sahnouni] It was not an exchange. We are against these practices, which damage the people's and the country's interests. The number of victims is minimal, compared with the actual danger. But one day we shall know who is responsible.... I also wish to confirm that the djounoud did not use their weapons. However, it is a good idea to keep them at a distance from built-up areas to avoid any excesses.

[Oucherif] Like those of El Takfir Oua Hidjra of the Afghans?

Sheikh Hachemi Sahnouni somewhat raised his tone:

[Sahnouni] Some people are excited, impatient. They are our brothers is Islam. We are aware of the price of blood, blood that is at the heart of the Last Judgment. We are confident. Today, I note that we have no government, that Chadli has been "absent" for a long time, that the ANP [People's National Army] continues to govern the country. And there is no need for Mr. Ben Bella to ask, we are for peace, we do not want violence, we deny that. This is our country, this is our people: the people have suffered; enough is enough; let the people participate freely in shaping their destiny.

[Oucherif] Does that mean that you are for democracy?

[Sahnouni] If the people want Islam, we shall act accordingly! But we do not want a Western-type democracy; we want our democracy, i.e., the choura, dialogue, consultation, collective decision making.

[Oucherif] This "chourocracy" is also one of the demands of Hamas?

[Sahnouni] Yes. Between Hamas and us, there are only minor differences, actually in the application of shari'ah. They maintain that an Islamic government does not implement shari'ah immediately, but over a period of nine to 15 years. But we want the shari'ah to be implemented immediately, not in totality, but one part at a time. They want to show consideration for democratic parties; but we advocate the choura.

[Oucherif] Sheikh Hachemi Sahnouni, people say that the FIS is headed by individuals who know little about Islam....

[Sahnouni] In the leadership, Sheikh Benamara and Sheikh Abassi Madani have doctorates, respectively, in political science and in psychology; Sheikh Benazzou and Sheikh Larbi Maariche have master's degrees; others have bachelor's degrees. However, even this is not enough, because the FIS is not a normal party, it is an Islamic party, a party that presents the people with an alternative.

[Oucherif] The FIS is now in the 11th day of the state of siege. Beaten? Perhaps! Weakened? No! Good recovery, Sheikh!

Commentary Views Madani's Role in FIS

91AA0564A Paris LE MONDE in French 29 Jul 91 p 5

[Article by Algiers correspondent Georges Marion: "Algeria: Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] 'Conclave' in Batna; Even in Jail, Mr. Madani Remains the Islamists' Boss"—first paragraph is LE MONDE introduction]

[Text] On Friday 26 July, following a 24-hour long "conclave" in Batna, the FIS declared its support to its jailed leaders, Messrs. Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj. This decision will somewhat complicate the task of the prime minister, Mr. Sid Ahmed Ghazali, who hoped to see a "reformist" FIS led by a subdued team take part in the national conference that the government is expected to convene on July 30-31.

Judging from the few decisions made public after a closed meeting, even in jail Messrs. Madani and Benhadj still receive strong support for their theses from within the Islamist movement. To demonstrate its loyalty, the Majlis Echoura [advisory council], i.e., the FIS collegial directorate, decided not to appoint another spokesman to replace Mr. Madani, who held that position before his arrest.

More significantly, 12 members declared their support to the Majlis Echoura, including Mr. Mohamed Said, who was also imprisoned when Mr. Madani, from his jail cell, appointed him as his legitimate successor. On the other hand, five members of the FIS leadership, Messrs. Hachemi Sahnouni, Benazouz Zoubda, Mohamed Kaarar, Makhoulfi Said, and Kamredine Karabani, were relieved of their responsibilities until the Congress takes place. None of them can be suspected of supporting the movement's objectives only halfheartedly: Mr. Said is the author of a sort of civil disobedience manual that of late has been widely circulated in the mosques; as for Mr. Karabani, he used to have supreme control over the youth sector and was also in charge of security matters.

But all disagreed with the course imposed on the FIS by Messrs. Madani and Benhadj during the general strike and the bloody events of the past few weeks. Their dismissal shows a contrario that, even behind bars, Mr. Madani is still the boss. Mr. Said Guechi, who appeared to be the leader of the anti-Madanists, slammed the door of the movie theater where the FIS assembly was taking place.

Mr. Ait-Ahmed's Hesitations

After the meeting, Mr. Guechi did not state clearly whether he would attend the meeting between the government and political parties scheduled for 30-31 July. In a message made public on Wednesday, Mr. Madani stated that, for his part, he thought this was inopportune. In Batna, the fundamentalist leadership merely demanded the release of the political prisoners and the end of the state of siege. These demands, presented as prerequisites to further talks, actually make it unlikely that the FIS will attend the meeting.

As the Islamists made their position clear, Mr. Hocine Ait-Ahmed's Front of Socialist Forces (FFS), too, announced its conditions in a letter to the prime minister. Although Mr. Ait-Ahmed agreed to join in "organizing the meeting," he challenged its agenda and called for a rapid end to the state of siege and the setting of a "precise" date (before the end of the year) for legislative elections prior to any background discussion.

All these demands may soon lead to the withdrawal of the FIS and FFS, thus depriving the national conference of a good part of its substance and justification. Even though Mr. Ghazali's friends pretend not to be especially sorry about it, the absence of the two largest opposition parties could hardly be presented as a success. Apart from the FLN [National Liberation Front] and Mr. Said Saadi's RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy], and except for a few brilliant individuals who might come to the negotiation table, no other formation actually possesses real representativeness or even a program that might prevent the meeting from looking like a matter of pure form, i.e., the exact opposite of the democratic consultation that Mr. Ghazali had hoped it would be.

**RCD Leader Criticizes Fundamentalists,
Government**

91AA0496A Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic
17 Jun 91 pp 20-21

[Interview with Dr. Said Saadi, head of the RCD Party, by Bashara Ghanem al-Boun in Algiers: "FLN In Collusion with FIS for Power;" first three paragraphs are AL-DUWALIYAH introduction; date not given]

[Text] Algeria's road to democracy must pass through a multiplicity of views and political parties. Among the parties that were active in the past few months is the Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD]. This is the party about which questions concerning the circumstances of its establishment have been raised. Its leader, Dr. Said Saadi responded to AL-DUWALIYAH's questions in an interview conducted with him in Algiers.

Dr. Saadi accused the National Liberation Front [FLN] of "nourishing" the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], and described it as "collapsing." He called for the withdrawal of all reins of power from the FLN which, consequently, would make the political game in Algeria easier, so that "the choice is easy for the Algerian citizen, i.e., between democracy on the one hand, and fundamentalism on the other."

Saadi believes that the danger of fundamentalism exists, but that the opportunity for translating it into political action is not considerable. He considers Algerian and Maghrebi society to have nothing at all in common with fundamentalist conviction.

[Al-Boun] What is your evaluation of the internal situation in Algeria, after recent events?

[Saadi] Building democracy in the Third World is not easy. Naturally, the birth of democracy in a country of the south, which has recognized only one party for 30 years, cannot be possible without obstacles. Today, we are being subjected to a kind of coercion. The important thing is to recognize how to get out of it. What has happened so far in Algeria? There was one party in power that held the collective memory, fought for liberation, and benefitted from the climate that prevailed during the sixties. It thought that plurality, freedom of expression and assembly, and democracy were luxuries. We tried during the seventies to call attention to the dangers of this regime that rejected everything for the citizens. Unfortunately, no one listened to us. The response was prison, prison, and imprisonment. Paraleling this regime is another regime, which is no less "totalitarian." It has taken over the "religious" field, in an attempt to gain power over something holy, which is religion. The only place that the citizen could express his views was in the mosque. After the events of October 1988, the attempt was made to develop the situation with regard to political pluralism, which differs from democracy. By this I mean that it was possible—in form—to talk and express views, but the means of operating institutions was inoperative, because of the

past political culture, built up over 28 years of repression and suppression. Therefore, we found ourselves under the shadow of a twofold totalitarian regime, which held the country hostage. The FIS, and the fundamentalist movement in general, were feeding on the FLN's failure. Based on that, the fundamentalists attracted the destitute and deprived classes, especially since victims of the single party's administration were plentiful.

In addition to the fact that power was slipping through the hands of the FLN, 18 months ago I had called for the formation of a national transitional government, in order to take the country out of political sterility and the dangers of a return to dictatorship. We did not receive attentive ears, because it was not the FLN's habit to be receptive or blessed with intelligence. The FIS' demands today are the same that we, along with other political parties, raised three months ago. However, because they knew that we would not violently attack the government, they rejected our demands, and preferred to make concessions with the FIS, instead of making concessions with democrats, with regard to the points themselves.

[Al-Boun] However, do you think that political parties—other than the FLN—have sufficient strength and credibility to offer themselves as a democratic alternative to the FIS?

[Saadi] I think that we have credibility. As for our strength, the means of public administration have so far been confiscated by the FLN, which does not enjoy credibility. Throughout the process of taking over the media and the machinery of administration, the FLN has thrown obstacles in the path of the democrats' progress and development. In exchange, it has not harassed the FIS, which has its financial resources.

[Al-Boun] Have you received guarantees from the new prime minister concerning the holding of free, clean parliamentary elections?

[Saadi] We posed this question frankly to the prime minister, when we met him. The reply was yes. He officially gave us a commitment to do all in his power to hold free and clean elections, as he put it.

[Al-Boun] Did he invite you to join the new government, and are you prepared to take part in it?

[Saadi] We will not participate in this government, which must be transitional, as we demanded 18 months ago.

[Al-Boun] What is your view regarding a final date for parliamentary and presidential elections? Will it be before the end of the year?

[Saadi] The priority is to form a government, then reconsider the election law, the boundaries of the election districts, and other questions still under discussion. Parliamentary elections will be held before the end of the year. As for presidential elections, although we called for them to be held before parliamentary elections, we don't think that there is any ultimate need to hold them

concurrently with the parliamentary elections, lest we put all our institutions into an unstable position, and achieve a constitutional vacuum.

[Al-Boun] Do you see the danger of army intervention as still being likely?

[Saadi] We have faced the military authorities and the army here, on the spot. We did not want to choose exile, or to work underground over a period of 15 years. So, we are in a position that allows us to discuss this military institution, which has not yet decided to intervene. It was invited by the institution of the presidency to restore security and public order, i.e., so far, it has not aspired to exercise political power. It is important to record that point. With regard to future developments, and how things will be, one must work with everything at one's disposal to avoid a return to military authority, which has been condemned historically.

It remains to be seen whether the democrats will be able to coordinate their efforts, in order to offer a credible alternative for public opinion.

[Al-Boun] However, in the event the FIS should be victorious, will the ghost of army intervention return to cast its shadow over the situation in Algeria?

[Saadi] If the FIS should emerge the victor through violence, because it adopted violence as a strategy for seizing power, it goes without saying that this development of itself would cause the militarists to return to power. We must strive to avoid that situation. However, the FIS' victory can only be avoided if the FLN loses its privileged position, that is, gets out of the institutions and facilitates the political game, so that the choice will be clear for the citizens, democracy or fundamentalism.

[Al-Boun] Don't you think that there is a possibility of a majority in favor of the FIS emerging from the ballot boxes?

[Saadi] Not at all, I don't believe that at all. We saw the influence of the FIS during the first three days of the general strike, which it called. It was virtually nonexistent. However, after the government's resignation, that constituted encouragement for the FIS to use violence.

[Al-Boun] Are you saying that there was a kind of collusion between the FLN and the FIS?

[Saadi] There is a large part of the FLN in collusion with the FIS.

[Al-Boun] What is the goal of this political game?

[Saadi] The part in collusion believes that there is a possibility of reaching a consensus with regard to the social base for each front. Furthermore, a portion of the proposals advanced by the FIS has not been rejected by certain FLN circles. The FLN is aware that it has been losing its credibility more and more in the community. It sees itself as compelled tactically to try to arrange an alliance, even with a part of the FIS.

[Al-Boun] This surely means that there is a part of the FLN in alliance with part of the FIS?

[Saadi] Yes, objectively.

[Al-Boun] Is it possible that tomorrow we will see an Islamic republic established in Algeria?

[Saadi] No, not directly. However, a consideration must be whether Algerians want to establish one in their country. Our conviction is that Algerian society, and Maghrebi society in general, will never have a fundamentalist conviction. For example, during the 12 days of the government's absolute resignation, and the collusion of certain security agencies, which played a provocative game, Algerian citizens were not alarmed. On the contrary, they maintained their self-control and restraint. They remained aloof from a struggle between an autocratic totalitarian party, and a Stalinist totalitarian party.

[Al-Boun] Many are talking about a challenge that the Arab Maghrebi countries face. It is the danger of fundamentalism by hostile action. Do you share their fears?

[Saadi] The danger is there, but we say that the chance to translate it politically is not great. However, if a great event occurs, the course of history is changed. But, that is only possible if political officials behave irresponsibly, as a result of an erroneous maneuver that could happen in reaction to acts of provocation by the fundamentalists using violence. At that time, the FIS could exploit this situation, because a part of its plan involves upsetting the stability of institutions, which would be the prelude to its seizure of power.

[Al-Boun] What quarter do you mean, that might be intent on feeding the violence?

[Saadi] There are senior officials, i.e., the "old guard," who advocated opening fire on the demonstrators recently. We believe that the intent was to create a climate rife with fear, and destabilize our institutions. In addition, certain politicians ignored the facts of the situation, which caused them to adopt unfortunate positions, like those persons who returned from exile, such as Ben Bella and Ait Ahmed, who made a fatal mistake.

[Al-Boun] However, there are those who say that your group is a FLN tool. What is your response?

[Saadi] That is mere prattle. We are the only party in Algeria composed of political partisans. We faced the authorities on the spot; we did not choose exile, nor work underground, which was the easy way. We preferred to go to jail many times, in order to create a mentality to liberate the energies in our society. These are our positions, and I don't know how the FLN can adapt to our presence. We will not stop demanding that they go away.

[Al-Boun] Do you think that there is any chance of an alliance being established among the democratic political parties, in opposition to the FIS?

[Saadi] We have been calling for that for two years. Three months ago, we succeeded in contacting seven political parties. But, because democracy is consensus, equality, harmony, and knowing how to mix the ambitions of some with those of others, the process is not easy. So far, we have been unable to establish a stable group.

[Al-Boun] What about the future of democracy in Algeria?

[Saadi] The democratic hope exists, but the means of translating it will not be easy.

[Al-Boun] What is your view regarding Sid Ahmed Ghazali, the new prime minister?

[Saadi] He is a man who is well known as an excellent official, who serves the state as an administrator, and who achieves programs to which he is committed. Without any doubt, he is a nationalist. It remains to be seen whether he will find in himself the necessary means to face up to this new and difficult stage.

[Al-Boun] Some talk about him as a possible candidate in the coming presidential elections to succeed President Chadli Bendjedid?

[Saadi] I know nothing about that; you had better ask him that question.

Commentary Describes Roundup of FIS Activists

91AA0497A Paris LE MONDE in French
4 Jul 91 pp 1, 8

[Commentary by Georges Marion: "Hunting Down the Algerian Fundamentalists"—first paragraph is LE MONDE introduction]

[Text] Search operations, arrests, criminal charges: The radical wing of the Islamic movement has been dismantled. Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali confirmed on Tuesday 2 July that Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj, the two FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] leaders arrested on Sunday in Algiers, will have to "answer for their actions" in a court of law. He announced he would meet again with the political parties "to structure the dialogue."

Algiers—The FIS seemed scarcely to believe it. After forcing the resignation of Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche and obtaining the promise of "clean" legislative elections and an early presidential election, it thought nothing was beyond its reach. Certain of its strength, encouraged by the impunity it had enjoyed for so long, it scoffed at warnings from the army. It was reckless. Now, assailed by a wave of searches and arrests, it is in the process of being dismantled. Although the political problem posed by the FIS cannot be resolved by the state of siege and emergency measures, the police tactics the government has employed to hunt down the Islamic militants have been quite effective.

Several days ago the army was attempting—in many cases without success—to replace the illegal "Islamic commune" inscriptions on the faces of municipal buildings with the official motto "by the people and for the people." The security forces ran into opposition not only from the Islamists but also even more from slum dwellers themselves, who reacted angrily to what they considered an intolerable intrusion. So the tanks are less conspicuous now, and the police, to avoid situations that spur the people to rally to the Islamists' defense, are choosing their targets more carefully, going for the leadership of the fundamentalist movement they depict as a terrorist organization pure and simple.

The front-line troops are the special antiterrorist units. It was they who on Sunday 30 June arrested Mr. Ali Benhadj in the streets while he was en route to the television station to demand the right of response. It was those same units that invested the Algiers FIS headquarters several hours later, detained its president, Mr. Abassi Madani, and seized the organization's records. And the next day it was those same units that arrested six other members of the FIS's collegial directorate.

Residents of Algiers, who had not even suspected such units existed, were treated to a daunting demonstration of efficiency. On Tuesday, they sealed off the premises of the FIS women's organization near the Rahma mosque (formerly Saint Charles' cathedral). Arriving in unmarked vans that bristled with submachine guns pointed at the crowd, the commandos—hooded and wearing bulletproof jackets, assault rifles in hand—forced their way quickly into the premises and reemerged with a batch of documents. Simultaneously, the FIS national headquarters (in what used to be Charras Street) was also "visited," under the eyes of a stunned crowd kept at bay by fierce looking men whose vehicles pulled out and roared away just a few moments later.

By military order, FIS premises remain closed. The organization itself has not been legally banned, but its activities have been brought to a de facto halt. Hundreds of FIS cadres and militants are under arrest. For some time now, especially since its victory in the June 1990 municipal elections, FIS had been thoroughly penetrated by police informers. It was the intelligence thus collected, along with the mountains of documents seized in the latest operations, that made all those arrests possible.

Radicals Nabbed

Police sources estimate unofficially that by Monday some 2,600 people—both FIS militants and mere demonstrators—had been arrested since disorders broke out. There were arrests not only in Algiers and the surrounding suburbs, but also in Chlef, Blida, Constantine, and Bordj-Bou-Argeridj. On Sunday and Monday, 144 people were hauled into court for failure to observe curfew and unlawful public assembly. At El Oued, 65 people received jail sentences ranging from three days to two months.

The mayor of Annaba was hauled off to jail after replacing the "Islamic commune" inscription the army had removed from the front of the municipal building. Others were arrested for the same offense in several communes in the wilaya (prefecture), as well as in El Tarf, while several local FIS leaders in Souk-Ahras and its region were detained. At M'Sila, two demonstrators were killed when police occupied FIS premises. Violent clashes took place on Tuesday morning at Mostaganem, in the Islamic stronghold of Tidjildit, after an appeal for "holy war" was launched from the minaret of a mosque.

According to police, the 700 people whose arrest was acknowledged on Monday in an official communiqué (LE MONDE, 3 July) all belonged to the radical fringe of the FIS and are suspected of state security offenses. The same description has since been applied to 340 other arrestees, including a number of foreigners—militant Islamists from Libya, Tunisia, Lebanon and even Iran. All these fundamentalists have been put under close watch by the constabulary.

The new minister for human rights, Mr. Ali Haroun, promises they will be brought to trial very quickly, in accordance with the code of criminal procedures. The same goes for Mr. Madani and Mr. Benhadj, who are being kept in a garrison on the outskirts of Algiers, though for the moment authorities refuse to say exactly when they will be tried.

"Engage in Politics"

Generally speaking, the news being provided about police operations is skimpy, and verification is difficult. The public authorities, for example, have made much of the discovery of 72 Molotov cocktails in a mosque at Blida. The same sources say weapons, clothing, and medicines collected for Iraq during the Gulf crisis have reportedly been seized in various towns, often in the mosques. The police have also confiscated a large amount of documents that are now being examined and will serve to "beef up" the prosecution's case against Madani and Benhadj.

Forty-eight hours after the onset of the anti-FIS operation, political authorities say the results overall have been positive. To hear them tell it, the radical fringe of the movement will never recover. Terrorist acts are still a possibility, they believe, but the danger is mostly past. While maintaining that normalization will continue until it is completed, officials say the army is in the process of returning to barracks and leaving the rest of the operation in the hands of civilian police. Thus on Tuesday night it was armed policemen, rather than soldiers, who manned the security checkpoints.

To show they have nothing to hide, the authorities now claim they are anxious to allow the entry into Algeria of the journalists and human rights organizations clamoring to get in. They hope, in any case, to dispel fears that a dynamic of repression might be getting out of control. They maintain it is not a question of outlawing the FIS: Only eight members of its 70-person collegial directorate

have been arrested. Contacts are under way with the other Islamic movement officials in hopes of encouraging the emergence of a new directorate amenable to leading the FIS on a more moderate course.

"We are going to give them the opportunity to engage in politics rather than revolutionary agitation," said a member of the government on Tuesday. It remains to be seen, however, whether a more cautious and soft-spoken Islamic movement will be able to maintain the same control the old FIS exerted over the most destitute classes of Algerian society.

Progress Reported on Italian Pipeline Negotiations

91AA0445C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Jun 91 p 9

[Article by Medhat Maqar]

[Text] Rome—Italy and Algeria were able, at the end of the week, to end the dilemma that led Italian authorities several days ago to freeze a \$7.2-billion loan on which the two parties had agreed last May. Italy has agreed to release the first portion of the loan to Algeria. The new agreement between the two parties stipulates payment of the first installment of the loan—which is designated to refinance Algeria's debts owed to Italian companies—by means of payments that end on 31 December 1993. The formula and dates for the payment of the \$4.5-billion balance of the loan to Algeria will be determined at a later time.

It is expected that the Organization to Guarantee Italian Exports will completely cover the joint loan, which will be provided by a group of Italian banks headed by the Banca Commerciale Italiana, Mediobanca, and Imi.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the disagreement which led to the freeze pertains to the details of the gas agreement, which was part of the agreement on the loan. It was decided that the loan would be repaid by Algeria's supply of gas to Italy. However, according to well-informed Italian sources, Algeria opposed the initial wording of the agreement, which stipulated Algeria's repayment of loan installments and debt servicing in the form of Algerian commitments "not subject to abrogation" to the account of Italy's Sanam company which specializes in the gas and oil exploration and exploitation. The commitments in question require Algeria to supply Sanam with specific quantities of Algerian gas during the loan period.

The Italian sources who disclosed this aspect emphasized that the freezing of the Algerian-Italian agreement "has no relation to recent political developments in Algeria," and that the Italian Government will adhere to the agreement regardless of the results of the general elections that had been scheduled to occur in Algeria on 27 June 1991, but were postponed due to the recent wave of disturbances. The Italian sources added that the amended wording of the agreement does not assume the

form of a direct agreement between the Italian Sanam Company, which specializes in oil and gas extraction, and the Algerian SONATRACH [National Algerian Company for the Transport and Commercialization of Hydrocarbons] (which is what the Algerians objected to). Rather, the new agreement stipulates SONATRACH's transfer of a portion of the gas supplies account to a British trustee bank yet to be named, with the understanding that the bank will in turn be responsible for transferring the sums through its branch in Italy to the Italian banks financing the loan.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the sum to be transferred by the British trustee bank will suffice to at least guarantee the payment of the first portion of Algerian debt servicing. The British bank will also assume responsibility for the payment of the Italian debt installments at the designated times to Italian banks.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has also learned that the delay of the agreement on the loan and the guarantees connected to it led to a delay in the disbursement of the first installment of the Italian loan. That installment, which totals \$2.7 billion, is designated to refinance Algeria's debts to Italian companies. As the result of that, the Algerian banks were forced to pay, from their own account, about \$330 million of the debts that had come due to the Italian companies during the negotiating period. Therefore, these sums will be subtracted from the sum of \$2.7 billion, which will be drawn by Algeria as the first disbursement of the total loan, which totals \$7.2 billion. The balance of the sum will be paid out over the course of 23 months and 29 days.

The Italian authorities announced the purport of the loan agreement early last month and promised to provide guarantees to cover the full value of the loan. However, they stated that the Italian commercial banks would be left to agree on specific projects in which the loan would be invested and the determination of interest rates and the term of the loans.

Sources at the Italian Organization for the Guarantee of Exports (Sace) estimate that the interest on the total loan for its full 10-year term will exceed \$9 billion. Also, the amount of insurance coverage provided by Sace totals 100 percent of the value of the loan and represents about 20 percent of that organization's total liabilities, according to details of the deal.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Algeria requires, in order to repay the loan over the course of ten years, somewhat less than \$1 billion per year, or the equivalent value of the Italian Government's annual purchases of Algerian natural gas.

JORDAN

Limited Number of Parties, Coalitions Encouraged

91AE0511B Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
20 Jun 91 p 5

[Text] Amman (Petra)—Jordanian politicians, intellectuals and public figures are emphasizing the need for

coordination among political groups which share similar ideology, saying that such coordination was essential to prepare the group for settling differences and giving meaning to political pluralism.

Lower House of Parliament Deputy Sulayman 'Arar said that democracy entailed pluralism. However, pluralism does not mean that "we have to create an unjustifiable number of parties if they have the same ideologies and programme."

He said that the AL-MUSTAQBAL party which is now being established, supported any party, which shares the same principle.

He said he would not rush to establish his party, but wait to discuss with other parties.

Dr Jamal al-Sha'ir said he supported forming a national party which "is not attached to any foreign power or party."

He said there was agreement among five parties for forming a national coalition, the United National Work Front, and called on other parties, groups and public figures with the same line of thinking to join.

Lower House Deputy Ahmad Qutaysh al-'Azayidah, spokesman of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, rang the alarm bell over the multitude of political parties. He said formation of many parties "calls for worry since some of them are feared to be attached to foreign parties."

However, he said, the solution to the problem "lies in promoting awareness among our citizens about the dangers of the multitude of parties and their relations with foreign parties or forces."

He called on people to learn from the experience of the 1950s.

Mr al-'Azayidah urged groups and parties who share the same line of thinking to form one party, rather than several parties. He said that the Muslim Brotherhood movement was keen on forming one party, grouping all Islamists.

Dr Sa'id al-Tal, former higher education minister, said in an interview with AL-DUSTUR daily he believed that no limitation on the number of political parties should be made because such a limitation contradicted with democracy.

Concept of Political Pluralism Under Islam Examined

91AE0483A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Jun 91
p 4

[Article by Muhammad Ibrahim Shaqrah: "Multi-Party System as Viewed by Islam"]

[Text] The nation of Islam would not have been torn apart by the darkness that has besieged it for so long had

the original believers truly understood God Almighty's words: "Truly, it is the Party of God that will achieve Felicity."

When evil tore the nation apart, when the scorpions of whim spread over its land, when it headed with its blackness toward the sunset, it assiduously sought the great forbidden which God warned against in the Koranic verse: "But people have cut off their affair (of unity) between them, into sects: each party rejoices in that which is with itself," [Koran, 28:53] starting out with an imminent evil that it was unable to repel without going back to God Almighty's jurisprudent saying, "Truly, it is the Party of God that will achieve Felicity," to comprehend the nation's situation in its early ages and its past deeds that spread sweet fragrances over the nations of the world and illuminated peoples' horizons.

But how can it now regain its status of yesteryears, given its disdain for the above verse that it has cast aside, permitting itself to violate God Almighty's proscriptions: "...And fall into no disputes lest ye lose heart and your power depart" [Koran, 8:46]; "Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving clear signs" [Koran 3:105]; "...Follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (Great) Path" [Koran, 6:153]; and other verses that censure and warn against disagreement and discord.

Whereas truth with God in these commands and proscriptions inspires all people to obey His laws and follow His commands—truth leads to benevolence and benevolence leads to paradise—lies and falsehoods are quite the opposite, for they induce people to lose faith in God, prompting them to shun His commands and proscriptions without giving any thought to their evil deeds.

Truth decrees that the nation be united and follow the original code of conduct and ideology it inherited from its Prophet, Muhammad—God's blessing and peace be upon him—as revealed to him by God, which is constant and has never changed. If the nation is fragmented into different sects and parties, with each claiming a right to Islam, this will undoubtedly create a course of belief and behavior contrary to the paths followed by others, despite the claim that they all go back to one origin, namely, the Islamic religion, as we illustrated in our first articles. But in time, they, namely the paths, will lead to a path incompatible with those of other parties and groups. If this is not religious disunity, which God proscribed by saying "Do not be disunited in religion," then what is?

Moreover, if every one of these parties were to claim that it is the one that has been saved, then which ones have been sent to perdition? This claim, logicians say, is like a wandering individual. If this is the case, they ought to agree on which one is the saved. But how can they agree, since they have failed to agree on the one belief and its origin?

If the nation were to wash its brain of partisan fanaticism and rid itself of the burdens of arbitrariness and the

shackles of subjection, I believe that the saved would not be a mystery to it, based on what the Prophet said in response to a question: "Those who are like me and my companions." Who were Muhammad's companions? We can get the answer from their written biographies, from their teachings, and from their numerous good deeds to which our Prophet—God's blessing and peace be upon him—wanted us to dedicate ourselves, saying: "Sink your teeth into my sunna and that of the rightly-guided orthodox caliphs."

Most of the nation's population, having been disabled by their failure to manage, discern, and study the aspects of life in the finest first three centuries, the prophecy century in particular, preach with unparalleled haughtiness, denying what is known and claiming to have knowledge of what is desired, believing that they are well informed when, in fact, they know nothing. They are blind to the news of those radiant centuries and ignorant of their landmarks, developing a marked hostility toward them out of their belief that such hostility is a kind of loyalty that binds them to those three centuries.

And if believers find themselves besieged by partisanship, with all its various factions and paths, their only salvation is to abide by the Prophet's command: "Dissociate yourself from these factions even if you have to sink your teeth into a tree trunk until you die." This was the Prophet's answer to Hafizah when he was asked: "What if the Muslims do not have a group or an imam?" This reply ought to silence them and should get them out of the madness they brought upon themselves when they were swarming around the parties and factions to pick which one to join, believing that therein lay their salvation. But by violating the Prophet's sunna, they would not be saved, nor would they be able to save anyone else. Witness the effects of the instrument of partisanship amongst the nation that was put on earth to bring happiness to the people through good deeds in this world and the hereafter, just as it had brought happiness to them in the past.

There is no doubt that compliance with the Prophet's command will bring those who have detached themselves from these factions together on the right path, to lead them to the first dawn so that they may bind themselves to and identify with it, realizing that its heroic epic is their epic and its righteousness their righteousness, hence the Prophet's saying: "He who is like me and my companions." I do not believe that the excuse of the advocates of multiple parties and Islamic groups would be acceptable nowadays, for it claims that "doctrines, ideas, and multiple creeds, which find a breeding ground in Islam and among the Muslims, would not have grown mighty, powerful, and brave were it not for the parties that united their members under their banner."

This is an invalid excuse, incapable of expressing itself and illustrating its significance, because the simple fact is that these doctrines and creeds are alien and strange to us, and when factions and groups are counted, they do

not figure into the calculations of Islamic factions and groups because they did not grow out of Islam. What we are talking about are the Islamic parties that disgrace those Muslims who wish to follow other peoples's path of division and discord by forming parties and groups, which is a path to evil and an imitation of a sunna they contrived: "Follow the sunnas of your predecessors." The nation's might can only be realized through unity, harmony, and repudiation of the blind adoptions of sunnas from others to fulfill God's saying: "Truly, it is the Party of God that will achieve Felicity" as a proper interpretation of God Almighty's saying: "The believers are but a single brotherhood," and as a practical code of behavior that impels them to heed the Prophet's warning: "Do not bicker with one another, do not hate one another, and do not envy one another, but be brothers to one another."

I do not think that there is a single sensible person in the nation who is unaware of the fact that division and discord over the origin of the divine path intensify hatred and envy and draw the minds away from reason and righteousness, thus leading them astray.

Labor Minister Provides Unemployment Figures

*JN0607162391 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 5 Jul 91
pp 1, 16*

[Article by Mamduh Hawamidah]

[Excerpts] 'Abd-al-Karim al-Dughmi, minister of labor and cabinet affairs, has stated that the most salient solutions and proposals the government will put forth to tackle unemployment revolve around five main points.

In a statement to AL-RA'Y, al-Dughmi said that the problem of unemployment is one of the government's priorities. [passage omitted]

Al-Dughmi said statistics on hand show that 106,000 people are currently registered as unemployed. This figure represents 16.8 percent of the entire labor force in the kingdom. It includes 48,962 who have applied for jobs with the Civil Service Commission and the employment bureaus of the Ministry of Labor, 30,000 who returned from Kuwait and other Gulf countries in the wake of the Gulf crisis, and 27,000 who have not registered their names with the Ministry of Labor or the Civil Service Commission. [passage omitted]

Official Comments on Drop in Wheat Production

*91AE0483C Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Jun 91
p 9*

[Article by Muhammad Khuwaylah: "Weather Conditions Caused Blossoms To Fall"]

[Text] Engineer Muhammad 'Ali al-Khaza'ilah, al-Ramthah province director of agriculture, said that the department has made nine guidance tours throughout the province to instruct farmers in methods to combat

blight, insects, and weeds, and to make them aware of the importance of tilling, irrigation, and planned forestation.

Furthermore, agricultural advisers have made 45 guidance visits to farmers throughout the province, and the department has called upon farmers in al-Ramthah and the Marw Agricultural Station to attend a demonstration of automated lentil and vetch harvesting.

Mr. Khaza'ilah said that last month farm insects infested olive and almond [amygdalaceous] trees, grapevines, rose bushes, and vegetables.

At the veterinary clinic, 1,808 sheep, 31 goats, 126 cattle, and 42,000 chickens have been treated for gastric and other diseases, and 1,268 head of sheep and cattle have been vaccinated against gastric disease.

Field Crops

Weather conditions have affected field crops, with wheat production dropping over 55 percent. In al-Buwaydah village, farmers have been forced to sell arable land for cattle grazing.

The average yield of one dunum in al-Ramthah region is expected to be 50 kg, and in other provincial villages up to 85 kg, which is below the annual average.

As for the barley crop, most of the barley farmland in al-Buwaydah and eastern al-Ramthah regions have been sold to cattle breeders as pastureland because of meager rainfall, bearing in mind that most of the barley farmland is located in these regions. In western al-Ramthah and the province's villages, the average yield of one dunum may range between 100 and 180 kg, while the lentil yield is between 50 and 100 kg.

In the field of forestation, due to the prevalent weather conditions and two days of strong wind last month, most of the trees have been affected and large quantities of blossoms and fruit have been lost, as was evident with olive trees. As for grape and almond trees, some of them did not bear fruit.

Artisan Wells

Last month, farmers who have wells planted summer vegetables, especially cucumbers. As for fruit trees, farmers are taking care of their plants through weeding, irrigation, and blight control, particularly with aphids on almond, pomegranate, and other trees.

Director al-Khaza'ilah said that the total livestock slaughtered last month was 1,874 sheep, 41 goats, 5 cattle, and 130 camels.

Veterinary Quarantine

The veterinary quarantine at al-Ramthah border conducts the necessary testing on incoming animals and collects tariffs. It has received 294,459 head of sheep and

26,013 head of goat in transit, and collected 7,799 dinars in fees. Quarantine and agricultural marketing fees amounted to 10,000 dinars.

As for summer grains, the total area of farmland in the province is divided as follows: 66 dunums of chickpeas; 1,950 dunums of sesame seed; 380 dunums of broom-corn; and 100 dunums of tobacco in the village of 'Amrawah.

Impact of Drought on Industry, Villages

Industrial Production Affected

91AE0552A Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
11 Jul 91 p 3

[Article by Fares Sharaan and Sandra Khouri, Petra: "Insufficient Water Upsets Sahab Factories' Production"]

[Text] Amman—The Water Authority of Jordan's (WAJ) current water distribution programme is adversely affecting the work of the Sahab Industrial City, near Amman, and upsetting production programmes of most of the factories, according to industrialists and officials.

For nearly one month now, the factories at the industrial city, many of which need a great amount of water to operate, have not received the bare minimum of water requirements due to poor water pumping during the summer season, said Engineer Fawzi Khuri, who is responsible for the maintenance and operation sections at the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC).

Water supplied to the factories in the industrial city is pumped at the average rate of 2,000 cubic metres a day on Sundays and 300 cubic metres on Thursdays, which is 330 cubic metres a day. The city's real water needs are estimated at between 600 and 700 cubic metres a day, Mr. Khuri said.

"The present water supplies are 25 percent less than the previous years at a time when the needs of the factories are growing progressively since most of those that were operating at half capacity will soon start operating at full capacity to increase exports," Mr. Khuri said.

Factory owners told Petra that the decline in the amount of water reaching the industrial city was bound to have a negative impact on the national economy at a time when the overall amount of water needed accounts for only five percent of the country's total consumption.

Ibrahim Abu-Zayd, one of the factory owners who is also general director of a ceramics plant, said that ceramics production depended to a great extent on water, of which the factory consumes some 25 cubic metres a day.

'Azzam al-Tal, another businessman who runs a food processing plant, told Petra that his factory requires up to 120 cubic metres of water if the amount received is

less; the production cost increases as water has to be purchased at high cost, he said.

JIEC Director General Fayiz Suhayma expressed fear that the water problem would have very serious consequences on the investment process in the industrial city of Sahab at a time when the city's factories are gearing up to double their production, especially the pharmaceutical and food industries which have already resumed exporting to the Gulf countries.

Nearly 205 factories employing 8,000 workers are experiencing the water crisis, he said. According to Dr. Suhayma, many of these industries—like those producing medicine, food, ceramics and textiles—require great amounts of water supplies.

Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Mu'tazz al-Balbisi told Petra that the decline in the amount of water pumped to the industrial city was a result of an increase in people's water consumption in the summer season.

Mr. Balbisi made it clear that his department could do nothing about the distribution programme during the summer season, especially because of the growing needs of people and in the absence of new water resources.

However, Mr. Balbisi said that the WAJ has now made plans to increase the amounts of water supplies to the Amman region in the coming week after water starts being supplied by the Walah River, south of Madaba. At present, he said, WAJ is conducting experimental water pumping from al-Walah.

Deteriorating Conditions

91AE0552B Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
21 Jul 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—The water shortage in the Kingdom is becoming more acute this summer because of the limited amounts of available underground water reserves and to the increase in consumption in the hot season, especially with the presence of large numbers of Jordanian expatriates spending the holiday in the country.

A report by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday focused attention on the water shortages in the Irbid Governorate, 'only 10 days after a report about the complaints of factory owners at the Sahab industrial city near Amman, who complained about the shortage of water which they said was detrimental to production.

Some of the villages in the Irbid Governorate have had no water supplies for the past three months and the Water Authority is struggling to deal with the situation, Petra reported.

The village of Tibnah, near Irbid, is one of these "dry" villages and, according to Irbid Water Authority Director Ibrahim al-Rawashdah, lack of supply was due

to work that was going on a road linking the village with Zabyah, another village in the area.

Mr. Rawashdah admitted that the villagers had no water supply for three months but said that his teams have now succeeded in resuming the water supply to the village.

Water Authority sources said that the insufficient water-fall in the country over the past two years, coupled with increased water consumption and the presence of additional numbers of people in Jordan during the summer, are making its teams' task more difficult.

Furthermore, excessive water consumption on the part of certain groups of people in different areas of the country make it difficult for the Water Authority to maintain the water distribution programme to various population centres.

According to Petra, the area is suffering from an acute water shortage unprecedented in its history. The Water Authority told Petra that the scattered homes in the villages, the extra length of the water pipelines needed and the selfishness of certain groups which continue to consume more water than they need are adding to the difficulties.

Villages like Thunaybah, 'Amrawah, Shajarah and al-Turrah in the al-Ramtha District have made persistent complaints to the Water Authority, demanding longer hours of water pumping to their area, Petra reported.

Al-Ramtha District Governor Salti Nassar said that the shortage of water in the villages is worsening partly due to the loss of underground water because the water network is old and rusty.

Agreement was reached with the Water Authority recently to replace the old network with a new six-kilometre long system, a project which will be carried out in the coming three weeks.

The Water Authority announced at the start of July that it would be conducting trial water pumping from Wala Springs, near the town of Madaba, in a bid to provide additional water for domestic consumption during the summer season.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation had said that the Amman Governorate alone consumes up to 210,000 cubic metres of water daily. That amount was expected to rise to 230,000 cubic metres a day during the summer, according to the ministry.

Japanese Government Aid Agency To Open Office
91AE0533B Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
3 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Nidal M. Ibrahim]

[Text] Amman—A Japanese government agency whose main task is assisting the development of economies of

Third World countries will officially open an office here Wednesday, according to an official of the agency.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) hopes that the opening of its new office in Amman will promote better relations and a deeper mutual understanding between Jordan and Japan, said Mr. Kiyoushi Hirakawa, resident representative of the JICA Jordan Office.

"Because of the exchange of people from Japan and Jordan, we can know each other more," Mr. Hirakawa said.

The office will coordinate and help implement a variety of government-based technical cooperation programmes, ranging from technological transfers to conducting studies for the Jordanian Government, Mr. Hirakawa said.

Although JICA has had a presence in Jordan for some time now, the opening of the Amman office further entrenches the agency as a major contributor and assistant to the Jordanian economy, Mr. Hirakawa added.

The values of JICA programmes to Jordan in 1988 and 1989 were \$8.4 million and \$6.8 million respectively, according to Mr. Hirakawa. Final figures for 1990 were not available, he said.

The amount of assistance JICA provides to Jordan depends on the number of requests the government submits to the agency, Mr. Hirakawa said.

"We are not allocating a specific budget to Jordan, but requests for aid are evaluated on a project to project basis," Mr. Hirakawa added.

Requests for assistance from JICA have and will continue to be conducted through official channels at the Japanese Embassy, Mr. Hirakawa said. The JICA office in Amman will serve to further coordinate requests and provide information about the organisation's activities.

Among the programmes the new office will be responsible for the Technical Training Programme, Expert Dispatch Programme, Provision of Equipment for Technical Cooperation, Project-Type Technical Cooperation, Development Studies, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and Disaster Relief Aid and Cooperation.

Before the Gulf war, the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers Programme had 27 volunteers, mostly university graduates, in Jordan, Mr. Hirakawa said. Despite their evacuation during the crisis and the war, the volunteers have all since returned, he said. In addition, one new volunteer joined and four more are scheduled to arrive in Jordan in mid-July.

Volunteers have applied their skills in various organisations around Amman, including positions at area hospitals and at the Jordanian University, Mr. Hirakawa said.

Tribal Law To Be Abolished Soon*91AE0494A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
6 Jul 91 p 5*

[Article: "Jordanian Government Considers Abolishing Tribal Law"]

[Text] It is all but confirmed that tribal law will be abolished in Jordan within the next few days.

Abolishing tribal law, which has continued in Jordan for more than 24 years, has become a popular demand since the latter part of 1988, when Madar Badran's government pledged to the elected Chamber of Deputies to abolish tribal law, work to eliminate its influence, and to rectify its consequences in terms of political detainees and those separated from their jobs on the basis of laws promulgated by military tribal courts.

However, Madar Badran's first and second governments did not keep these promises, although certain subsidiary accomplishments were achieved in this regard, such as restoring certain jobs to persons who were separated for political reasons, and releasing some of those sentenced in political cases who had completed two-thirds of their sentences. Tribal law has continued despite demands that it be abolished on every occasion, to the extent that not abolishing tribal law, as Madar Badran had promised, has opened the doors wide for attacks on the credibility of that prime minister's pledges. His government has become a target for attacks from several political quarters and orientations, all of which want to settle accounts with the authorities through attacking Madar Badran's government.

Successive Jordanian governments—in the context of a well-known tradition—have gradually identified themselves with a measure that they propose to adopt for the Jordanian citizen, which receives wide approval through its advantages of being sincerely expressed and presented soothingly to the citizen. These measures include, for example, abolishing tribal law, reducing prices, or some other issue directly touching the lives of a broad sector of citizens.

Madar Badran's previous government made another promise, and carried it out to some extent. It pertained to the new stage of democratic life. Perhaps it was content with that, and disregarded its other pledge to abolish tribal law or, at least, this is the rumor with regard to its failure to carry out its decisive pledge to abolish tribal law.

However, this simplification avoids—to a considerable extent—the truth of the matter, the philosophy of the government, and the change of cabinets in Jordan. Objective circumstances and, to a considerable degree, subjective circumstances as well, govern implementation of governmental policies in Jordan.

Accordingly, one could say that abolishing tribal law at a previous time was not in harmony with the political circumstances in Jordan at that particular time. This

caused Madar Badran to renege on abolishing it. However, this interpretation cannot be accepted at this stage of democratic life in Jordan. Therefore, the pluralistic system cannot be divided or diminished. As for true pluralism, and integrated civil life, the matter is no more than governmental disparagement of the past.

The government of Tahir al-Masri raised a widespread clamor in the Jordanian political street when the statement was made that it was a negotiating government preparing for the stage of peaceful solution, and that it was a transitional government prepared for the political circumstances to hold unilateral talks with Israel, etc. This will oblige the cabinet to give the Jordanian political man in the street a noteworthy accomplishment for every citizen, which, of course, is to abolish tribal law.

This will leave a positive feeling that Tahir al-Masri's government began its term with a great accomplishment, which was one of the greatest aspirations that the people and their political forces wanted to achieve.

The authorities, for their part, are very anxious to give the citizen a sense that the democracy that was promised is a sound, not faulty, democracy, that it is now in effect, and that the government and the authorities both feel the pulse of the street and are extremely responsive to it, if circumstances will permit. Abolishing tribal law in Jordan is not considered an accomplishment for Tahir al-Masri's government alone, but rather, for Madar Badran's pledge to the Chamber of Deputies two years ago, while categorically denying all mention that the government has tried to bribe the people by acting as a proxy for Madar Badran's government, which had made the pledge but then reneged.

It remains to be said that political circumstances are the basis for decisions and actions in Jordan. They are the basic indicator of developments in this country.

New Private University To Open in Amman*91AE0533A Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
3 Jul 91 p 4*

[Article by Serene Halasa]

[Text] Amman—A new university is scheduled to open in Amman in the coming 1991-1992 academic year.

The Philadelphia University will concentrate on a new educational philosophy which believes that university education should transcend the stage of merely supplying knowledge to expanding the learning faculties and scopes in a person's mind. Mrs. Layla Sharaf, a member of the university's board of trustees, said at a press conference on Tuesday.

Mrs. Sharaf, a member of the Upper House of Parliament, also said that the philosophy adopted by the Philadelphia University would aim at enabling students

to develop a continued self-education process by promoting their personalities in all aspects of life, especially scientifically, spiritually, morally and creatively.

"We encourage our students to participate in discussions and to give their opinions freely, while respecting the other's point of view," Mrs. Sharaf said. "This is the basis of a true democracy, and should be taught in schools and universities," she added.

The new facility is a privately-owned university, with a JD [Jordanian Dinars] 1.3 million capital coming from private donations and long-term banking loans. Although the cost of registration has not yet been decided, Mrs. Sharaf said that it might range between 1,800 and 2,500 Jordanian Dinars.

According to Mrs. Sharaf, the university could accommodate between 800 and 1,000 students. The university will only accept a maximum of 500 students per semester in order to maintain "a good standard of education at the university."

During the press conference, Mrs. Sharaf also pledged to encourage student clubs and athletics in an effort to strengthen and encourage extra curricular activities.

"The Jordanian citizen is known to have special characteristics and that is why we should work at promoting our country so that it becomes the haven of culture and education in the Middle East," Mrs. Sharaf added.

The university's acceptance policy will be determined by laws set by the Higher Council for Education. Mrs. Sharaf stressed that a student's acceptance would not only take into account the high school examination (tawjihi) grade, but will be based on other considerations too, such as the grades of the last three years in school.

"I don't think it is fair to base our acceptance on one grade only, we should take other elements into consideration such as personal circumstances, examination pressure and other matters," Mrs. Sharaf said. "That is why we will sometimes conduct interviews with our students to see if they have any potential that should be looked into."

The university will offer the following courses: communications engineering, electrical engineering, computer engineering, computer sciences, computer information systems programme, economics, accounting, money and banking, business administration, translation, functional English, journalistic English and administrative, trade and economic English.

Writer Urges New Water Policy

91AE0470B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
13 Jun 91 p 4

[Article by Dr. Usamah al-Mudallal]

[Text] First, I do not wish to enter into the details of recent treatments by experts and pertinent agencies

regarding water resources, amounts, needs, etc. Many have made contributions to these topics, which is no small wonder, given that water is a very important, vital matter for this country and must be a top priority. However, my question is:

Do we in Jordan currently have a water policy that is upgraded and changed from time to time based on water data, indicators, and variables? Is this water policy, if it exists, part of a strategy that is integrated with agricultural, municipal, and other environmental frameworks? Does the water policy take into account neighboring countries, given that water, especially ground water, neither recognizes nor stops at political boundaries?

The answer to these questions, ascertainment of the data implied by that answer, and commensurate action provide a basis and a plan according to which any country can proceed in providing for its agricultural, industrial, and population growth. Before that, other details must be taken into account, such as elements of the hydrologic cycle, including total annual rainfall, the amount of rainfall that reaches underground water tables, the flow (floods) of rivers and wadis [streams], the average amount of annual evaporation, etc. The following is a summary of a scientific framework, on which a virtual consensus exists, for treating the problems which we face in providing water for all purposes:

1. The manner of conserving our ground and surface water reserves.
2. An increase in the amount of water drawn through the discovery of new water resources or the development of existing resources.
3. The formulation of a carefully studied, well-grounded plan for the legal regulation of water uses for all consumption purposes.
4. A reduction in the amount of water used in agriculture without reducing the area of irrigated land, and, moreover, efforts to increase the area of irrigated land based on modern techniques, such as increased reliance on drip irrigation, a reduction in canal irrigation, and the application of scientific methods to determining the water requirements of land whose irrigation is sought, so that agricultural lands are irrigated according to their need rather than available water resources [to prevent excessive irrigation].
5. The adoption of healthy, sound methods for re-using waste water (sewage water) by ascertaining the safety and cleanliness of waste water expelled from factories, fuel stations, and sewage treatment plants into rivers and wadis to prevent the pollution of ground and surface water.

It should be noted that waste water, after undergoing regular purification—whether naturally by means of exposed basins, as is the case at the al-Khirbah as-Samra' purification station, or mechanically, as is done at other

purification stations where biological pollutants are controlled and chlorine is added—must be suited to the irrigation of trees and some agricultural crops. If a few additional treatment methods are applied, this water becomes suited to the irrigation of all agricultural crops, and in some areas of the world, it is treated for use as drinking water.

In response to the main question of this article regarding whether Jordan has a water policy: We in Jordan do not currently have a water policy that is part of an integrated strategy to meet the demand for water reserves for drinking, agricultural, and industrial uses in the future. Solutions to remedy the drinking and agricultural water shortage fall under the heading of immediate measures that we should pursue tirelessly when some problem arises.

To clarify, we should distinguish between a water plan, a water policy, and a water strategy. A water plan entails drafting a study regarding the implementation of a specific project in a given area (or a number of areas) to ensure that the project's water needs (drinking, agricultural, or industrial) are met.

The success of such a plan depends on an economic and technical feasibility study of the project in question (before it is implemented) based on a comparison between the amount of available water and the project's water requirements.

A water policy entails a long-range plan involving the study and exploitation of available national water resources to supply all water demands over a long period. A water policy's success depends on the availability of information and precise, continual measurements of hydroclimatic factors (average rainfall, evaporation, flows in wadis and rivers, groundwater replenishment, etc.). This information is analyzed and used as a base to determine proper water requirements and the best methods for implementing national water projects. Thus, importance is attached to measurements and information regarding ground and surface water levels and the ascertainment of the sources and quantities of ground and surface water. If measurements cease or if information is lacking, it is not possible to formulate a water plan. Consequently, the entire water situation is adversely affected and becomes governed by guesses and judgments instead of knowledge and information, at which point the water plan is dead. The destruction of bridges and the erosion of crossings that we have seen recently are due to a lack of water information at the disposal of the designing engineer. Also, the failure of some water projects can be explained by a lack of water information and improvised implementation, such as projects which are commissioned and implemented without first conducting an economic and technical feasibility study.

Thus, a water plan is subsumed by national water policy, and a water policy is more general and comprehensive than a water plan.

A water strategy, by contrast, goes beyond a water policy with respect to the data, indicators, and objectives which it entails. A water strategy must also take into account the water resources and needs of neighboring countries and full coordination to exploit ground and surface water resources common to two or more countries, because it is impossible to implement water projects based on shared resources without this coordination. Thus, we see that any country's water strategy must transcend its political borders. In most cases, this strategy is governed by regulations and laws in addition to hydrologic principles and water needs.

It is fair to say that the Central Water Authority (1960-1966) and, after it, the Natural Resources Authority until 1983, succeeded in implementing many water measurement and water observation programs. The water observation program became very advanced thanks to ongoing training of the necessary cadres and dispatching them to academic and technical courses, which, in the early seventies, led several neighboring countries to send technicians to Jordan for training in water observation methods. Also, a number of Jordanian engineers and specialists were sent to several fraternal countries to train cadres and establish several water observation stations there. If this program of measurements, information collection, and analysis had continued, we would now have a good—perhaps integrated—water plan. However, this program declined considerably, because the Water Authority became overloaded with other administrative and procedural tasks, and there was an increase in pressure created by demands for more services to provide for the pressing needs of water and sewage projects.

To solve our water problems appropriately, the following must be provided as a minimum for formulating a water policy within the framework of an integrated, proven strategy.

First: The formation of a supreme water council to monitor, scrutinize, guide, avoid errors before they occur, formulate priorities regarding water projects, and arrange for the funding needed to implement water projects. Such a council should preferably be headed by the prime minister, who can provide it with moral and executive force, because nothing is more important than water to Jordan. It is a matter of the life and destiny of this country. The members of the council should have experience and knowledge and should be selected based on their knowledge and devotion, not their employment position.

Second: The formulation of a law and regulations based on a study of laws currently in effect. These laws should be unified to close all loopholes in them, which stem from the fact that they were formulated more than 30 years ago but have been renewed and amended subsequently, so that their goals and purposes have multiplied, creating a situation in which more than one law applies to a single relevant domain, which in turn has created a great deal of confusion and indecisiveness.

Among the most important loopholes in these laws is their lack of a deterrent, which encourages violations.

Third: The restructuring of the Water Resources and Irrigation Ministry in keeping with these developments. The ministry should make efforts to carry out its tasks based on scientific, practical methods suited to its expanded responsibilities.

The ministry could be divided into three main sections (authorities):

The first would be for planning and research, with responsibility for all types of studies, measurements, planning, and design. It would be the backbone of the implementation of the water plan and tracking its development.

The second section would be for water and sewage, with responsibility for implementing small water and sewage projects; supervising large projects, directly, or through an consultant engineer; and carrying out the daily activities of the water and sewage services, the purification stations, and other operational and procedural needs of the services.

The third section would be for irrigation works. It would be responsible for what the Jordan Valley Authority does in the way of studying and supervising irrigation systems and dams, and providing directives and advice regarding all irrigation works. No agricultural activities would fall within the purview of this section. All agricultural activities and matters would be left to the Agriculture Ministry, with the understanding that there would be full coordination between the two ministries. To confer full efficacy on these three authorities in the Water Resources and Irrigation Ministry, each authority should preferably be headed by a general secretary connected to the minister, or a central agency should be established in the ministry under a single general secretary who would be connected to the minister and who would be assisted by the general directors of these three sections, each of whom would enjoy expanded authorities. This would serve to obviate constrictions in carrying out work or creating a type of centralized authority. The creation of such an organization, or something similar to it, will provide a strong push in the right direction, especially inasmuch as the Water and Irrigation Ministry currently has advanced capabilities and specialist engineers with long experience in the field of water, water resource development, and the implementation of water projects.

In summary, the water situation in Jordan is critical. However, it has not reached the danger point, which is to be avoided. Work should start immediately on preparing an integrated water/agriculture plan, according to which priorities are formulated regarding the construction of earthen and rock barriers on small wadis to optimally exploit flood waters. More importantly, we should realize that we can store between 100 million and 150 million cubic meters annually by building dams on the al-Mawjib, al-Wala, Ma'in, and al-Hasah rivers, and that there is also a possibility of exploiting about 120 million

to 150 million square meters of water annually when the Unity Dam on the Yarmuk River is completed (after the amendment of the agreement ratified with fraternal Syria).

Also, the use of treated waste water can be expanded, and agricultural water consumption can be reduced by adopting modern irrigation methods. All of this is a cause for cautious optimism if we can learn how to formulate and implement a water plan.

Finally, these developments regarding water must be accompanied by constructive developments in agriculture, inasmuch as agricultural progress depends on how much water is available. Consequently, achievements in agriculture, the development of water resources, and the formulation of a water policy must jointly form the correct foundations of this country's water strategy.

Voting Rights Urged for Soldiers

91AE0483B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Jun 91
p 20

["With Life and People" Column by Dr. Musa al-Kilani: "Soldiers Are Citizens Too"]

[Text] When a businessman pays his taxes, the authorities allow him to exercise his right in local council and municipal elections in view of the impact local council resolutions have on his life, livelihood, and future.

When an industrialist pays his dues, the chamber of industry allows him to take part in electing its board members who adopt momentous resolutions that determine the voter's future, his profits and losses, and his industry's growth or decline.

Now that we are almost on the threshold of a new era of founding a Jordanian democracy and strengthening its principles, fundamentals, and pillars, from the new election law bill to teaching democracy as a course at the country's academies, colleges, and public schools, we do not have the right to wonder why the Jordanian soldier is still deprived of his right to vote, given the fact that, compared to a businessman or an industrialist, the soldier pays the highest, the most precious, and the most honorable tax: the tax of blood, life, and soul that he sacrifices in his country's defense.

Do not the people who pay the greatest tax have the right to take part in the election of those who will be entrusted with their children's or brother's welfare after they are gone?

Does not the soldier manning the trenches of honor and dignity have the right to take part in the election of those who will take care of his family and children after him?

How can soldiers who, with their families, make up 27 percent of the total Jordanian population, be excluded from the exercise of a genuine vital right enjoyed by their counterparts in the oldest and greatest of democracies in

the world? Is it not true that American ballot boxes are sent across the ocean from foreign bases to Washington?

Is it not true that some countries have designated a certain percentage of their parliamentary seats for armed forces representatives so that they may take part in the adoption of constitutional and legal decisions that safeguard the rights of the soldier—manning the forward trenches of honor—as a citizen who holds his own views about the parliamentary composition that claims that it seeks to reshape his children's mentality at their schools, seeks to achieve prosperity for his family at home, and seeks to guarantee the safety of his colleagues in their towns and living quarters?

Among the civilizational qualities in every country is the right of the people in all walks of life to take part in the parliamentary election process: soldiers, women, and young people of legal age. People's profound awareness is measured by the degree of their participation in elections.

Do not the European countries with the oldest democratic systems respect the soldier's right to exercise his citizenship by electing his parliamentary representatives? Such esteem goes so far as to spare the soldiers the rigors of election campaigns and the mudslinging out of deference for the barracks of honor in which they are entrenched.

Everyone acknowledges the fact that the entire Jordanian population is more politically aware, more mature and experienced in life, and more culturally advanced for its chronological age.

So why deny the caretakers of 27 percent of the population the right to vote so they can decide the fate of those who have the power to determine their fate?

King Husayn has turned this country into a "model state" to be emulated by all Arab peoples when they decide at some point in the future to build a model nation on their land.

What adds to the charisma of the state Jordan is the fact that it has risen from the ashes of an Arab system charred by programmed laser bombs and emerged in the wake of failed experiments to establish a new Arab system based on the hypotheses of a stable state and on the theories of a leading state.

And here we are at the dawn of the post-charter ratification stage—which will lay out the pillars for building a model state—by enacting a political parties law and a new press law based on freedom of the press, followed by a new election law that we hope will expressly grant soldiers their fundamental right so that they may use their personal identity cards to cast their votes.

Furthermore, we frankly hope that the partisan political powers will abide by the constitutional provisions of keeping their campaigns out of the Jordanian armed forces and refraining from distracting the trench of military honor by their electioneering and wranglings so

that the soldiers may always be aware that they are sacrificing their pure blood to protect the country of all the people, not just some of the people, and to be confident that they are sacrificing their lives to defend the honor of all the people, not some of the people.

The Jordanian soldier is above partisan quarrels, above factional whining, above rhetorical pomposity, and above ideological sycophancy.

Soldiers are citizens too. They have a right to the state and to society. We all admire their courage, we respect their sense of honor, and we acknowledge their valor. They are the strongest pillars of the institution of the throne, the model nation, the ideal state. We all acknowledge their creative civilizational standard, their splendid cultural awareness, their conscious political know-how, and, above all, their most honorable and clean, national, and patriotic record.

LIBYA

Justice Committee Responds to 'Inexact' Amnesty Report

*LD2706222791 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1410 GMT
26 Jun 91*

[Text] Tripoli, 26 Jun (JANA)—The General People's Committee for Justice today issued a communique the text of which follows: Amnesty International released a press communique in Paris on Tuesday 25 June 1991 based on inexact data in connection with human rights in Libya. The General People's Committee for Justice, the quarter in charge of seeing that laws are carried out in the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, while denying the contents of the aforementioned communique, affirms the following:

1. The commitment of the Great Jamahiriya to international conventions and obligations on human rights, and it has reinforced this with the issuance of the Great Green Document on Human Rights in the Era of the Masses, in the summer of 1988.

2. In implementation of the provisions of this document, the Basic People's Congresses have issued two important laws: the first is the law on the strengthening of liberties, and the second provides for the abolition of all laws and legislations in contradiction of human rights.

3. A national committee for human rights has been set up in charge of following up legislation on human rights, and of seeing that they are implemented.

Furthermore, the General People's Committee for Justice would like to remind Amnesty International of the historic initiative of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi, the leader of the Great al-Fatih revolution in demolishing prisons, freeing political prisoners, and abolishing all the restrictions that limit the freedom of the Libyan citizen, and his rights to travel, movement, and residence.

The General People's Committee for Justice would like to affirm its preparedness to cooperate with Amnesty International, and to exchange data with it to obtain precise and correct data on the extent of the commitment of the concerned Libyan quarters to the principles of human rights.

MAURITANIA

ADB President Comments on Economic Development Aid

91AA0501B Nouakchott CHAAB in French
15 Jun 91 p 7

[Report on press conference by Babacar N'Diaye, president of the African Development Bank, in Nouakchott on 12 June 1991]

[Excerpt] Babacar N'Diaye, president of the African Development Bank [ADB], left Nouakchott on Wednesday evening following a three-day working visit to our country.

During his stay in Nouakchott, he had an interview with Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, president of the CMSN [Military Committee for National Salvation] and chief of state, and also held talks with numerous national officials, including the minister of planning.

Babacar N'Diaye also inspected projects being financed completely or partially by his institution in Mauritania, and he visited Nouadhibou and Zouerate, where he was able to see the tremendous progress made by our country in the areas of fish exploitation and processing, industry, mineral extraction, and port facilities.

Babacar N'Diaye was seen off by Minister of Planning Mouhamedou Ould Michel.

As the head of one of Africa's most important financial institutions—if indeed it is not the most important—Babacar N'Diaye, who is serving his second consecutive term as president of the African Development Bank group, is an expert on financing, an authority in the field, and also a specialist on the African economy. His experience and competence, which earned him his second term and confirm the sacrifices he has made for the African continent, are sure values that he continues to turn to good account on behalf of development and African economic integration. At the conclusion of his recent visit to Mauritania, Babacar N'Diaye answered questions from Mauritanian reporters during a press conference, which he held shortly before his departure. The challenges facing the African economy, economic recovery policies, patterns of development, problems with the mobilization of funds, choices of projects, and intervention by the ADB were the focus of the answers given by the ADB's president.

Here is a summary of the press conference.

"The question of how the some \$19 billion distributed by the ADB have contributed to Africa's economic integration is no doubt pertinent.

"It is difficult to assert that that sum has been devoted entirely to the continent's economic integration. One of the main obstacles facing not only our institution but also a number of other institutions operating on the continent has been the difficulty involved in identifying regional projects.

"It is true that 26 years have now passed, but in the beginning, there were no subregional institutions such as ECOWAS [Economic Community of West African States], the free trade zone, the FADEC [expansion not given], the UMA [Arab Maghreb Union], and so on.

"Regional and subregional structures are essential to the achievement of economic integration, both because of their own activities and because of the role they play in identifying and initiating integration projects, thereby facilitating intervention by an institution such as the ADB. It can be noted that of the \$19 billion in financing that has been made available, \$12 billion have been provided since 1985. That is proof, if proof is needed, of the dynamism breathed into this institution over the past five years, in which it has granted almost twice as much money as it did during the first 20 years of its existence. That amount has been used primarily for sectoral activities, particularly in the fields of agriculture, which received 27 percent of the total, community facilities (water supply, electricity, and so on), which received 22 percent, and infrastructure (20 percent).

"The projects in the area of community facilities include programs for interconnecting electricity transmission systems between states, and in the field of infrastructure, multinational roads have been financed, thus contributing directly to the economic integration of regions by setting up a framework for trade.

"It will now be easier for our institution to focus its intervention on projects contributing to more effective integration because the appropriate economic structures and real political will exist.

"The signing last week of the treaty establishing the African common market constitutes a new turning point on the road to integration."

Regarding the ADB's intervention in Mauritania and the size of that intervention in comparison with certain other countries in the region, Babacar N'Diaye, who expressed his reluctance to make such comparisons, said that in Mauritania, the some \$250 million made available by the ADB—an amount that will soon rise to nearly \$270 million—constitutes significant intervention in a country with fewer than 2 million inhabitants.

In the field of community services, the ADB has financed a potable water supply system in the city of Nouakchott, participated in the project for building a 28-megawatt power plant, and, in the mining area,

contributed to the M'Howadatt project. It has also participated in carrying out projects in the rural sector. Babacar N'Diaye noted that he was happy to say that "for the past three years, the ADB has been participating at a faster rate in the organization of financing to support the Mauritanian economy. From 1972 to 1985, we arranged the supplying of 58 million units of account for Mauritania, and from 1985 to 1990, that amount rose from 58 million to 201 million units of account. Recent times have therefore been characterized by a definite acceleration in the pace of our intervention in Mauritania. That is proof of mutual will on the part of both the institution and Mauritania.

"As far as the number of projects is concerned, we have very few operations here, but the projects targeted are those that will undergird economic development and social progress.

"By focusing our intervention on such support projects, we will be participating more significantly in the stimulation of economic activity in Mauritania." [passage omitted]

Airport Security Project Completed

*91AA0501A Nouakchott CHAAB in French
12 Jun 91 p 2*

[Text] At the Nouakchott air terminal on Monday afternoon, Lieutenant Colonel Dieng Oumar Harouna, a member of the CMSN [Military Committee for National Salvation] and minister of equipment and transportation, and His Excellency Pierre Lafrance, the French ambassador to Mauritania, presided over a ceremony marking the completion of a three-part airport security project financed by the French Cooperation Mission.

The ceremony included an exchange of speeches between the minister of equipment and the French diplomat. In his address, the minister thanked France for implementation of the project.

The minister went on to say: "France, which has already financed the planning and construction of Nouakchott's future international air terminal through the French Cooperation Mission and the Central Fund for Economic Cooperation, has constantly supported our activities in various areas, one important area being infrastructure, and that is a gesture whose value we fully appreciate."

Lt. Col. Dieng Oumar Harouna added that it was in the context of that constant support that he was accepting the new facilities and the changes made to the existing facilities, the result of which will be a considerable improvement in the quality of passenger handling, not only because of the rearranged and more harmonious space, but also in terms of time thanks to acquisition of the Controlix equipment.

Implementation of those projects, through the training of personnel and the acquisition of new equipment, will

make it possible for our facility to meet international standards in airport security, he said, emphasizing that "other projects in the area of aeronautical infrastructure are already identified or in the process of being identified, and we are convinced that France's aid will not fail us when it comes to identifying those projects, planning for them, and carrying them out." Last, the minister took the opportunity to convey the sincere thanks and profound gratitude of the Mauritanian people, the Military Committee for National Salvation, the government, and their leader Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, president of the CMSN and chief of state, to the French diplomat and the head of the French Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Action and, through them, to the French people and government for the valuable help they constantly give us in all areas of economic, social, and cultural development.

In his turn, the French ambassador said that his country would remain always ready to come to Mauritania's assistance whenever the need was felt. He expressed the hope that relations between France and Mauritania would develop further, particularly in the area of infrastructure facilities, which he said constituted an essential sector in a country as vast as ours.

The minister, the French ambassador, and the delegation accompanying them then toured the various parts of the project and heard explanations by Mauritanian officials and French experts concerning the operation of the equipment.

We note that the project, which was carried out with a grant of 15,933,000 ouguiyas from the French Cooperation Mission, consisted of three parts:

1. Repair work on the old air terminal to rearrange and rationalize the layout for arrivals and departures, increase the size of the departure lounges and baggage claim areas, improve ventilation, and repaint the buildings inside and out.
2. The supplying of equipment intended to improve traffic control. This involves a Controlix-D unit for inspecting carry-on and checked baggage. It is a large-capacity unit, with 12 walkie-talkies for police and six manual metal detectors.
3. A training program for instructors. This was conducted by seven French experts last November, with the result that 16 Mauritians from the various military services and security organizations are now in a position to teach one-month courses in which all police officers at the airport will be taught how to use the various kinds of equipment.

Last, we note that the ceremony took place in the presence of many important figures, including in particular the secretary general of the Ministry of Equipment, the director of civil aviation, the deputy director general of national security, the head of the French Cooperation Mission in Mauritania, and the representatives of foreign airlines in Nouakchott.

MOROCCO

Istiqlal Party Plans Demonstrations, Meetings

91AA0551A Rabat L'OPINION in French
17 Jul 91 p 1, 4

[First paragraph is L'OPINION introduction]

[Text] The Istiqlal Party has adopted a detailed plan of action to mobilize the Moroccan people in an effort to preserve the country's territorial integrity. Throughout Morocco, rallies will be held over the next three months in response to challenges from abroad. The first of these rallies will coincide with the commemoration of the Battle of Anoual.

The Istiqlal Party is unchanged in its view that Morocco has achieved its territorial integrity as concerns the return of Sakia El Hamra and Oued Eddahab [Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro], two provinces that have been recovered thanks to the efforts of His Majesty the King and the Moroccan people, the sacrifices made by the Saharawis who fought in various battles against the occupation troops, and the talks His Majesty the King has held with the Spanish authorities on different occasions.

These provinces have been recovered in accordance with international law, as the matter was submitted to the United Nations and the International Court of Justice; their recovery is the outcome of the Green March followed by the Madrid Agreement signed with the administrative authority of that time, as well as the renewed allegiance of the sons of the Sahara and, finally, the elections and referenda that have taken place in the Sahara and across the national territory. For that reason, in the view of the Istiqlal Party, the referendum called for by the United Nations was no longer warranted or relevant.

However, as soon as the United Nations began to enact the provisions setting up the referendum, foreign plots by neocolonialists and Morocco's enemies began to surface in an attempt to influence the outcome of the referendum. This occurred at a time when the large number of separatist leaders returning to the motherland made it apparent that the separatists would lose.

Since the month of May, the Istiqlal Party has drawn up a major program to mobilize the Moroccan people with the aim of winning the fight against the challenges Morocco is facing and securing a definitive victory through the mobilization and vigilance of the people in the face of plots against our country.

At its fifth session which was held on 25 and 26 May, the Party's National Council drew up a program of mobilization that was charted in detail at the 11th session of the Central Committee which met on 6 July.

It was at that time that the Party began to take action to execute the mobilization program.

Under that program, the Party will organize several national events in the various regions of the country aimed at raising the awareness of citizens and mobilizing them in an effort to defend the country's territorial integrity and entity against all foreign challenges.

The first event will take place this week in conjunction with the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the historic battle of Anoual, which was an expression of the people's will to win victory under the leadership of the fighter Mohamed Ben Abdelkrim Khattabi against Spain's occupation troops.

This year, the primary rally will be held in Al Hoceima on Sunday 21 July. Similar rallies will be organized by each Party branch in the different regions of the country.

The Party will hold the second event on 4 August on the anniversary of the Battle of Oued El Makhazine. It will include a primary rally and related rallies in Morocco's different regions.

The third event will be held on 14 August on the anniversary of the anniversary of the return of Oued Eddahab [Rio de Oro], which irreversibly completed Morocco's recovery of the entire Western Sahara.

20 August, the day of the Revolution of the King and the People, will be the occasion for Istiqlal rallies in the different regions of the country.

In the month of September, meetings of the Istiqlal Party's Provincial Councils will take place. October will see the sixth session of the National Council, with which the Party will mark the height of activism and mobilization of all activists to reaffirm the country's territorial integrity.

These events will be crowned by a large rally on 6 November on the 16th anniversary of the Green March, which was conceived and successfully carried out by His Majesty the King—the greatest march that a people has organized in the 20th century in an effort to recover its territories and regain its sovereignty and unity.

All of these events will coincide with major historic dates on which Morocco achieved monumental victories and confirmed its presence and unity at both the national and international levels. On these dates, Morocco forced its enemies to recognize its entity, unity, liberty, and independence.

These historic events are still fresh in the minds of our people.

The Party will use their anniversaries as occasions to mobilize the people in a similar affair in which the obstinacy of colonialism continues to block our efforts to complete our territorial integrity. Our people are ready to campaign until victory is achieved in ending what is known as the Sahara affair—with or without a referendum—as well as plots contrived by the enemies of Morocco and its territorial integrity.

The Istiqlal Party is steadfast in its continuing activism in favor of independence and unity and in its commitment to all the sons of this country, martyred as they fought to defend unity and independence.

Investments Drop 14 Percent First Four Months

91AA0507A Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE
in French 28 Jun 91 p 21

[Text] Based on the number of approved dossiers, investment intentions declined by 14 percent during the first four months of the year. That drop, which had been expected following the start of the Gulf war, affected the various sectors.

In all, approved dossiers represented a total of 2.7 billion DH [dirhams], compared to DH3.1 billion during the first four months of last year. Of that total, foreign investment accounted for DH405 million (down 24 percent).

Below is a review of the change in approved investments during April based on information supplied to us by the Industry Administration.

Dossiers Approved: 249

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry granted its certificate of conformity to 249 dossiers in April 1991 (73 new applications and 176 expansions), thus registering one project less than in March and one more than during the same month last year.

Total investment was on the order of DH736 million, representing a 3-percent increase over the previous month and a 22-percent drop in comparison with the same month last year.

That investment will require foreign exchange expenditures totaling DH474 million.

The result will be the creation of 7,916 jobs. Of the businesses started in April, 62 percent intend to export all or part of their production.

As far as the financing of those projects is concerned, 45 percent will be self-financed, bank loans will provide 43 percent, and suppliers' credit and leasing will account for 6 percent each.

Participation by Moroccan private promoters accounts for the bulk of the investment at 83 percent. Foreign promoters account for 16 percent, and the remainder (1 percent) is being provided by the public sector.

The average investment per dossier totals DH29 million for the creation of 32 jobs requiring DH113,000 each.

Change in Approved Investments (January-April)

Sector	Jobs			Investments (1,000's of DH)		
	1990	1991	Change (%)	1990	1991	Change (%)
Food processing	1,723	1,754	+2	453,513	376,828	-17
Textiles and leather	15,584	17,417	+12	1,079,382	981,600	-9
Chemicals and paracheicals	4,523	4,217	-7	747,314	736,923	-1
Metals and mechanical industries	1,836	1,432	-22	269,588	200,593	-26
Electrical and electronic industries	973	495	-49	88,661	76,524	-14
Enterprises of an industrial nature	2,798	1,976	-29	488,091	306,573	-37
Industry-related service enterprises	257	178	-31	15,796	15,112	-4
Total	27,694	27,469	-1	3,142,345	2,694,153	-14

Source: Industry Administration.

Businesses Started

The businesses that were started in April were concerned mainly with textiles and leather (46 percent of the total approved investments), chemicals and paracheicals (25 percent), and food processing (15 percent).

As usual, the regional distribution of the projects is characterized by the predominance of Casablanca (36 percent of all the investments combined), followed by Sale and Agadir.

Foreign investments initiated in April came to DH115 million, or 16 percent of the total. Of the foreign investments, 30 percent are French and 23 percent are British.

Of the 249 dossiers filed in April, 136 (58 new projects and 78 expansions) were concerned with PMI [small and medium-size industries], representing 55 percent of the total.

Those projects will result in the creation of 3,890 jobs, or 49 percent of the total created, and will require an investment on the order of DH186 million, including DH85 million (25 percent of the total investment) in foreign exchange.

The average investment per dossier in the case of the PMI comes to DH1.3 million, and the average cost per job is DH47,000.

Commentary Considers Sahara Part of Colonial Struggle

91AA0551B Rabat *L'OPINION* in French 18 Jul 91 p 1

[Editorial by Mohamed Idriss Kaitouni: "The Will To Triumph"]

[Text] There is great importance and profound meaning in the Istiqlal Party's commemoration this year of the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Anoual, the dominant theme of which will be "the mobilization of the Moroccan people behind His Majesty King Hassan II, may God bestow glory upon him, in reponse to the challenges posed by the international referendum in Sakiet Al Hamra and Oued Eddahab [Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro]."

It is, indeed, the continuation of a struggle—the one fought against colonialism in all its forms to preserve independence and attain territorial integrity, two fundamental objectives of the highest priority to the Moroccan people who are not afraid to make sacrifices in order to achieve them.

The Battle of Anoual sought to liberate the northern zone, at that time under Spanish occupation, and to join it with the other zones so as to transform Morocco into an independent, sovereign, unified, and free country. Our modern-day struggle to confirm the Moroccan identity of Sakiet Al Hamra and Oued Eddahab falls within the same framework—that of preserving independence and territorial integrity—and is dependent upon the mobilization of the people behind His Majesty the King in a climate of perfect symbiosis.

Moreover, that is Morocco's basic and decisive asset in this battle. The best guarantees of final victory are the clarity of the objective, the symbiosis between the king and the people, the permanent and unanimous mobilization of people, the spirit of sacrifice, and the will to achieve victory. Whenever Morocco rises to meet a challenge or responds to a plot, it is armed with its determination and its mobilization to thwart plots and win the battle.

Today, thanks to this very mobilization that enabled it to secure independence, it will be victorious and will meet the challenges that have been put to it in connection with

the international referendum in the Sahara. The outcome of the referendum, which will inevitably confirm the Moroccan identity of these provinces, is already a source of concern to our detractors and the enemies of our territorial integrity.

The Moroccan people value their inalienable rights and remain mobilized to defend their territorial integrity and the foundations of their identity as a free and independent Muslim country.

Mrs Serfaty Describes Tazmamart Prison Conditions

91AA0565 Paris *LE MONDE* in French
27 Jul 91 pp 1,4

[Article by Christine Daure-Serfaty: "The Living Dead of Tazmamart; Testimony of the Wife of Abraham Serfaty, Moroccan Political Prisoner Since 1974"]

[Text] That was 10 years ago; I had just celebrated the 10th of May holiday; for the first time in my life, I was going to the Elysee palace to meet with an adviser to the president and talk about human rights in Morocco; I had been talking about it for 10 years already, but in vain: I was asking questions amidst near total silence and indifference.¹

"Where are the Oufkir children and their mother? Where are those who were convicted at the trials that followed the coups of 1971 and 1972? They were serving their sentences at the Kenitra jail; they are no longer there; where are they?" I was not asking where Abraham Serfaty and his friends were; I knew it: arrested in 1974, they had spent 15 months "in custody" at the clandestine center of Derb Moulay Cherif, handcuffed, blindfolded, tortured to the point of still suffering from aftereffects today, in total isolation; then they had been judged, sentenced to centuries in jail for "attempt against the internal security of the State," i.e., for criticizing the monarchy—not for bombings, not for West Sahara—then transferred to the Kenitra central jail where eight of them—including Abraham—still remain 17 years later.

At the Elysee palace, therefore, 10 years ago, I met with a young adviser in shirtsleeves—it was a very hot day—high up under the roof: Hubert Vedrine. I told him what we had just learned: Tazmamart, a locality in the Atlas mountains from which the first clandestine letters had just reached France. [sentence as published] They were telling the story: these men, judged by Moroccan justice—in the name of the king—entered dark cells in August 1973; a 10-cm hole in the ceiling, under the double roof, provides a lighter spot; they never get out; they have a concrete platform to sleep on, two blankets, a hole without water near the door for toilets; the guards are not in the building, they come every day with flashlights and leave some food and a pot of water near the door.

At the time—that is in 1981—eight were already dead, the others were struggling to survive and preserve their human dignity. The letters said so: they were forcing themselves to walk in the darkness of their cells, 3X2 meters, several hours every day; they were reciting the Koran to implore God and so as not to founder; they were cutting their nails with their teeth, their hair by rubbing it against the edges of the walls; they appealed to their families, to the institutions of their country, to international public opinion, to us. Most of them had finished serving their sentences, imposed by Moroccan justice, a long time ago.

I left the Elysees palace comforted, relieved; Hubert Vedrine had looked stupefied, shocked; he did not know: the living dead of Tazmamart were now in good hands, in the hands of the socialist government....

I also listened to the Cancun speech, addressed to the freedom fighters, heard in all prisons, and I had hope for Kenitra....

In 1986, with Danielle Mitterrand's help, I was allowed to marry Abraham Serfaty in jail, and to see him in the prison visiting room, like the other prisoners' families.

In 1987, the Oufkir children escaped, alone, by digging the ground with their hands. They talked; now, 19 years later, these unfortunates are allowed to live decently in Morocco, as long as they do not leave the country and keep quiet.

Two small victories, that's all.

Ten years already. Thirty of them, one-half, have died in the Tazmamart jail; and what death! Hubert Vedrine is general secretary at the Elysee palace, where the president decides on France's foreign policy.

In 1989, we celebrated the bicentennial of the French revolution and the Proclamation of Human Rights.

I Go On

Many Socialists, not to mention the others, go to Mamounia as guests of the sovereign.

In September 1990, Gilles Perrault described Kenitra and Tazmamart. He also mentioned Mamounia: 300,000 copies of his books were sold. Hubert Vedrine is no longer the only one to know.

In June, Moumen Diouri was expelled as a matter of absolute urgency, so everything could go on: as in the poem, businessmen are doing business; our minister of foreign affairs "maintains France's rank"; in Kenitra the 17th year is about to end; in Tazmamart a few voices are calling us for help. Not many now. Among them, those of three Frenchmen, the Bourequat brothers, who disappeared 19 years ago.

I have talked about Tazmamart: I can no longer go back to Morocco to see the man I married at the central jail five years ago; from now on, he will receive no visits.

I, too, go on.

Footnote

1. At the time, and since 1972, information was provided by the committees against repression in Morocco, 14, rue de Nanteuil, 75015 Paris.

SAUDI ARABIA

Requirements for Gulf Security Discussed

91AE0473B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
16 Jun 91 p 15

[Article by Ghazi al-Qusaybi: "Gulf Security, Four Rings"]

[Text] Friends of the Gulf, and enemies too, are to be excused for becoming perplexed listening to Gulf statements that contradict one another with respect to Gulf security. Some statements contradicted actions that had actually been taken. Whereas the statement of one Gulf official would assert that Gulf security was the responsibility of its inhabitants, a second statement would stress the Arab role in Gulf security. A third statement would emphasize the importance of a regional force in security, while a fourth statement would speak about the importance of international guarantees. In this flood of conflicting statements, no specific measure has come to light except for Kuwait's request that an American battalion remain in its territory for several months and the sudden withdrawal of Egyptian forces from Kuwait.

In fact, there is no contradiction, neither between the statements themselves, nor between statements and actions. The various statements indicate differing, but nonetheless linked, rings, which in the end represent Gulf security. Since the end result has not yet been achieved, it is premature to speak of actions conflicting with statements.

The first ring in Gulf security is the internal ring, by which we mean military and security conditions within each Gulf state and the military and security relations between Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. This is undoubtedly the most important and critical ring. If internal security degrades, or security relations between GCC countries deteriorate, this would mean that the battle for Gulf security had ended before it began.

It is solely towards this ring that statements emphasizing that Gulf security is the sole responsibility of its inhabitants are directed.

The second ring of Gulf security is the Arab ring. The first Kuwaiti crisis of 1961, and the second, and God willing the last, of 1991, confirmed that the Arab element is effective and influential in ensuring Gulf security. The Damascus Declaration serves to confirm this fact and that the Gulf countries have absorbed it.

From this perspective, the Egyptian withdrawal should not be viewed as nullifying the Arab role in Gulf security. Indeed, it may be more precisely considered to hasten the specific arrangements to systematize such a role.

Then there is the third ring, the role of regional non-Arab powers, beginning with Iran and Turkey and extending to such countries as India and Pakistan, which while more distant geographically, make their impact felt in the Gulf arena. The recent crisis has confirmed that regional countries have an undeniably large role in Gulf security. It is unarguable that had it not been for the positive stance taken by Iran and Turkey in the Kuwaiti occupation crisis, the situation would have become extremely seriously complicated. It is this ring, specifically, that continues to need much discussion and negotiation. Indications of a serious discussion are beginning to show on the horizon.

The remaining fourth ring is the role of the superpowers. To consider this ring to be purely American is to simplify the facts. While acknowledging that the United States led the coalition that restored Kuwait, we must also acknowledge that had it not been for the genuine international cooperation embodied in United Nations resolutions, as well as the inclusion of 30 nations in the military forces that liberated Kuwait, the United States would not have been able to play the role it did.

In spite of the temporary measure Kuwait was compelled to take and which was approved by the United States, it is clear that neither the Gulf countries nor the United States wish to have an American ground force presence in the Gulf (the seas are open to all nations having fleets!). Unanimity between the five permanent members was the most important element enabling the Security Council to issue its resolutions to end the occupation of Kuwait, and the continuance of this unanimity is the greatest guarantee of Gulf security.

What remains is for me to direct some sincere advice to friends of the Gulf. It is not my place to give advice to its enemies! My advice is that they practice a bit of patience until the final outlines of Gulf security become clearer. Friends should remember that haste in decision-making is not one of the traits of Gulf people, even when the matter under discussion involves their security.

Saudi-Soviet Bank Established in Kazakhstan

91AE0499A Jeddah ARAB NEWS in English 10 Jul 91
p 1

[Article by Khalid Nazir: "Saudi-Soviet Bank Set Up"]

[Text] Jeddah, 9 July—A Saudi-Soviet bank has started operations in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan Republic of the Soviet Union in the first joint venture of its kind between the two countries which restored diplomatic relations last year after a break of 52 years.

The bank is owned on the Saudi side by the Jeddah-based Dallah Group of Companies and on the Soviet side by the government of Kazakhstan.

The Dallah Group, owners of the Barakah group of banks, is also discussing the establishment of an Islamic bank in Moscow. The venture has already been approved in principle by the Soviet authorities, according to the group. The bank is expected to become operational sometime next year.

With a capital of \$150 million, divided equally between the two sides, the al-Barakah-Kazakhstan Bank is to finance commercial projects in the republic, without interest provided that profits and losses be shared by the bank and the project owners. The bank will also finance partnership companies and joint establishments in the republic.

The bank, according to the Soviet Agency Press (SAP), is considering the financing of the Alma-Ata International Airport and the reconstruction of the "Grand Silk Route," by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The route has historic significance as it was used by Arab traders to reach China for silk. The Kazakhstan Parliament last week adopted a plan to sell off virtually all government-owned housing, shops and small enterprises in the coming months. The plan also approved the selling of shares and making investments by foreigners tax-free.

Moscow has been wooing the Saudi capital to develop the Soviet Union's Muslim populated republic of Azerbaijan, Turkmenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizia and Tajikistan, which have a total population of over 70 million.

Kazakhstan is one of the richest southern republics with oilfields in the west and minerals in the north. SAP reported that the bank is also considering the financing of oil drilling and refining projects in Kazakhstan.

The founder of the group, Salih Kamil, has on individual basis invested and financed various projects, including endowments at some of the southern state universities. Dallah Group has over 330 companies around the world with an investment of \$3 billion.

Military Base Planned for Empty Quarter

91P40357A London AL-HAWADITH
in Arabic 28 Jun 91 p 25

[Text] Informed defense sources indicate that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia intends to build a comprehensive military base that is considered to be one of the largest in the world.

These sources add that the area of the base, according to construction plans, will be 900 square km. It will be located in the Empty Quarter, 550 km south of Riyadh. The base will include a residential area for 20,000 individuals; a large airport with an area of 25 sq km;

three runways, each 4 km in length; warehouses, hangars, and hardened aircraft shelters.

Construction of the base is expected to start next year. Saudi Arabia has a number of similar bases that proved to be effective and useful during the battle to liberate Kuwait. Coalition military leaders attested to the efficiency of these bases.

Water Used in Fish Industry, Irrigation

91AE0436A Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic
20 May 91 p 6

[Article by Muhammad al-Rashid: "Dr. Fahd Balghunaym, Agriculture Undersecretary for Fish Resources, Tells AL-RIYAD: Kingdom's Fish Products Marketed in Europe and United States; Centers Will Be Opened Shortly in Daba' and on Eastern Coast; 35 Licensed Fish Projects, of Which 23 Are in Operation Currently"]

[Text] Fish resources are a living, naturally-renewable wealth and a store marked by propagation and death. The government, represented in the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, has specialized in this livestock resource and has planned to exploit it ideally in order to acquire the biggest yield without harming its natural stores. The government established a fish resources research section more than 26 years ago to evaluate and survey fish resources along the kingdom's coastline which stretches for nearly 2,300 km and whose continental shelf covers nearly 123,000 km square. Dr. Fahd Balghunaym, undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water for fish resources, has pointed this out to AL-RIYAD, saying that the system for fishing, exploiting, and preserving aquatic resources in the kingdom's territorial waters has been issued by a cabinet decree which underlines the Ministry of Agriculture's important role in supervising and organizing all fishing and diving activities and in adopting all steps likely to develop and enhance the exploitation and preservation of aquatic life in these waters.

Dr. Balghunaym has asserted that the ministry's fish resources section supervises the aquatic resources research centers in each of Jeddah and al-Qutayf and the fish wealth service branches in al-Jubayl, Jizan, and Amlaj, in addition to a new branch which will be opened shortly, God willing, in the town of Daba'. These centers and branches will issue all permits for fishing and conducting research connected with fish reserves, survey fish production, and control environmental influences which accompany the development processes and affect the kingdom's shores. They will also curtail as much as possible damage done to the environment. These centers and branches will also issue diving permits because the Red Sea is one of the world's prettiest seas with its rare resources and unique and varied living creatures. This has made it the focus of attention of many professional divers and underwater photographers. In past times, fishing was done along the kingdom's coastline with

primitive means and equipment. The ministry has conducted numerous surveys to learn about the fishermen's communities and to develop their means and methods, thus contributing to enhancing the capability of professional fishermen who have become able to use modern navigation and fishing equipment, to search for fish, and to preserve their sea catch so as to maintain its quality and freshness.

Dr. Balghunaym added that the ministry, using research ships and boats equipped for the purpose, has conducted field surveys and experiments and exploratory trips in the kingdom's territorial waters to determine the most important varieties of commercial fish, the sites where they can be caught, and the best equipment and methods to catch them. More than 180 varieties of fish and shrimp have been recorded in the kingdom's waters. Moreover, new fishing areas have been discovered and fishermen have been guided to them. Some fishermen have been trained on the use of naval fishing maps prepared by this ministry to lead professional fishermen and investors to locations rich with fish and shrimp resources.

The government of the custodian of the two holy mosques has exerted tangible efforts through development plans which have contributed to establishing a strategy that aims to develop, enhance, and preserve the fish resources sector by providing it with the mainstays it needs and by bolstering it constantly. The Ministry of Agriculture and Water has exerted and continues to exert tangible efforts to enhance this sector. The kingdom's fish production rose by nearly 130 percent in the period from 1985 to 1988. In the same period, there was an increase of nearly 95 percent in the number of fishermen and fishing workers. As for fishing means, there was an increase of nearly 120 percent in the same period. The kingdom's marine life production in 1988-89 amounted to nearly 50,000 tons. The number of fishermen and fishing workers rose to 11,000 and fishing means to nearly 4,500.

This development in the fish resources sector in general was the result of the ministry's efforts which were embodied in:

First, establishing research centers and fish wealth service branches on the eastern and western coastline. These centers and branches have conducted studies and research on developing and improving fishing equipment and methods. They have also carried out marine surveys to discover new fishing areas and conducted studies and research to evaluate the fish reserves. Through this effort, it has been possible to determine the fishing locations and seasons, to ban the fishing of shrimp, to determine protected areas where fishing is prohibited, and to promulgate laws and regulations that establish controls for investment in this area and that protect the reserves from depletion. This is embodied in promulgating the executive bylaws for the law on fishing, exploiting, and protecting living marine resources in the kingdom's territorial waters. This law has expanded the

investment activities wisely and has established conditions and controls for the various types of fishing permits. Numbers and specifications have been set for the fishing means and equipment used to ensure that this store is utilized and exploited ideally.

Second, a number of workers of the fishing resources sector have been sent to specialized universities and institutes both inside and outside the kingdom to enhance their qualifications and experiences in this area.

Third, fishermen and fishing workers have been guided to and trained on modern fishing technologies. The results of the latest research have been conveyed to them in a manner that makes it easier for them to understand these results.

Fourth, encouraging fish farming by virtue of the importance of this activity in contributing effectively to increasing production and to alleviating the pressure on marine fisheries. The ministry has established the Fish Farming Research Center on the western coastline to perform the task of conducting research to find out the best methods for farming aquatic life and the most significant varieties that can be farmed under the kingdom's conditions. This center is tantamount to a model farm for providing guidance on salt water fish and shrimp farming. The ministry also plans to open a fish farming center on the eastern coastline to supervise and follow up on fish farming projects in the area. Moreover, the ministry plans to establish a fresh water fish farming center in the Central Province with the aim of selecting varieties fit for farming and of conducting research on fresh water fish. This will make it easier for the ministry to provide technical advice and supervision, to follow up on projects in the kingdom's internal areas, and to ensure the feasibility and success of such projects.

[Al-Rashid] What about the ministry's fish farming experiment?

[Balghunaym] With God's help, we have succeeded in farming some varieties of sea fish, such as the marine Tilapia and the Saffi or Segan. We have also succeeded in farming the "Monodon" or tiger shrimp variety and the "Index" or white shrimp variety. As for fresh water fish, we have succeeded in farming the Nile and Mozambique Tilapia fish, "al-Mabruk," and sheatfish. Studies are also underway on farming the "Najil," Hamour, and Chem fish varieties and other shrimp varieties. There is big demand for all these fish varieties in the local markets. Permits have been issued to 35 projects, of which 23 are in production currently.

[Al-Rashid] What about the development plans adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture?

[Balghunaym] The fish resources development plans adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water can be summed up as plans that aim to achieve self-sufficiency in seafood products so as to serve the country's food security and to create good investment opportunities in

the area of fishing and farming aquatic life while preserving fish stores and protecting them from depletion.

Dr. Balghunaym added that the Ministry of Agriculture and Water is the authority empowered to issue the necessary permits for engaging in any kind of commercial fishing and diving activity and establishing aquatic life farming projects. The General Fish Resources Directorate and the fish wealth service centers and branches receive [and process] citizens' applications. The directorate concerned has tried to establish systems capable of simplifying the procedures for acquiring these permits. It has also prepared a special program to receive the owners of fish farms already established without their having to refer to the various ministries. The directorate familiarizes itself with these farms' activities, issues them the permits to get skilled technical labor, and supplies them with guidance services. All the farmer has to do is take the initiative and contact the ministry or one of its branches and explain to them the location and capacity of the project so that the project can be studied and licensed, keeping in mind the importance of these two steps. The kingdom is experiencing the beginning of an upsurge in fish farming through the requests made by numerous investors, capitalists, and companies to set up shrimp and fish farms along the kingdom's immense coastline. These projects, like the various other agricultural projects, receive support and backing from the Ministry of Agriculture and enjoy the attention of his excellency the minister of agriculture who follows up on these projects. The ministry has become certain of the feasibility of projects that rely mainly on water resources that are made available within the framework of various agricultural activities. Water is supplied to fish farms and then pumped from there to various crops. After fish ponds are filled with water for the first time, the water volume produced for agricultural purposes is nearly equal to the volume consumed for these purposes [after passage through the fish farms]. Moreover, fish deposit in this water wastes which form liquid and suspended fertilizer, most significantly fertilizer in the form of nitrogen compounds, such as ammonia and other compounds. This reduces the volume of fertilizer used for agriculture. Moreover, temperatures play a role in encouraging growth and speedy production cycles. The kingdom's climatic conditions, especially its temperatures, are ideal for farming. These temperatures and water availability are the two most important elements in fish farming.

Moreover, the Saudi people's diet patterns have also shifted greatly toward fish consumption. This is similar to the shift toward poultry consumption in the kingdom. In 1979, the Saudi average per capita fish consumption amounted to no more than 3.5 kg annually. In 1985, this average per capita consumption rose to 9.3 kg.

Even though fish prices are considered high when compared with the prices of other protein sources, fish is in demand by citizens in both the coastal and the internal towns and villages. Moreover, the services available under our wise government, such as electricity and

paved roads, have helped reduce production costs, and may help reduce them further. Electrical machinery and equipment play an important role in incubating, breeding, and processing fish products.

Concluding his statement, Dr. Balghunaym pointed out to AL-RIYAD that the Saudi investor has not been content with investment in the fish resources area by just investing in fishing in territorial waters or in fish farming, that the ministry receives numerous applications for high-seas fishing, and that it approves these applications when they are completed. This ministry's approval empowers the investors to fly the Saudi flag over their fishing boats. Moreover, the ministry, represented in the fish resources sector, supports investors in this regard. At a time when the kingdom imports large quantities of fish, we find that the kingdom's products are partially marketed by investors in Europe, the United States, and other countries and that these products are in high demand there by virtue of their high quality. Moreover, encouraging prices are paid for these products, especially for shrimp.

SABIC Declares Cash Dividends for 1990-91

91AE0473D Jeddah AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 29 Apr 91
p 6

[Unsigned article: "At Ordinary Shareholders' Meeting Chaired by al-Zamil: One Billion [Saudi] Riyals [SR] Cash Dividends to SABIC Shareholders at SR 10 Per Share"]

[Text] His Excellency Engineer 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abdullah al-Zamil, the Saudi minister of industry and electricity, chaired the general shareholders' meeting of the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC) held at the corporation's headquarters office in Riyadh.

The meeting approved all of the articles presented to it, including distribution of the sum of SR 1,000 million as cash dividends to shareholders at the rate of SR 10 per individual share with the remainder to be transferred to the general reserve. It also approved the board of directors' report, the auditors' report, and the profit and loss statement for the financial year ending 12/31/1991.

His Excellency Eng. 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abdullah al-Zamil, the minister of industry and electricity and chairman of SABIC's board of directors, stated in his address during the meeting that 1990 was filled with a number of accomplishments in production, marketing, upgrading, and technology, pointing out that SABIC's previous efforts were crowned during the year in the field of developing and improving national manpower.

He stressed that SABIC's mounting achievements reflect the position it occupies in national industrialization plans.

The minister of industry and electricity praised SABIC's integrative role in the transformative industrial sector where its program directed there led to a reduction in the

volume of plastic end products and their imported raw materials, and the continuation of SABIC's plastic sales in the local markets at high annual growth rates reaching 26 percent compared to the preceding year.

The number of national plants provided plastic raw materials by SABIC grew from 92 (AH 1400) to 292 (AH 1410). This number continues to rise steadily. In particular, SABIC has conducted a number of studies concerning the use of its products as raw materials to produce goods from the second generation of petrochemicals, opening many investment opportunities in the transformative industrial sector. Summaries of these studies have been made available to investors, welcoming work with them and providing them with the advice and consultation needed to carry out these ventures and see them to success.

Mr. Ibrahim bin-'Abdullah bin-Salmah, vice-chairman and appointive member of the board of directors, presented the board of directors' report throwing light on SABIC's production and marketing operations, revenue, and net profits during the year just concluded and comparing them with the previous year.

According to the report, 1990 witnessed an increase of about 8.5 percent in total production, reaching 10,262,600 tons, aside from products used internally in SABIC's industrial complexes and the products of the gulf complexes in which [SABIC] participates. The amounts marketed in 1990 jumped to 10,536,000 tons, a 12 percent increase over 1989. These amounts also do not include the sales of gulf companies in which SABIC participates. SABIC products were marketed in more than 70 countries around the world.

Sales revenues in 1990 were higher than those of the previous year with the entry of new products such as compound fertilizers, reaching SR 13,734 million.

The report indicated that at the end of 1990 Saudis accounted for over 61 percent of the total of 8973 workers, while all leadership positions were ably occupied by Saudis, strengthening the hope for an "organized Saudi Arabia" which SABIC is seeking in accordance with the strategic objectives of national development plans.

It pointed out that the conditions through with the region passed caused SABIC to double its attention to industrial safety efforts and to developing more controls designed to protect lives and installations and preserve the environment from pollution. This has qualified many SABIC complexes to receive the highest international prizes in this field. During the past year, SABIC plants completed 17,612,451 of working hours with a very low accident rate.

The report said that SABIC engaged in implementing a series of expansion projects reflecting its work to develop its volume of participation in industrial, housing, and agricultural renaissance programs. These projects seek to raise the quantity and quality of productive capacity at

the following complexes: Ibn Hayyan, al-Razi, iron, petrochemical, eastern, Faz, Ibn-al-Baytar, and the new SAFCO complex under construction in the industrial city of al-Jubayl.

Regarding the SABIC Industrial Complex for Research and Development, the report indicated that work has begun at the first experimental plant for polyethylene research. Plans are to complete the remaining work by the end of 1991 so that it can undertake its activities as the core for arriving in the future at local technologies to replace foreign technologies, in addition to its role in strengthening the levels of product quality and diversifying their types, levels, uses, and applications.

It should also be pointed out that during the meeting SABIC's shareholders approved the payment of dividends as of Tuesday, 7 Dhu-al-Qa'dah (according to the Meccan calendar), equivalent to 21 May 1991.

SABIC Exports Iron Products to Asia

91AE0496A Jeddah ARAB NEWS in English
2 Jul 91 p 2

[Text] Riyadh, July 1—A shipment of about 1,000 metric tons of rebar and wire rod coils was sent to Japan yesterday from King Fahd Port in Dammam, the first in a series of iron exports to the Far East and Southeast Asian countries by the Saudi Basic Industries (SABIC).

According to the Minister of Industry and Electricity Abdul Aziz Al Zamil, who is the chairman of SABIC, other shipments will also be sent to Japan by the end of July. Moreover, next month another 31,650 metric tons will be shipped to Southeast Asian countries including 11,650 tons to Singapore, 10,000 tons to Taiwan and another 10,000 tons to South Korea in August.

"We can be proud that the day has come when the Kingdom has changed from importer to exporter of iron products," Zamil said.

Furthermore, having achieved self-sufficiency in steel production, the Kingdom is now able to aid in the reconstruction of Kuwait, as well as in the development of the other Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Refinements in steel production techniques have doubled the output of Saudi Iron and Steel Co. (HADEED). Located in the Al-Jubail Industrial City, the company went on-line in 1983 with an annual capacity of 800,000 metric tons per year [MT/Y] and is now turning out 1.6 million MT/Y, according to SPA [Saudi Press Agency].

Steel industry planners at HADEED have targeted an increase to 2 million MT/Y by 1993 as a result of additional modernization under way at the facility.

"It is specially significant to be exporting products to those same countries from which Saudi Arabia once imported iron," Al-Zamil remarked.

SUDAN

Opposition, Government Leaders Comment on U.S. Policy

91AA0471B London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
12 Jun 91 p 38

[Interviews with Abu-Bakr al-Shanqiti, chancellor of the Sudanese Embassy in Washington, and Muhammad Ibrahim Khalil, chairman of the National Democratic Alliance; places and dates not given]

[Text]

The Official Sudanese View

The following is an interview with Abu-Bakr al-Shanqiti, the chancellor at the Sudanese embassy in Washington:

[AL-MAJALLAH] Is there a famine in Sudan?

[Al-Shanqiti] Since last September, the government has been calling on international food and agricultural organizations to evaluate the situation jointly with the Sudanese Agriculture Ministry. However, it was not possible to determine the size of the gap at that time, because production had not ended. The final report was submitted in January. This means that the government has been concerned with the matter and has appealed to international organizations. On 17 December, an official communique was issued, stating the existence of a gap in the food supply and the need for international aid.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the problem then?

[Al-Shanqiti] The problem is that, in October, they wanted us to announce the existence of a famine. At that time, we stated that there is no famine. However, we also said that if international measures are not taken, a famine might occur.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the current situation?

[Al-Shanqiti] The production of winter wheat is very successful this time, 650,000 tons, which is 50 percent of the gap determined by the United States and international organizations. The new production began in April. However, we still need international aid.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the American Government's position on the famine?

[Al-Shanqiti] It is praiseworthy. It has helped by providing more than 300,000 tons. The European countries have also made commitments. However, with sorrow, I note that the fraternal Arab countries have not provided anything. I take this opportunity to call upon them to help us.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is your response to the American Government's growing criticism of the Sudanese regime, especially regarding human rights?

[Al-Shanqiti] An emergencies law is in effect in Sudan to consolidate the rule of law following the anarchy witnessed by the period of the parties. However, measures continue to be taken toward a relaxation. Recently, all political prisoners were released, and the door was opened for the resumption of negotiations with the Garang group.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How do you describe American-Sudanese relations?

[Al-Shanqiti] Headed toward normalization.

The Opinion of the Sudanese Opposition

Professor Muhammad Ibrahim Khalil, a former foreign minister and Constituent Assembly chairman, and the current chairman of the National Democratic Alliance speaks to AL-MAJALLAH in the United States:

[AL-MAJALLAH] Is there a famine in Sudan?

[Khalil] There is no doubt regarding the existence of a famine. The Sudanese Government is calling it a "gap." This is playing with words. A very severe food shortage exists. For a long time, international aid organizations have known about it and have been warning the Sudanese Government.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Does the Sudanese Government bear responsibility for that? Or, is the rain shortage a natural problem?

[Khalil] The rain shortage is a primary, natural cause. However, it is the government's duty to expect and prepare for such a shortage. In the past, everybody used to store durra in anticipation of dry years. The previous government in Sudan was concerned with building silos for the storage of grain. This government has squandered what was stored, and it has permitted merchants of the [National] Islamic Front to export durra to obtain dollars.

In addition to the current government's inept policies regarding exportation and importation and the continued war in the south, the current government bears responsibility for the war, because the previous government was on the verge of reaching a final agreement with the [Sudanese] People's Liberation Army in the south.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Has the American Government recently begun to criticize the Sudanese Government publicly and directly?

[Khalil] For a long time, the American Government continued to hope that the Sudanese regime would reform itself. Thus, it avoided heaping criticism on it, lest it widen the gulf between the two countries. Other Arab countries have done the same thing.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Are there contacts between you and the American administration?

[Khalil] Sudan's domestic situation and the reinstitution of democracy are matters of concern to the Sudanese,

regarding which we do not seek anyone's opinions, advise, or aid. However, current contacts pertain to international, cultural issues, such as human rights, human dignity, and the provision of food and freedom to people.

NDA Issues Statement; NIF Said Increasing Night Watches

91AA0471A Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 12 Jun 91 p 2

[Text] The National Democratic Alliance [NDA] issued a communique in Khartoum, in which it saluted the Sudanese people for its heroic steadfastness, for its willingness to sacrifice life for the sake of democracy, progress, and honor, and for its brave endurance of torture and arrest and deportation campaigns. The communique called for an intensification of the struggle for democracy, the return of legal unions, the right to free expression, and the right to organize, and demonstrate. The communique indicated that, while the release of political detainees has begun, there are alarming indications that the government is shirking and evading the implementation of the promise that it made to the world. It also stated that malicious whispering has begun to circulate regarding personalities who have not been released, because they pose [as it were] a danger to the security of the revolution, and regarding other personalities who will be arrested again.

The NDA urges all families whose members have not been released to beseege the security agency, until the last political prisoner is released, and not to be deceived by ruses and promises. The communique called for the intensification of pressure to investigate the assassination of martyrs 'Ali Fadl and 'Abd-al-Mun'im Salman and officers of the 28 Ramadan movement. It further demanded the opening of the dossiers on the death squads to which hundreds have fallen victim in the areas of "al-Markhiyat" and "the green belt [al-hizam al-akhdar]," and the trying of officials for committing these crimes.

It is Rumored:

That governmental forces launched air raids against refugee camps at Jokau and Kambala, and several other border cities, and that these forces took advantage of the circumstances of the recent disturbances in Ethiopia to carry out those raids, to which dozens of women, children, and the elderly fell victim.

That the government of the National Islamic Front [NIF] has intensified its night watches inside Khartoum recently, and that an increase in the number of vehicles traveling in the capital during curfew hours has been noted.

Finance Minister Discusses Currency Exchange, Rebels

91AA0455A Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 4 Jun 91 p 9

[Interview with Sudanese minister of finance and planning 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi, by Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah; place and date not given: "Replacing the Currency was a Strictly Economic Decision"]

[Text] Sudanese minister of finance and planning 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi asserted to AL-SHA'B after the Islamic Development Bank meetings that the decision to supplant the Sudanese currency was not, contrary to rumors, a political decision meant to deprive the rebel Garang and the opposition of the counterfeit notes they printed. Rather, the decision was strictly an economic measure to shrink monetary liquidity by "80 percent of the funds outside the banking system." He added that the measure was brilliantly effective and that within the short span of 10 days, bank deposits grew by 10 percent from 10 billion pounds "last year" to 20 billion pounds. This was coupled with lower prices for many commodities. The price of corn, for instance, dropped by 50 percent from 2,400 to 1,200 pounds. The dollar exchange rate also fell and stabilized at around 12 pounds. The minister also explained the rationale behind freezing 20 percent of depositor funds with banks. He revealed how the Sudanese government doubled its budgetary surplus, enabling it to make an unexpected decision to increase salaries. He also discussed the impact of Ethiopian developments on the Sudan.

The following is the text of the interview with minister 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi, professor of Islamic economics and current minister of finance:

['Arafah] Why was the Sudanese currency replaced? Was it an economic decision or a political one?

[Hamdi] It was strictly economic. Monetary liquidity had greatly expanded, contributing to higher prices as evidenced by speculations on dollar exchange rates and on the prices of corn and other crops. Furthermore, the exodus of Sudanese currency was so voluminous that it was being traded in neighboring countries both openly and covertly, thereby giving support to the smuggling industry.

Also, The currency had totally migrated outside the banking system. About 80 percent of it was outside the banking system and only 20 percent remained within that system when the reverse should have been true. It was imperative to reinstate the currency to banking system parameters by adopting measures to control and temporarily curtail liquidity, restrain illegal activity, and make payment by check mandatory.

A secondary objective of the currency measure was to deprive southern rebels of the smuggled funds in their possession; a minute portion of which was counterfeit. The measures has been so strictly enforced that even

diplomats were subject to luggage searches. Figures indicate that the old currency has partially disappeared abroad. "In other words, the currency that was smuggled is no longer of value."

100-Percent Increase in Bank Deposits

The initial impact of that economic measure, as minister 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi calls it, was very promising. Banking figures indicate that bank deposits rose to 20 billion from 10 billion pounds last year. In other words, people's deposits doubled in ten days!

['Arafah] Some people are dismayed at the decision to freeze, "but not to confiscate," 30 percent of the bank deposits of the Sudanese. They say the government tricked them when it asked them to exchange their [old currency] funds and then withheld 30 percent. How do you feel about that?

[Hamdi] The freeze involves 20 percent of old deposits and 30 percent of new deposits. This applies to the first 100,000 pounds which means that 85 percent of the Sudanese remain unaffected. Only large depositors are affected. Besides, the freeze will remain in effect for only one year at maximum and may be rescinded any time before then. The objective is to control and rationalize liquidity for a limited time. The [frozen] funds will not earn their owners any return since they are on deposit with the Bank of the Sudan and will not be invested in any form.

['Arafah] It is noted that the new budget provides for a considerable increase in wages. Where did the underlying budget surplus come from?

[Hamdi] The surplus resulted from higher customs duties on cigarettes and nonessential goods—with the exception of petroleum, wheat and flour, medicine, fodder, and all farm machinery and needs. That sum alone [as published] is sufficient to cover the increase in wages. Higher taxes on other goods are expected to yield 5 billion [pounds] and revenues are therefore expected to climb from 16 billion to 32 billion Sudanese pounds. The current budget deficit has also been pared for the first time, and by a substantial margin of 65 percent, dropping from 38 billion to 1.1 billion pounds [as published].

['Arafah] What recent steps has the Sudanese economy taken towards compliance with Islamic shari'ah?

[Hamdi] We have endeavored to steer the economy towards production and reduced consumption, away from extravagance, and towards self-sufficiency. Those are Islamic precepts. We have also made financing available for the first time to such people as small farmers, graduates in agriculture, and cooperatives.

State projects are financed at "the bottom of the ladder" with true resources by commercial banks which made 2 billion pounds available for that purpose. We have therefore been emancipated from subservience to donors in as far as food is concerned. This year, the Sudan has

achieved self-sufficiency in wheat for the first time. It would have stopped importing this year but for the drought. We have, as a precaution against future droughts, arranged to plant wheat on 1.6 billion feddans of irrigated land. Prices of farm products have been liberalized and farmers are being supplied with all their farming needs in order to motivate them.

Workers earning the minimum wage of 600 Sudanese pounds will have their pay doubled by \$130 [as published]. The salaries of higher-paid workers will go up by only 30 percent. We had to boost salaries because we recognized that the people suffered patiently from exorbitant prices while supporting the objectives of the [National] Salvation Revolution. That was no political bribe; they [the workers] had it coming to them.

Ethiopian Revolutionaries Destroyed Garang's Bases

[Arafah] What role did the Sudan play in connection with Mengistu, Garang, and the Falashas?

[Hamdi] We were delighted that the fall of Mengistu dealt a devastating blow to the forces of the rebel Garang. We understand that his primary base has been compromised in a bloody clash with revolutionary forces. Garang will likely move to Kenya or Uganda—probably the latter because he is friends with the Ugandan president who attended the same college with him in the United States. Any yet, both Kenya and Uganda have reservations.

As to the Falashas, reports that they were airlifted across Sudanese skies are unconfirmed. Besides, the Sudan does not yet control all of its air space. More significantly, I believe that the Falashas were most probably airlifted to Israel on planes of the Coalition Forces in the Gulf, and especially of the United States.

Ambassador to Egypt Discusses Famine, Iraqi Scuds

91AA0482A Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 10 Jun 91 p 6

[Interview with Sudanese Ambassador to Cairo 'Izzal-Din Hamid by Usamah al-Karam, in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] [Al-Karam] There has been an immense increase in prices in Sudan as a result of the drop in the value of the Sudanese pound. The Sudanese pound's exchange rate has reached 72 pounds to the dollar. What measures is the national salvation government taking in order to alleviate the hardship of the brotherly Sudanese people?

[Hamid] Yes. Truly there has been a considerable rise in prices of consumer goods in Sudan. It can be said that a great part of this increase is due to the actions of brokers and middlemen as well as to black market activity. Yet the fact remains that the rise in commodity prices is high, making the cost of living far too high for certain sectors of the society. No doubt the government is giving due attention to the matter; it has laid down policies and

action programs to control market prices. The basic objective should be to increase production of vegetables, fruits, and meat. When there is an abundance in the market, prices will naturally drop.

[AL-Karam] Certain news agencies said there is a famine in southern Sudan and that foreign aid brought no benefits for the victims. How true are these reports?

[Hamid] The term "famine" and allegations that aid is not reaching the needy people are exaggerations. This is part of the campaign waged by foreign quarters against Sudan. It is alleged that in Sudan people are dropping dead in the streets because of the famine. What we say and insist on saying is that there is a scarcity of products and a food shortage that could be severe and affecting certain areas. But at the same time serious work is underway to cover this shortage through local production and the facilitation of the distribution of commodities received from abroad. This is a firm program and the situation is improving, but hope is pinned on increasing production.

[Al-Karam] Any new developments in the crisis in southern Sudan? Are there any practical solutions to end this problem?

[Hamid] Yes there is something new. The government recently proposed the idea of holding a meeting with the rebels in order to continue the dialogue and reach a peaceful solution for this long-standing problem. The rebel movement has been showing some flexibility in its response to the government's appeal. I believe that one of these signs is that a meeting will be held between the government and the rebels at a certain place in order to continue the dialogue and reach a peaceful solution. This solution has been proposed by the national salvation revolution which held a big conference on the subject, which was attended by a large number of southerners. The proposed solution is to establish a federal system in the South that would meet much of the demands of the sons of the South.

[Al-Karam] It was rumored in Egypt that Scud missiles based in Sudan were aimed at the High Dam during the Gulf crisis. How true are these rumors?

[Hamid] This has been denied even by the Egyptian officials themselves. These were merely naive rumors. It is impossible for Sudan to threaten an Egyptian installation like the High Dam since Sudan is of deep strategic [importance] to Egypt, and this is part of the Nile valley security.

[Al-Karam] How do you then explain this rumor?

[Hamid] This is part of the campaign directed against the national salvation revolution waged by remnants of the former Sudanese parties located in Egypt and elsewhere through the spread of false rumors.

[Al-Karam] What is your opinion on a foreign presence to maintain security in any Arab region?

[Hamid] The policy declared by Sudan and which Sudan believes in is that Arab security should be in Arab hands and that problems of the Arab region should remain within the Arab League framework. We view the question of foreign presence in any Arab area as a negative phenomenon that is unacceptable to us.

[Al-Karam] Does Sudan see any need for the presence of an Arab force in the Gulf?

[Hamid] This matter should be decided on a consensus basis. If the Arabs are unanimous about any policy, Sudan will then be a party to such a policy, which should be the collective responsibility of the Arab League. Sudan cannot alone lay down policies and impose them on the others.

[Al-Karam] Therefore, will Sudan take the initiative and call for the presence of Arab forces in the Gulf?

[Hamid] There is nothing against this should circumstances call for taking a certain initiative. But any initiative or proposal must be put to all the Arab states.

[Al-Karam] Going back to the domestic situation in Sudan, I would like to ask you about the latest developments with regard to the implementation of Islamic law in Sudan and whether this experiment has faced obstacles.

[Hamid] Laws regulating the process of implementation have been enacted; they provide for the means and mechanisms of implementation. This operation is entirely organized on the basis of the new political regime in Sudan which is founded on federalism and the states system. Therefore, we give the South the right to enact the laws it wishes to apply in the South. Therefore, the shari'ah will not be implemented in the South unless the southerners choose this regime.

Government Begins To Sell State-Owned Companies

91P40379A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
18 Jul 91 p 10

[Text] Khartoum, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—The Sudanese Government has decided to put the Sudanese Commercial Bank up for sale to the private sector next week, thus transforming it into a publicly-held company. This is the first step to be taken by the government toward selling off bankrupt state-owned companies.

This was part of a decision made the day before yesterday [16 July] in a meeting of the Cabinet to convert state-owned companies into private sector companies.

Sudanese Minister of Industry Taj-al-Sirr Mustafa said that among the establishments being put up for sale are the Abu-Na'amah Project and the White Nile and Khartoum Tannery. The Sudanese minister indicated that the

sale would be transacted through bids tendered by investors from the Sudanese private sector and by foreign investors.

It is expected that the steps to sell these projects will be completed by September. The Sudanese minister indicated that workers in these projects would be given their due rights.

In addition, Sudanese sources said that there are a number of projects under study for sale, including SATA, formerly BATA, an onion cannery in Kassala, a cannery in (Anbasa), the Red Sea Tannery, some distillation companies, and the Blue Nile Packaging Company.

Oil Production To Begin in Western Regions

91P40381A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
23 Jul 91 p 9

[Report by Sayyid Ahmad Khalifah]

[Text] Jeddah, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—The Sudanese Government has announced its intention to exploit the petroleum discovered years ago in the Abu-Jabirah oil field in western Sudan, where the American company Chevron halted operations after the collapse of security conditions in southern Sudan.

Rebels under the leadership of John Garang launched an attack on these areas in conjunction with their attacks in the area of the Jonglei Canal, when they hit and disabled the largest drilling rig, along with the rest of the working rigs on that project.

In a communique issued from Khartoum at the beginning of this week, the Sudanese Government said that it would begin transporting the crude oil from the Abu-Jabirah region to a refinery in Port Sudan on the Red Sea for the purpose of producing about 300,000 gallons of gasoline per day, i.e., about 618 barrels per day.

The Sudanese Government said in its communique—which came in the midst of an acute crisis in domestic transportation—that it would work to complete and bring on-line the small oil refinery which it had decided to construct in Kosti in the White Nile region, a place which links southern and northern Sudan by way of Nile riverboats.

New Prison Complex To Be Built in Omdurman

91P40383A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
21 Jul 91 p 4

[Text] Khartoum, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—The Sudanese Government has announced that it intends to build a complete city to be a [prison] camp for the relocation of prisoners from Kubar and Omdurman Prisons—whose final closures were announced last month—in addition to Dar al-Tubah in Suba and Dar al-Hadayah in al-Harif West. This was explained in press

releases by the new director of prisons, Colonel al-Shaykh al-Rih al-Shaykh. He also said that the Finance Ministry had set aside the necessary funds to construct a "city of guidance" in southwest Omdurman which will consist of an open camp for first-time convicts and a closed prison to accommodate 3,000 inmates. The aim of this is to set up and make possible the implementation of a new policy which indicates that the role of the prison is as a penal institution.

The Sudanese president, Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, announced the demolition of Kubar Prison on 30 June, describing it as a symbol of degradation and subjugation established under British colonialism to oppress Sudanese citizens. In fact, al-Bashir, operating a machine together with Libyan president Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi, demolished the front of the prison as part of a large official and popular celebration.

Throughout the various phases of public life in Sudan, Kubar Prison is known to have held an assortment of politicians, who describe it as the way station through which all leaders have passed. Some of them have mentioned that there was a clear path between Kubar Prison and the cabinet.

Tension Returns to University of Khartoum

*91P40402A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
6 Aug 91 pp 1, 4*

[Text] Khartoum, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—Once again an atmosphere of tension has returned to the University of Khartoum after the students' union submitted a memorandum yesterday to the university administration demanding the release of three of their colleagues, who were arrested during a sit-in and clashes with police last month.

The union also demanded the return of 22 students that the administration had expelled during the recent disturbances.

A responsible source within the students' union announced that they had given the university administration 48 hours to respond to their demand, and that if it did not, they would not implement the agreement reached between the union and the administration which had brought about the resumption of classes last week.

Yesterday morning, units of the Central Reserve Forces deployed in front of the university, while a number of plainclothesmen spread out around the university buildings.

The day before yesterday, the union had held an evening meeting with the administration to discuss the demand made in the memorandum, but the two sides did not reach an agreement. Subsequently, the union issued a communique stating that unnamed agencies are not pleased to see the union achieve victories "and that the greatest evidence for refuting the authorities' claims that

they have abolished preemptive detention is those student union leaders who have been held since 19 July."

The communique went on to say that the arrested students had sent a letter to the union demanding: "Do not bargain with the rights of the students of this university, even if they remain interned for life."

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the arrested students are: Hisham Hasan, deputy director of the Council of Forty (a student in the College of Engineering); al-Rashid al-Tahir, (assistant secretary general, a student in the School of Dentistry); and 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Habib, (secretary for external affairs, an engineering student).

Schools Reportedly Open Late Due to Clashes

*91P40384A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
21 July 91 pp 1, 4*

[Text] Khartoum, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—It was reported yesterday that schools in Khartoum will not open today for the beginning of the new school year, confirming expectations that studies would be delayed because of the student incidents at the University of Khartoum last week which led to the death of one of the students after a clash with security forces. The government did not announce a reason for the delay in opening schools except for a statement broadcast by the spokesperson for the Ministry of Education in the State of Khartoum, Sufayat 'Abd-al-Rahim, indicating that the reason stemmed from a drinking water shortage which has afflicted the capital of Khartoum for a several days now because of an increase in silt in Nile waters. Unusual preparations have been made in recent days to have the schools open today, including the procurement of teachers, materials, books, and furniture. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the government of Khartoum province was intending to provide breakfasts for students in secondary and middle schools this year and in the future to students in the primary grades. The government also announced that it would provide transportation and school uniforms at reasonable prices. As for the situation at the University of Khartoum, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT toured the university and noticed nothing beyond normal security. However, with the school's closure has come an increase in the students' zeal in writing wall newspapers [papers posted on university walls], publishing manifestos, and establishing "debating circles" concerned with academic stability or with raising the housing issue with the university administration.

SYRIA

Columnist on al-Asad's Calculations

91AE0528A Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 19 Jul 91 p B2

[Article by 'Amos Gilbo'a: "Asad. Yes and No"]

[Text]

What Is Contained in the Syrian Reply to President Bush?

The details of the reply, which covers five pages, are at this time known only to the Americans and the Egyptians. According to the Syrian media, which are directed personally by Asad, there are three components in the Syrian reply:

First of all, a positive reply to Bush. The U.S. President asked that Syria agree to come to a peace conference under the auspices of the United States and the Soviet Union, to the conference having no powers and to its convening once every six months, and to the presence of a passive UN observer at the conference, with the main thing being direct negotiations with Israel. Asad replied, "I am ready to come to the conference."

A reiteration of the Syrian positions. These emphasize the compulsory nature of the conference and the necessity that it lay down in advance that Israel must withdraw from all the Arab lands, in accordance with Security Council Decision 242, according to the Syrian interpretation. Apparently, these positions were not presented as a condition for the Syrian agreement to come to the conference.

Words of praise for Bush and Baker, and quotes from their previous statements on "territories for peace."

Does the Syrian Reply Constitute a Change in the Syrian Positions?

Yes and no. A clear yes on the tactical and procedural level. In all the discussions and deliberations that the Syrians held with the Americans, they insisted that the UN have an important and influential role, and that the conference would be continuous and would have powers. They opposed the American compromise proposals on this subject, as Israel did for its own reasons. Now they have agreed to them. That is a change.

On the other hand, they repeated their traditional positions, including on the substantive matter of the unconditional withdrawal and the authoritative character of the conference, without any reference whatsoever to direct negotiations with Israel.

The Syrian "yes" is still strewn with many mines, and it is necessary to wait and see what is really hiding behind Asad's sophisticated move.

What Made Asad Say "Yes" to Bush?

Three factors:

First of all—to satisfy the Americans. Bush and Baker are eager to present some achievement in the political process in the Middle East, as rudimentary as it may be. "I will not put a technical obstacle before them."

If Israel refuses to come to the conference and continues to oppose the compromise proposals of the United States, then Syria will win all the possible points. If Israel does not refuse, then, in any event, Syria will not lose

much as it is faithful to its basic principles and will present them at the conference.

The Egyptian and American "nagging." Have the Americans promised something to Asad concerning the withdrawal from the Golan? Time will tell.

What Is the Price That Syria Is Ready To Pay in Exchange for an Israeli Withdrawal From the Golan Heights?

The Syrians declare repeatedly that they are for a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East. But they never said that they are for peace with Israel. The comprehensive peace, according to the Syrians, consists of withdrawal by Israel and the Palestinians receiving their rights.

Egypt paid for Sinai with a peace treaty with Israel: an open border, an Israeli flag in Cairo, etc. Syria is not ready for that. It is ready only for the conclusion of the formal state of war between it and Israel.

If it becomes evident that the Syrians are indeed ready to sign a peace treaty with us in exchange for the Golan Heights, with special security arrangements, then that would truly be a substantive change in the traditional Syrian position.

What Is the Significance of the Syrian Reply to Bush From Israel's Viewpoint?

In the diplomatic sphere—a challenge has been posed that creates an opening for pressures, for tension in relations with the United States and Western Europe and for a deep chill with Egypt.

In the security sphere—if the conference does not convene and Israel is accused of refusing peace, then the Syrians can go to the Arab world and say: You see, we told you that Israel was like that, now come unite around us so that eventually and at the right time, we can start to exert military pressures on Israel.

How Does Syria's Position Today Differ From That of Two or Three Years Ago?

At the end of the 80's, Syria's status was bad. In Lebanon, it was stuck in the mud; its economy was in an exceedingly bad state; in the Arab world, it was completely isolated, and Saddam Huseyn had sworn to take revenge on Asad, who had supported Iran in its war with Iraq; in the West, it was regarded as a terrorist state; Syria was outside of the diplomatic process, which was focused on the Palestinian issue, and no one "gave a damn" about the Golan Heights. And, most important: the Soviet Union, Syria's traditional security and diplomatic support, fell from its position as a superpower.

Asad read correctly the changing world map, and made changes in his policy in order to adjust it to the new situation: he decided that it was necessary to link up with the United States, but without cutting himself off from the Soviet Union, and to do this via Egypt. He renewed

the diplomatic relations with Egypt, which had been broken off following the peace agreement with Israel, he improved his relations with the Arab oil states and moderated the extremism of Syrian propaganda. Syria began to come out of its isolation.

What Contributed to All These Things—the Gulf War?

The war, in which Syria lined up alongside the United States and constituted a central component in the Arab coalition against Saddam Husayn, gave a boost to Asad's new policy, and improved Syria's status with one blow.

Billions of dollars flowed to Damascus and saved its economy; it liquidated its opponents in Lebanon and became in fact its legal overlord; in the West, it began to be perceived as "nice boy Damascus"; it created with Egypt a leading axis in the Arab world; its relations with the U.S.A. became closer, and Bush met with Asad in Europe; and, for the first time in years, the Golan Heights returned to the agenda of the diplomatic process, and Syria became a central factor in it.

What Are Syria's Basic Positions on the Issue of the Arab-Israeli Conflict?

First of all and above all—a complete and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all of the Golan Heights (and, over time, to this was added the demand for an unconditional withdrawal from the security strip in south Lebanon) and the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. In exchange, Syria will be ready to rescind its state of war with Israel.

As Syria assumes that Israel will not give up the Golan Heights of its own free will, an international conference, under the auspices of the UN, and with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council, must impose the withdrawal upon it. The direct negotiations with Israel must be only to conclude the technical details of the withdrawal, and the demilitarization arrangements that will exist on both sides of the border.

Military strength is the central instrument by which pressure is exerted upon Israel to knuckle under—by means of war or the threat of war in the course of a diplomatic process that has stalled.

What Is the Syrian Military Power That Faces Israel?

The military strength is based on a large land army of 11 divisions, of which seven are armored (more than Iraq once had). An air force that numbers about 600 war planes, including modern planes, a large ground-to-ground [missile] force and chemical and biological weapons.

This military power is now in a process of growing stronger, foremost in long-range (600 km.) ground-to-ground missiles that were purchased from North Korea and are about to be purchased from China.

The Syrian Army does not believe that it is capable **alone** of coping successfully with the IDF [Israeli Defense Forces]. But it constitutes a dangerous threat for two main reasons:

- a) Most of the Syrian power is concentrated against the Golan Heights. Therefore, it can, potentially, surprise the IDF before [the latter] can mobilize its reserves.
- b) It has a missile capability to strike at the rear of the State of Israel and at its strategic installations.

How Does Asad Make Decisions?

Alone. He has no advisers. He customarily consults with and receives data from a small number of cronies, who have been with him for 20 years. He consults with Haddam, the vice president and former foreign minister, on diplomatic matters and on Lebanon; he consults with Chief of Staff Hikmat Shahabi on military matters and with several Alawite officers on matters of internal security.

Asad is not quick on the draw. He makes his decisions after a long "gestation period," and he keeps them very close to his chest. On matters that interest him, he goes into the smallest details with an extraordinary patience.

Effect of Changes on Public Sector Assessed

91AE0538A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
21 Jul 91 p 12

[Article by Walid Najm: "Future of Syrian Public Sector in Light of Recent Economic Changes"]

[Text] The economic changes that have begun to appear clearly in Syria raise questions about the future of the public sector. The private and joint sectors have begun to grow more rapidly and are imposing their presence in the Syrian market and outside it, although the public sector is still the backbone of the Syrian economy.

Figures from successive five-year plans show that investments for the 1966-1990 development period totaled 295.3 billion Syrian pounds. Of these investments, 81.7 percent were entrusted to the government and public sector; 18.3 percent of them went to the private, cooperative, and joint sectors under the development goals set by five-year plans.

The Syrian public sector, carrying out the economic direction set by the government, implemented many projects for the infrastructure of the national economy. It embarked upon many large, strategic economic projects, such as oil production, and entered into large-scale manufacturing areas such as the building, food, chemical, and textile industries. It also ventured into such service areas as instructional, health, and cultural services.

These figures clearly show the prominence of the public sector in the Syrian economic structure and the extent of its day-to-day relation to the economy. However, the

sudden emergence of the private and joint sectors as rivals to the public sector in building the country and strengthening its economy—an emergence that has been helped by a series of supportive laws, the unified investment law being the most recent of them—reflects the government's desire for a balance between the three sectors, rather than allowing any one of them to be eliminated. This is quite the opposite of rumors that the public sector is finished or on the way out. Encouraging the private and joint sectors is merely a serious attempt to shake the dust off a public sector that appears flabby and thoroughly bloated.

In fact, although the public sector has continued to implement its plans, it suffers from blights that have begun to tear its body. These blights have resulted from the weakness of most of the successive leaders that have managed the sector. This has caused such enormous losses to the sector that many important factories and installations operated by it have closed and others have ceased operation for months on end.

One cannot place the burden of responsibility for what happened only on management. After the eighties the public sector was in a hopeless situation. It was being asked to do everything, with nothing at its disposal. Importation was prohibited, while exporting was subject to the policy of the payments agreement. The sector had no option but to retreat further and lose even more. In particular, it was not accustomed to surprises of the sort that can befall the economy of any country. It therefore lost its balance and much of the confidence of citizens and the government.

Many successive managements of the sector came and went during the period. Some of them were charged with negligence and having caused losses.

The reality was actually quite different. Many leaders of the sector were indeed incompetent, but the sector was being forced to employ thousands of workers and technicians only a quarter of whom could have been absorbed in its factories and installations under the best of conditions. This began a process of falling profits, losses, and declining wages. While such hiring may have helped curb unemployment, it entrenched veiled unemployment, which could not fail to have a negative impact on the structure of the entire economy.

The conditions that the public sector was experiencing opened the way for the other sectors to outstrip it. In particular, the public sector often departed from its assigned functions and embarked upon competition unsuitable to its level. For example, it became involved in selling fruits and vegetables in the markets or with selling ready-made clothing to the consumer. This put it into direct confrontation with the public, which was not satisfied with the way the sector sold its goods without thought to consumers' tastes or purchasing power.

Therefore, it is now necessary to take a long and hard look at the future of the Syrian public sector. The

government cannot upset the three sectors that contribute to forming its economic structure. All official economic sources affirm that the Syrian public sector will remain a principal contributor to the course of the national economy. But can this sector continue in its current shape?

Statistics on the Syrian economy and the new realities of the international economy say no.

The public sector badly needs a definition of its tasks and goals. It is not hard to discover what these tasks and goals are. The public sector should undertake strategic projects in Syria, projects that the private or joint sectors cannot implement because they are looking for a quick turnover of capital that strategic projects cannot offer.

Naturally, this requires expert leaders who can make careful plans, taking into account the growth of the other sectors. The public sector must not be seen as a consumer of workers and officials, who now have opportunities to work in private- and joint-sector projects. The idea of absorbing unemployment should not be exclusively the lot of the public sector.

Lest the public sector remain like an old man that people regard now with pity and now with annoyance, it must be rejuvenated with enlightened laws in step with the spirit of the new economic age.

These laws are the responsibility of the government, which considers the public sector its eldest son. They must be flexible and realistic, like the laws the government has promulgated for the private and joint sectors. Because the government wants all sectors in Syrian society to grow, its responsibility to the public sector is all the greater.

The public sector must be given advantages and credits, so that it can stand on its feet and undertake its new strategic tasks. Let us not forget that in a developing country like Syria the public sector has rendered enormous services to the Syrian economy, despite all its false steps, and that every new defect in its structure would be a setback for the national economy. It would hurt the public sector to eliminate some marginal functions, particularly service functions, while retaining its basic functions, particularly strategic functions such as heavy industry and specialized essential industries.

The public sector will undergo much deterioration and cause much loss to the national economy if its structure does not change and if its new goals are not carefully delineated. It will continue to run panting after the private and joint sectors if it continues to sell fruits and vegetables or ready-made clothing.

Islamist Cases' Impact on Human Rights Record

91AA0527A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
8 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qalibi]

[Text] From Tunis, Muhammad 'Ali al-Qalibi analyzes the results of opening the human rights file following the

trials of the fundamentalists, especially at a time when the Tunisian Government is trying hard to improve its international relations, particularly with Western states.

Within the conflict which recently erupted between the Tunisian authorities and the fundamentalist Ennahdah movement, an issue appeared that stirred up a foreign and domestic tempest that the Tunisian Government has tried to contain.

This issue concerns the accusations directed at the security agencies in Tunisia regarding the use of violence and torture against detainees who had been accused of preparing to overthrow the system of government in the country.

These accusations came out in a report issued by the Tunisian League for the Defense of Human Rights dated 14 June. It contained the league's fears and preoccupation over what has been said concerning the violation of human rights in Tunisia. The report announced the formation of a special committee of the league to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of two of the detainees from the Ennahdah movement.

This report met with great interest in Tunisia, especially since it was the first of its kind issued since President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali came to power immediately following the change of 7 November 1987.

Since he came to power, President Ben Ali has tried hard to present a new image of Tunisia instead of that which had prevailed during the latter part of former president Bourguiba's era, especially on the eve of the 7 November transformation. That has been manifest in the cessation of all campaigns that had been launched against the zealous Islamic current, and he also freed the leaders of that current.

In addition to that, the new government set out to announce that Tunisia was joining the international agreement to ban torture, and agreement was made to open the Arab Institute for Human Rights' headquarters in Tunis, in addition to establishing a branch of Amnesty International. The state security court was also abolished. The previous government had often used this court to wipe its opponents off the map of political activity under various pretexts and guises, of which there were so many at the time. In addition to that, the system of precautionary detention (known in Tunisia as preventive arrest), was amended, such that limits were defined under which the authorities could hold political detainees, in particular.

Throughout the three years after the 7 November change, the authorities have dealt in a conciliatory and tolerant way with opposition movements in general, including, of course, the Ennahdah movement, even though this movement was not given official and legal freedom of political action because of the authorities'

eagerness to keep any political body from having a monopoly on Islamic activity.

However, this did not last long. The Ennahdah movement, benefitting from the dramatic developments in Algeria following the events of October 1988, began to resume the campaign that it had waged at the end of the Bourguiba era, essentially trying to reach the height of power.

The Tunisian Government has found itself confronting a movement that targets its very existence. Because it had previously used gentle methods on this movement without achieving the desired results, it decided to use other methods that consequently brought about the same situation which President Bourguiba's regime had come to during its last days.

Thus began the campaign of attacks and arrests which reached its peak with the announcement that the so-called attempt to "take the government by storm" had been uncovered.

There is no doubt that the fundamentalists have benefitted from their experiences in the Bourguiba era, and that is especially evident in the fact that most of their prominent leaders, foremost of whom is the head of the Ennahdah movement, Rachid El-Ghannouchi, had left Tunisia, depriving the authorities of the opportunity to arrest them and deal a crushing blow to their movement. Because they were outside the country, they were able to organize a broad propaganda campaign, in which they relied on certain information they were able to obtain through their channels of communication within Tunisia. In this campaign, they accused the Tunisian authorities of committing harsh acts of torture against arrested members of the movement, in violation of human rights. Thanks to various western media organizations, they were able to arouse the organizations interested in human rights.

Thus, following the league's aforementioned report issued in Tunis, Amnesty International then issued a stern report that aroused much consternation and indignation in Tunisian official circles, especially since Amnesty International enjoys a great deal of respect internationally.

The report came at absolutely the wrong time for the Tunisian Government, which had been trying hard for some time to remove all the residue left by the Gulf war and to turn a new page on relations with Western states. That report and the accusations it contained came as a blow to those Tunisian attempts and was an inducement to western states not to respond to Tunisia's attempts to improve its relations with them.

In the estimation of political observers, this development is what prompted President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to act quickly in this matter. He ordered the formation of an investigative committee to examine the facts surrounding this matter and to work to stop any excesses that might have occurred.

At the same time, he selected one of his brilliant aides in the government, Dr. Sadeq Cha'ban, and appointed him as first counselor for human rights, a post which was created for the first time in Tunisia. Moreover, the formation of the investigative committee is also a first in Tunisia, and many view it as a positive step that indicates that the government is anxious that there be no action that would arouse an international outcry on human rights.

The government did not stop at that. It organized a North African symposium devoted to discussing human rights, and it was noted that Tunisian Prime Minister Dr. Hamid al-Qarawi himself opened that symposium, stressing Tunisia's role in protecting human rights and its eagerness to adhere to this policy. However, the surprise that caught the attention of political observers was what happened directly after that; namely, the harsh sentences passed by the criminal court of appeals in Tunisia on five of those responsible for the heinous attack on the center of the ruling Democratic Constitutional Grouping in the Bab al-Suwayqah region. Whereas the first court had been content to impose life imprisonment on the accused, the court of appeals, which had been held in response to the demands of those who had victims in that incident, increased the punishment to a death sentence. That raised many questions in the circles of political observers concerning the purpose of these sentences, which were considered harsh, and whether they would be carried out or whether the authorities would use them as a trump card in its hand to force the fundamentalists to retreat from their long-term plans and accept adherence to the rules and fundamentals of secular society, in effect, in the country. Even though these political observers are intent on making a connection between these sentences and the general atmosphere surrounding the conflict between the authorities and the fundamentalist movement, especially following the discovery of its attempt to overthrow the existing system, the government seems to be anxious to keep the two issues separate. Dr. Sadeq Cha'ban says that the matter of the sentences of the Bab al-Shuwayqah incident has no political character. Rather, it basically falls within the framework of a crime that the entire Tunisian society finds abhorrent, because this society does not believe in violence, and this incident was characterized by the use of methods that prompted even some of the Ennahdah leaders to dissociate themselves from them.

Whatever the case, the test of the extent of the Tunisian authorities' adherence to human rights will be seen, as far as political observers are concerned, in what future measures are taken, as well as what sentences are passed on the fundamentalists by the concerned courts.

TUNISIA

RSP Secretary General Comments on Opposition Status

91AA0594A Tunis REALITES in French
26 Jul 91 pp 12-13

[Interview with RSP [Socialist Progressive Rally] general secretary Nejib Chebbi, by Moncef Mahroug; place and

date not given: "Nejib Chebbi Stands Aloof"—first paragraph is REALITES introduction]

[Text] The RSP general secretary distances himself from the government on certain issues, while giving it his qualified support on others.

[REALITES] How would you assess the relations between the government and the opposition two months after resumption of the dialogue?

[Chebbi] In my opinion, there are two ways to apprehend the relations between the opposition and the government. One that I would call the politicking way, which views this relation apart from the overall political context. And a political way, which views this relation as the expression of overall relations between the government and the citizens.

If we discuss the relations between the government and the opposition in a politicking way, we may say that these relations have outgrown the crisis stage, that contacts have now been established, that the debate goes on, and that the opposition and the government connect with each other.

But this approach seems extremely limited and does not in the least reflect the country's political dynamics. In my opinion, the relations between the opposition and the government matter only insofar as the opposition reflects the people's aspirations and concerns. From this point of view, the RSP's has reservations concerning the present political situation. In dealing with the political situation in Tunisia, the RSP stands by three fundamental texts.

The first one is the statement of 7 November. The second is the National Pact; and the third one, that is the two speeches the president made during the Gulf crisis.

When it states its adherence to a text, the RSP does not do so out of political opportunism, based only on present conditions. When it adheres to a text, it adheres to the principles that underlie this position or this text.

If we are to assess the status of liberties in Tunisia four years after the change of 7 November, I can safely say that political practice lags behind the principles announced on 7 November 1987.

If I am to discuss the cultural policy, for instance, I believe that the laws reflected the objectives adopted during the debate on the National Pact. We do not feel that the Tunisian school system will serve to build a nation possessing its own culture and civilization and intent on developing them. We have the impression that the school policy deviates from the objectives stated in the National Pact.

If I am to assess the Tunisian foreign policy, today, based on the extremely important and courageous principles stated in the speeches of 11 August 1990 and 26 January 1991, it seems to me that we are drifting away from these principles and that our will to adapt to the new political

realities is taking us on a slippery slope. Our will to adapt can drag us quite far, insofar as the current world situation is marked, in our opinion, by a U.S. dictate intent on penalizing the Arab States that showed independence during the crisis and on causing them to cut themselves off the Arab world and bow to U.S. will. This is extremely serious and far from the people's feelings that were forcefully expressed during the crisis, which confirmed the Tunisians' feeling that they belong to the Arab Nation and their will to be a part of the Arab revival.

I did not mention the economy, as Tunisia is going through an extremely serious crisis. The government is currently drafting the strategy for the next five years and consulting the opposition—that is a positive factor—but no policy has been adopted yet and, therefore, I would not want to mention economic choices prematurely; let's merely say that, without this year's record harvest, the economic situation would have been disastrous.

Therefore, in my opinion, the relations between the opposition and the government will be meaningful only to the extent that the opposition reflects the people's concerns as a whole, starting with the major choices to be made in the education policy, the foreign policy, the democratic reform policy, the higher-education policy, etc.

And, from this point of view, I can say that I see nothing coming. We express points of view, that's all. Therefore, I have the impression that, rather than progressing, the relations between the government and the opposition are marking time. I would also like to emphasize a very important factor in describing the political situation, namely the status of information. What is happening is frightening. Instead of demanding that TV and radio should play a greater role, the opposition finds itself in a position where it has to demand a return to freedom of the written press.

Freedom of the press has shrunk to the point of near extinction. And this is the result of a policy that did away with one of the important and essential achievements of the democratic revival—I would even say one of the essential achievements of the struggle for democracy in Tunisia, because freedom of the press experienced high points as early as 7 November. I would also like to point out with much dismay to the moral deterioration that is taking place in this sector, which is proof of the paucity of political ideas of certain media. I would like to mention the scandal that the latest issue of LES ANNONCES represents. Political life is stooping to a low level, both from a moral point of view and from the point of view of the arguments used by political "opponents" in their political struggle.

[REALITES] Why is it that, as you said, the opposition does not reflect the people's aspirations and concerns?

[Chebbi] I did not say that the opposition doesn't do that. The relations between the opposition and the

government have succeeded in bringing about an evolution of all these problems. This is where skepticism arises. And I believe that we are not progressing. Not because the opposition doesn't want us to, but the nature of these relations has not yet allowed all these questions to evolve and mature.

In my opinion, the essential is to release the wheels of political life; to begin with, to give real freedom to the written, spoken and televised press, and to allow not just parties, but all citizens as well, to say what they have to say. And, based on the liberalization of information, to think about reforming also the political system, to get it out of the monolithism that still characterizes it four years after the change.

There are talks of legislative elections. That's important. But that will first require a reform of the political institutions and the creation of a favorable political climate. The liberties must be guaranteed; the citizens must feel safe, they must have the means to say what they can; the parties must have the means to address the citizens.

Unfortunately, I say that we do not have these means to address the citizens, and therefore we do not have the means to increase our audience among the people, and to guide them. This is our job. And we cannot do it because there are monolithic concepts that preside over certain key sectors of political life, especially in the information sector. I do not understand why the "political game" is not made free so as to promote sound and true competition between the ruling party that has been on stage for 35 years and nascent opposition parties with little audience.

Citizens should know who their country's political leaders are; they should be able to choose which political party they will accredit with their confidence. Thus, we should truly institute a "democratic game."

[REALITES] The chief of state just raised again the question of by-elections. Will the RSP participate in these elections?

[Chebbi] The RSP has always had a positive attitude of sound cooperation with the government in order to reform the institutions and establish democracy in the country. When the chief of state, exactly one year ago, raised the question of enlarged partial legislative elections, we said "yes" without hesitation.

If this did not materialize, unfortunately, that was not because of the RSP. Today, the question arises again and we are asking two questions—perhaps I should say that we are setting two conditions. The first one is to create a sound climate, so that the people will support these elections and even accept the idea of a reform of the Chamber of Deputies. Also so that the latter will play its role, at least in providing impetus for political life.

Therefore, we need a sound political climate, one that will make citizens feel secure and will enable them to

participate in the reform. Otherwise, it will always be from the "politicking" point of view and all that will be achieved will be to give a few seats to the opposition.... That is something we will not accept, and I don't think that it is what the government wants.

Second, we do not want this presence of the opposition in the Chamber of Deputies to be a fictitious one. There must be a sizable opposition bloc capable of providing impetus for political life in the Assembly and, through the latter, for national political life. This would require at least 40 or so deputies from the opposition. This would assure the government of a large majority while enabling the opposition to really debate all the government's initiatives, all the laws. And, through the Assembly, to provide impetus for political life. This is necessary. Therefore, if these two conditions were met, the RSP would gladly participate in these elections and, together with the opposition and the government, it would look for the best formulas to achieve this objective.

[REALITES] Is the RSP ready to participate in elections in which the RCD [Democratic Constitutional Rally] would not participate?

[Chebbi] Actually, it is premature to speak of a formula, but that would probably be the least satisfactory in that it would once again look like "a gift" from "big" RCD to opposition parties.

But if we could agree on a program to reorganize political life, I don't see why we could not accept, for instance, a National Electoral Front that, based on a clear political alliance and clear objectives, would make it possible to introduce pluralism in the Assembly.

I would prefer an alliance in due form with the RCD, based on a platform that would be clear to each citizen, rather than having the RCD grant a few seats to the opposition. Again, it is still premature to discuss practical formulas; if there is a will to reform this institution, I think that formulas can be found.

[REALITES] We have the impression that the RSP is rather absent from the political scene. What is the cause for that?

[Chebbi] During the Gulf crisis, the RSP was very much present on the political scene. Actually, we chose to remain silent during this latter period. Because we noted the dual polarization between the RCD and the fundamentalists, and a trend toward general violent confrontation. We do not recognize ourselves in the turn taken by events. Why?

We fully agree with the government on the need to repress any acts of violence, any breach of the law, especially violent ones. But this must be done legally and according to the laws that guarantee the rights of each citizen. If repression oversteps the limits of legality, it

destroys the goal to which it is supposed to lead, namely democracy and the organization of peaceful relations among citizens.

But we do not agree that the fundamentalist question boils down to a mere phenomenon of violence. Fundamentalism is an important social, cultural and political phenomenon in Tunisia, and it must also be treated as such, which means that, while repressing the acts of violence which fundamentalism generates, because of its nature and its ideology, we must at the same time prepare ways out for a political evolution that will enable society, the nation, to digest this phenomenon and integrate it into its own fabric.

This is extremely difficult and it supposes the existence of a political strategy. Under present conditions, we cannot adhere to a point of view that would turn the question of fundamentalism into a mere question of political violence. It is true that this is one of its facets, and this facet must be dealt with vigorously and within the limits of the law; but we cannot reduce the fundamentalist phenomenon to a mere question of violence. It is a political question that must be dealt with as such. Legal repression should be only one element in a policy, not the entire policy or the only way to deal with the question of fundamentalism.

The RSP is not a pacifist party. It is in favor of rigor, which is required to guarantee law and order, the just repression of acts of violence. But this must occur within the context of a political strategy that will enable Tunisia to remain open to the citizens as a whole. This presupposes efforts on the part of the government, but also on the part of the fundamentalists who should give up violence and political totalitarianism. It is a matter of time.

We feel somewhat overtaken by the developments that are taking place. We are in contact with the government and we inform them most clearly of our point of view. We prefer standing back because we think that this situation cannot last and that, sooner or later, political solutions will have to be adopted. Then, the RSP will be ready to make a contribution in finding durable political solutions for Tunisia's problems.

[REALITES] Increasingly, there seems to be a gulf between the (realistic) leadership and the rank and file of parties. Doesn't that put the parties at risk?

[Chebbi] Anyhow, there is always a discrepancy between the state of mind of the rank and file and that of the leadership, in all parties and at all times. This, per se, is natural. But you are right, it should not lead to a divorce between the rank and file and the leadership, as this would cut them off their social base, i.e., the people.

Opposition parties are being realistic, and they are right. For if they do not follow a realistic policy, they will never achieve the desired objectives. They will reach a deadlock. I think that the opposition is biding its time. It is waiting for government initiatives.

If these initiatives are not forthcoming, I am certain that the opposition will act its part as opposition. If the consensus policy which we have called for now proves impossible, there is no harm in the opposition assuming its role of opposition. It has been done before.

Until now, we thought that by working together with the government—considering that there were democratic convictions and a joint project expressed through the National Pact—we could cause the political situation to evolve in stages toward that which we all aspire to as Tunisians. That is a country reconciled with itself as far as its civilization is concerned, politically independent, and democratic as far as internal relations are concerned.

If we are now “marking time” and going nowhere, if the consensus is no longer possible, the government should come to terms with itself as government, and the opposition as opposition.

Unionist Democratic, Communist Parties Form Front

LD0107205991 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 1 Jul 91

[Text] The Unionist Democratic Party and the Tunisian Communist Party have decided to coordinate together in order to form a progressive democratic front and to work together toward consolidating civil society. This would be based on numerous points of agreement in the analysis of the most important national issues in the political arena.

This plan was officially announced yesterday at a meeting in Gafsa chaired by Mohamed Harmel and Abderrahmane Tlili, the secretaries general of the two parties, who presented the analyses of their parties on relations between the opposition and the authorities; the role of the civil society in consecrating the democratic march; the stance regarding the phenomenon of following the example of the ancestors [salafiyah]; and the problems of economic growth, and other issues.

The address of Mr. Mohammed Harmel noted in particular: “We would like to lay the foundation for a responsible national opposition which would be able to positively contribute to pushing the country forward along the path of growth; to the development of the civil society; to facing up to the challenges and consecrating the democratic multiparty system; and to confronting the enemies of democracy, at the forefront of whom are those who adopt violence and conspire against the security of the country as a means of action which is rejected by ethics and the logic of civilized cooperation.” He called for gathering the efforts of all the democratic powers in order to firmly confront this grave phenomenon.

Concerning relations between the opposition and the authorities, Mr. Mohammed Harmel said: “We have entered into a dialogue with the authorities. It is not embarrassing to meet and cooperate with the authorities

because they are patriotic authorities. We are now living in an era in which constructive criticism has become an urgent necessity similar to the necessity of national unanimity on the essential issues; on consolidating the internal front; and on spreading true democracy. We must completely abandon the idea that the opposition should oppose everything.”

As for Mr. Abdallah Chabi, member of the political bureau of the Unionist Democratic Party, he concentrated his address in the name of his movement on the phenomenon of “salafiyah” which is widespread in numerous Arab countries. He pointed out that his party opposes all forms of violence and conspiracy and it is convinced that this phenomenon constitutes the greatest danger to democracy.

German Investment in Economic Sector Detailed

91AA0502A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 Jul 91 p 10

[Report by Ahmad Kamal Hamdi]

[Text] Bonn—Information published recently in the FRG indicates that direct German investments in Tunisia as of late 1990 totalled approximately 135 million German marks [DM].

That sum includes funds pertaining to reinvestment and general loans. However, it does not include German capital that has entered Tunisia through other European countries such as France and Belgium, for example.

Germany is second after France on the list of foreign countries that invest in Tunisia, while Tunisia occupies sixth place on the list of African countries in which the German economic and financial sector invests its funds.

German investments in Tunisia are concentrated in the machinery and electrical and electronic technology sectors; the clothing, textile, and leather sector; the oil sector; the import-export trade sector; German-Tunisian joint economic organizations; and other branches, such as construction, chemical products, paper and cardboard, metal casting, printing, and banking and financial organizations.

Among the most prominent German economic investment and development organizations that have invested in Tunisia is the German Investment and Development Organization [DIG], which is located in Cologne and participates in a number of developmental production projects throughout most of the Arab world. Although subordinate to the federal government in Bonn, this company nonetheless operates according to free market principles. It was established in the early sixties to encourage German investments and economic initiatives, especially development programs, in Third World countries.

The DIG in Tunisia participates in the Economic Development Bank in Tunisia, the Tunisian National Bank for

Tourism Development, and several economic organizations for the manufacture of cars, electrical transformers, loudspeakers, and socks. There is a joint German-Tunisian program to mine lead and zinc in Tunisia.

In the framework of a joint German-Tunisian conference organized by the DIG during the Hanover International Industrial Exhibition, which was attended by representatives of the Tunisian Agency for the Promotion of Industrial Investments in Tunisia, discussions were held on the potential for attracting more German investors to Tunisia, the opportunities and exemptions which the Tunisian Government offers to foreign investors, and the advantages offered by Tunisian markets in terms of: their proximity—as production and consumer markets—to Europe and the FRG; the low costs of investments, wages, and storage in Tunisia; and Tunisia's high-yield, specialized labor supply.

The seminar highlighted the substantial incentives offered by the relevant Tunisian authorities for establishing companies and concluding agreements intended to expand foreign investments in Tunisia. It also set forth the promotional incentives offered by the European group to European and German partners in the framework of what are known as the "Cheysson incentives," which aim to promote European investments in Tunisia and expand trade relations and the transfer of European capital to Tunisia and other Arab Maghreb countries.

Salih al-Hanachi, the general director of the Agency for the Promotion of Tunisian Industrial Investments, indicated his country's interest in attracting German investments and capital, especially since Germans were the first to take advantage of the opportunities and administrative and legal possibilities which Tunisia arranges to encourage direct foreign investments in Tunisia. He pointed to about 150 German economic, industrial, manufacturing, and financial organizations now operating in Tunisia in many manufacturing and investment fields, especially in the textile and clothing sectors, and organizations that manufacture spare parts and electrical and mechanical products.

According to information published in Bonn, more than 15,000 Tunisians are currently working in joint Tunisian-German companies and organizations.

Current Tunisian investments in the FRG, which do not exceed DM 10 million, are concentrated primarily in several projects belonging to joint stock companies, several branches of the clothing and textile industry, and miscellaneous tourism services.

Measures To Reduce Unemployment Detailed

91AA0521A Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE
in French 22 May 91 p 5

[Article by Larbi Chennaoui: "Fight Against Unemployment: The Wind of Realism"—first paragraph is LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE introduction]

[Text] Twenty-four million dinars available for the Job Initiation and Adaptation Program (FIAP). Population targeted: 152,000 youths with no skills at all.

A wind of realism is blowing on the job policy. Hence a strategy that was debated at length during a recent CMR [expansion not given] chaired by the chief of state. One of the main components of the new approach will consist in giving impetus to the Job Initiation and Adaptation Program known as FIAP, which was the subject of a national information seminar in Kairouan, one of the regions most affected by unemployment.

Desperate Measures for Desperate Ills

Beyond the struggle—which after all is the result of economic conditions—against "Nadhaoui-type" agit-prop based precisely on this theme, there is a political will to better reflect reality in the regions and to complete the mosaic formed by the SIVP1 [Course of Initiation to Professional Life for University Graduates] (for university graduates), the SIVP2 [Training Course for High-School Graduates] (for graduates of high schools, job-training contracts, vocational schools, and job-training centers), and apprenticeship (which is not well thought of).

Created on 2 March 1991, and since then tested, the FIAP is shifting to the next higher gear. Hence the authorities' promptness in disbursing. In fact, under a collaboration agreement with IRBD [International Bank for Reconstruction and Development], 24 million dinars have already been allocated. Enough to celebrate? No. Because if you consider the scope of the program—to help all the unemployed without skills or diplomas (close to 152,000 youths aged 18 and over)—billions more will be required. Of course, this is only an assumption. What matters the most is to put this tidy sum to use immediately to benefit these "unemployed" youths. How? Six ways were considered, two of which will be used at this stage:

—The implementation of training programs to benefit businesses that have expressed actual needs for skilled labor. Something concrete therefore. In fact, the business manager sends a request detailing his needs to the regional delegation to job training. The regional commission takes a close look at these needs. If the implementation cost does not exceed 50,000 dinars, approval is given immediately.

Above that ceiling, the national commission on job training and employment has a right of supervision. Probably to avoid side-slips. Once the needs have been expressed, examined and awarded, an agreement is signed. Its terms include—to mention only the essential—a firm promise to hire the youths that will be given job training; according to the supervising ministry, job training will be provided by instructors under contract and may be by an instructor selected by the manager of the business concerned. The objective is to restore the credibility of job training among employers who, it would seem, have not much faith in it. In addition,

training may take place on the very premises of the business concerned. The FIAP will pay for the instructor and the training materials (raw materials, tools, etc.) and give the young trainee a grant of 65 dinars per month for at most 11 months.

For the sake of equity, priority will be given to youths aged over 20.

—Second way: implementation of training programs to benefit the regions that show an obvious deficit as far as independent labor is concerned.

Actually, beside the demand from business managers, there is a demand from young people who want to work on their own. In this case, it is up to the youth to present a project, ask for financing, and indicate the specialty or specialties considered. The ceiling is 3,000 dinars. After approval of the regional delegation.

Let's sum it up so you will not get confused: The FIAP's role is to fight unemployment among the youth; for their part, the youths must register through the regional delegation or through the employment bureau (fill in a form giving their first and last names, address, desired specialty, etc.). That is all there is to it.

When the time comes, the duly-registered youth is contacted. An offer is made to him as expressed by a given employer. It is up to the youth to decide.

With a guarantee to be hired, a grant to subsist meanwhile so they do not have to live off their parents, they can only consider themselves fortunate. Especially since this new formula is geared to the regions, aiming to create training "basins" to attract investors in areas where labor is available, and therefore stimulate employment.

With the above-mentioned budget, the FIAP is said to have enough to operate for three years. But the program promises to continue after that, to acquire other resources, and radically change many factors that were assumed to be immovable.

Italian Investment in Tourism Industry

91AA0502B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
23 Jun 91 p 10

[Text] Tunisia—The Tabarqah tourism promenade project has entered a decisive phase. All of the property set aside for the construction of hotels has been sold, and there remain only a few relatively large lots prepared for the construction of residential apartments and set aside for a specific class of investors

A source in the Tourism and Handicrafts Ministry told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Italian investors have the lion's share of the investments. An Italian tourism group has acquired a major share in the project. Its representatives came during the Gulf war and signed an agreement with the Tunisian Government to establish a financial company to implement hotel projects in the

area. The group also purchased the promenade hotel building, which is now ready to receive guests. A presidential resolution regarding the ratified agreement is expected shortly.

Infrastructure projects in the area have progressed well. Work on water, electricity, and sewerage projects will be completed this year. Regarding the airport, the runways have been completed, 35 percent of the work on the buildings has been completed, and the balance of the work on the buildings is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

Projects to be established on the grounds of the Tabarqah promenade are of two types. The first pertains to residential apartments, the land for which has been purchased by Tunisian and Arab financiers, who have prepared plans and submitted applications to build on this land. The second type pertains to hotels.

Four investment groups have purchased land, submitted applications, and begun implementation: Dar [Jarbah], the Arab International Bank of Tunisia group, the Tunisian-Saudi group [Sa'idan-Boujabal], and al-Marjan Construction.

One of the persons in charge of the project noted that the Tabarqah promenade is the first step in stimulating tourism in this quiet area, which is known for its charming natural views. He indicated that the area includes a long coast suited to the establishment of large tourism projects.

He stated that the Italian group, which has been more enthusiastic than others about this project, submitted an application to acquire a large area of land of about 400 hectares in an area near Tabarqah called [Ezzouaira].

Regarding the effects of the Gulf crisis on this project, Fathi [Mardasi], the general director of the project, stated that the complications were temporary and that matters returned to normal, given that there has been a noticeable return of German, British, and Italian tourists, and, to a lesser degree, French tourists.

Efforts To Remedy Economic Situation Reviewed

91AA0502C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
7 Jun 91 p 14

[Article by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qalibi]

[Text] From Tunisia, Muhammad 'Ali al-Qalibi analyzes the energetic political activity being undertaken to rectify the disturbance in Tunisian economy caused by Saddam Husayn's invasion of Kuwait.

While the Tunisian Government is preoccupied with monitoring domestic, regional, and international political situations following the Gulf war and the complications which it produced, another front no less important is occupying Tunisian governmental agencies and worrying them somewhat: the country's economy and the effects of the Gulf war on several important sectors.

Recently, the Tunisian Government has been showing considerable concern with the formulation of plans to stimulate economic activity and mitigate, as much as possible, the damages from which Tunisia's economy began to suffer several months ago. It is feared that these damages will have social ramifications if the situation continues.

In any case, economic developments in Tunisia are inseparable from the developments ensuing directly and indirectly from the explosion of the Gulf crisis since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the war to liberate Kuwait.

When Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990, Tunisia was suffering from an economic crisis manifested, in particular, by a high unemployment rate and a foreign debt of over \$5 billion. This crisis stemmed primarily from a drop in agricultural yields due to three consecutive years of drought and a drop in European markets' demand for North African products in general, including those of Tunisia, because of the admission of Spain and Portugal into the European Common Market and the competition posed by these two countries to North African agricultural products. Another factor contributing to the crisis was the stiff positions which most of the European countries began to adopt regarding North African emigre manpower: Many of these workers were sent back to their countries, eliminating the possibility of a significant number of workers from these countries travelling to European labor markets. These factors have led to increased unemployment among Tunisian youths.

Tunisia's economic crisis developed despite the relative advantages that the country enjoys, the most important being the record number of foreign tourists it recorded in 1990, when more than 3 million tourists brought \$900 million into the country. Also, Tunisia has attracted the attention of many countries, especially the Gulf countries, regarding the establishment of high-yield investments and economic and construction projects. Therefore, Tunisia enjoys facilities and aid from a number of countries and Arab and international financing funds.

The Gulf crisis overturned all scales and measures and deepened the economic crisis affecting Tunisians.

Tourism revenues this year totalled only one-third of last year's \$1 billion, according to estimates of Tourism Ministry officials. These officials emphasize that more than 200,000 people benefit from tourism, which means that, given the expected drop in tourism revenues for the current season, only one-third of these 200,000 will benefit from tourism, while the other two-thirds will join the list of unemployed who are throwing their weight on the state in search of jobs. The total number of unemployed, 312,000, is a significant 15.3 percent of Tunisia's total labor force, according to statistics of the offices of the Social Affairs Ministry. In an agitated political situation, the presence of this large number of unemployed youths cannot be a source of comfort to the Tunisian Government.

At this time, many sources of financing that were available in the past have stopped. Foreign aid is no longer making its way to this country at the same rate that was usual in the past. This is also the case regarding investments and foreign financing. All of this is attributed to the fact that the countries which had been directing capital toward Tunisia are no longer doing so, either because their own domestic circumstances and concerns, or because the results of the Gulf war have made them hesitant about disbursement and spending, waiting for the waters to clear, especially as the war's effects have not been completely eliminated and there is still some waxing and waning.

Another factor that has added to the burden of the crisis is the American dollar's rise against the Tunisian dinar, which, in effect, has increased Tunisia's general debt to almost \$6 billion at present. An increase in the dollar's value is also conducive to increasing Tunisia's imports bill. If we remember that Tunisia is an importing country, we realize how great the burden is. It would be possible to offset the decline in the Tunisian currency's purchasing power if Tunisia's export market were opened wider. However, as stated previously, the European markets are no longer as open as they were in the past, which has led to a crisis in the disposal of the agricultural surplus this year.

The Tunisian Government is trying to take action in more than one area to confront the existing crisis. That is the context for understanding the overseas visits being made by senior Tunisian officials. These visits aim primarily to diversify foreign markets, open new foreign markets for Tunisian tourism and commodities, encourage foreign countries to invest in Tunisia, and to develop Tunisia into a tourism stop for the people of the countries the Tunisian officials are visiting.

Also worthy of interest is the visit made recently by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Habib Benyahia to Washington, where he made efforts to renew Tunisian-American relations, which had witnessed some tepidity during the Gulf war. As a result, U.S. aid to Tunisia dropped. Hurried efforts are now being made to restore that aid to its previous level and Tunisian foreign affairs circles are expressing optimism in this regard.

In a related development, the Tunisian Government is currently engaged in putting the final touches on a five-year plan, the eighth of its type in the field of its development plans.

The government hopes that this plan will help create about 70,000 jobs and achieve an economic growth rate of 6.5 percent annually. In any case, the Tunisian Government, which is well aware of the dimensions of the economic challenges facing it and the social effects which these challenges might have, seems bent on meeting these challenges based on a policy of self-reliance and a determination to remedy the causes of imbalance and deviation from which the administrations of numerous Third World countries usually complain.

First Trimester Trade Statistics Reported

91AA0521B Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE
in French 5 May 91 p 5

[Unattributed article: "Foreign Trade; Satisfactory 1991 Results; Tunisia Will Import Oil Already in 1992"]

[Text] Foreign trade results for the first three months of the current year show a more sustained progress of exports than of imports.

During that period, exports amounted to 807.5 million dinars, i.e., an 8.6- percent increase over last year, whereas Tunisian imports increased by only 5 percent, to 1,144.7 million dinars.

These results were presented at a meeting of the National Commission on Export Promotion and Follow-Up, last Friday afternoon in Tunis; the meeting was chaired by Mr. Sadok Rabeh, minister of national economy.

The development of exports during the first quarter of 1991 also resulted in a slight reduction (2.9 percent) of the trade deficit, from 347.1 million dinars to 337.2 million dinars.

Record agrifood exports were noted; they increased by 445 percent. The growth involved essentially olive oil, dates, citrus fruit and wine.

Export Trends During the First Quarter of 1991

Textiles and leather exports, for their part, increased by 17 percent compared with the first three month of 1990, and this sector accounts for an increasing share of total exports (42 percent instead of 39 percent).

Similarly, export revenues generated by the mechanical and electrical industries increased by 10.3 percent, making up 12 percent of Tunisian exports.

Revenues from oil exports increased slightly (1.2 percent) compared with the same period last year.

However, raw phosphate exports decreased by 62.7 percent by value, and the tonnages exported dropped by 63.8 percent.

Revenues from phosphate fertilizer exports decreased by 3 percent during the first quarter of 1991, while phosphoric acid exports increased by 32.8 percent.

Exports of miscellaneous industrial products decreased considerably (28.7 percent), due to a decline in exports of cement, paper, cardboard, and processed paper products, ceramics and glass, and perfumes.

As far as the geographic distribution of trade is concerned, trade with UMA [Arab Maghreb Union] countries showed a surplus of 21.7 million dinars, and sales to our Maghreb neighbors increased by 45.8 percent.

With the EEC, our exports increased only by 4 percent, and the coverage rate decreased from 79.2 percent to 75.9 percent.

Trade with non-EEC West European countries showed a deficit of 44.1 million dinars, while exports to East European countries increased by 29.3 percent.

As for exports to Asian countries, they increased by 127.3 percent.

Trade with Arab countries was somewhat slacker.

In his allocution, Mr. Sadok Rabeh mentioned the impact of the Gulf crisis and the creation of the single European market on Tunisian exports, and he emphasized that, starting next year, Tunisia will have to import oil.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**Government Budget Procedures Criticized**

91AE0434A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
31 May 91 p 9

[Report from Abu Dhabi by Taj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haq: "The Chronic Budget Problem in the UAE: Late As Usual! Good Oil News But Accounts Muddled in Wake of War"]

[Text] The UAE [United Arab Emirates] federal budget is yet to be released even though the fiscal year is half over. There is no definite indication that this year's budget, as far as its date of issue is concerned, will fare better than its predecessor, which was released just a few hours before the end of the fiscal year.

Delays in releasing the UAE budget are nothing new, but there had been optimistic expectations that the 1990 budget would be the last such instrument delayed beyond the constitutionally mandated release date, and that the 1991 budget would be issued early. Those expectations were based on a number of assumptions that may be summarized as follows:

The 1991 budget is to be issued by a new government formed in the fourth quarter of last year under Vice President Shaykh Maktum bin Rashid al-Maktum.

Initial measures by that government, and its composition, which combines the experience of seasoned ministers with the vitality of a youthful generation of first-time portfolio holders, led many to believe that the late budget problem would be the new government's first priority, since it triggers a long chain of problems that have to do with competent performance and with the speed and quality of project implementation.

A decision reached by the new government after a few meetings to create ministerial high commissions to function as miniature councils of ministers indicated that it [the government] was diligent in confronting certain chronic fiscal and administrative problems.

The commission on services, chaired by Shaykh Sultan bin Zayid al Nuhayyan, includes the Minister of

Finance, as well as the ministers for such basic services as health, education, water and electricity, public works, and planning.

A second commission was created for information. A legislative commission chaired by the Minister of Justice is to review and supplement federal laws and legislations.

Another point is that the 1991 budget comes a time of improved revenues, thanks to rising oil returns in the second quarter of last year as the result of higher oil prices and expanded oil production in the UAE.

Oil revenues, despite softening oil prices in the second quarter of this year, remained stable and did not suffer the sharp fluctuations experienced in 1986, 1987, and through the first half of 1988.

Total revenues that year [as published] paralleled their level—considered good—for 1989 and for the first half of 1990.

The significance of stability in UAE oil receipts is that it enables the member emirates of the federation to determine the ratio of their contributions to the state's general budget—a ratio that can amount to 50 percent of revenues in the individual emirates.

Abu Dhabi, Dubayy, and al-Shariqah, who are the major contributors to the federal budget, depend on oil revenues for their contributions. Oil market instability in prices or production would therefore make it difficult for those emirates to realistically project the amount of their federal contributions and the federal government would consequently be rendered unable to forecast budget revenues until it actually receives each emirate's financial contribution.

Therefore, the federal budget resorted to making projections on the basis of preceding budgets, and has avoided funding new federal projects, except within narrow limits.

As a result, expenditures became a hand-to-mouth affair and were disbursed monthly without consideration for year-long projects and without making allocations against projected revenues that may never materialize.

Stable and rising UAE revenues are not yet reflected in a timely budget, but it must be said in all fairness that the new government has, in the nine months since its inception, managed to regulate disbursements. Payables to merchants and contractors are no longer delayed beyond their normal due dates.

As a matter of fact, all pending financial obligations were finally settled in the past few months. They were previously carried over from one budget to the next in a manner that veiled their true character as delayed payables.

A third reason for optimism for a timely budget release was the new spirit rising in the region in this post-Gulf war period. The GCC states are confronting structural

problems and are using all available Gulf resources in the service of coordination and cooperation. The emirates will not be able to properly make their needed contribution to that effort if they themselves were suffering internal structural impediments and manifestations of duality.

The Gulf war, despite its many negative effects on the region, is therefore considered by many to have made a positive contribution to strengthening the federal structure of the UAE, which is now Gulf-oriented with aspirations for a united Gulf entity.

Naturally, in view of this, the most significant factor in solidifying the state's federal structure would be to resolve the problem of delayed budgets and, it would necessarily follow, the problem of budget contributions.

New Variables

Those were reasonable bases for optimism, but we must recognize a host of temporary variables that prevented those reasons for optimism from being translated into empirical solutions to federal budget problems in the Emirates.

The first and most significant factor is that rising revenues and improved oil returns in the federation's member emirates are accompanied by an increase in both federal obligations and in basic requirements.

The Gulf war was expensive in terms of the costs of domestic defense requirements, as well as in terms of carrying a share of the regional and international burdens it imposed.

The government found that priorities have changed in the post-war period, especially as they relate to the degree and type of defense commitments whose expansion and development have been mandated by the war.

It follows, therefore, that the government, being in a period of transition, would be unable to determine the magnitude of obligations or the size of contributions, especially since such a determination would not be a function of short-term planning. Rather, those obligations will constitute fixed expense items for years to come; i.e. the obligations and the contributions will extend beyond a single year and will recur over a period of several years.

The matter calls for a great deal of care and deliberation, even if the problem of delayed budgets has to be endured some more.

Another point is that the new federal government is going through a structural stage where priority is given to resolving pending financial issues and to defining what projects are needed for the state. Existing projects have been in operation for a long time and are due for expansion or renovation.

Field studies are required before such undertakings are translated into projects and federal budget appropriations.

Perhaps this is why the government has created a "mini-council of ministers" for services, to be chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Sultan bin Zayid al-Nuhayyan. The function of this council will be to debate and determine need, thereby facilitating and expediting decrees by the Council of Ministers and by the preeminent authority.

Temporary factors have precluded the budget's early release, but it is obvious that the reasons for previous delays are no longer valid and have given way to temporary factors that are easily controlled over time.

State Budget for 1991 Described

91AE0434A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
6 Jun 91 p 9

[Article by 'Ali Ibrahim: "New UAE Budget Scheduled for Release Next Week; Expenditures at Last Year's Level but Most Earmarked for Services; Get Lion's Share of Allocations; Deficit Declines and Self-Generated Ministry Income Rises"]

[Text] Figures and projections for the 1991 UAE [United Arab Emirate] state budget will be announced next week following the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers, according to official sources.

The new budget, it was learned, will remain close to last year's level of 15,645,419,000 dirhams, reflecting an increase in rudimentary expenditures without undermining the rationalization policy which has been in effect since the mid-1980's. The new budget is also expected to reflect an actual deficit reduction from last year's levels, in accordance with government efforts to keep expenditures in line with receipts.

The UAE Council of Ministers, at its 13 May meeting, reviewed state budget projections for the current year in light of requests by the ministries for 19.7 billion dirhams in allocations. This is an increase of 4.1 billion dirhams over last year.

The increase, according to Ahmad Hamid al-Tayir, minister of state for financial affairs, covers 3.2 billion dirhams in current expenses, as well as 900 million dirhams in project allocations. All the ministries had made requests for increased allocations and asked that 900 new positions be added to the current government service roster of 58,700 jobs.

The Council of Ministers asked the Ministry of Finance and Industry to review the needs of the various ministries, examine general expenditures, and give priority to utilities and basic services such as housing and electricity. Preliminary increased allocations requested by the ministries had [initially] caused the deficit gap in this

year's new budget to widen to about 6 billion dirhams from 667 million dirhams in 1990.

The UAE state budget, scheduled for release next week, will come early, in contrast with previous years when budgets were delayed by oil price fluctuations, since actual revenues could not be determined under conditions of oil market vacillation. Gulf war complications also delayed issuing the law covering the 1990 budget until late last March.

Expenditures of federal ministries are covered by temporary monthly allocations based on one-twelfth of previous year's disbursements. Accounts are settled at the end of the year when the budget law is issued. Funds are expended with an eye to reducing nonessential expenses in line with a general rationalization policy adopted in the mid-1980's in the wake of plummeting oil prices. The rationalization policy is currently being implemented by a ministerial commission of 6 ministers chaired by Shaykh Hamdan bin Rashid al-Maktum, minister of finance and industry.

The rationalization policy has paid off in past years in actual deficit reductions, which are expected to be maintained in this year's budget. Self-generated revenues of the federal government are also expected to rise under a plan to boost those revenues to some 30 percent of all budgeted receipts. Such self-generated revenues come primarily from fees collected by ministries for their services and from the returns on investment and on holdings in foreign and joint ventures.

Contributions by Abu Dhabi and Dubayy, as a share of their oil receipts, still account for the major portion of federal budget revenues.

UAE federal budget revenues rose from 11.2733 billion dirhams in 1987 to 13.2743 billion dirhams in 1988, but shrank back to 12.93 billion dirhams in 1989 before shooting up last year to 14.97876 billion dirhams. This increase of about 30 percent is attributed to improved oil revenues, to rising self-generated income by ministries, and to meeting new needs as new service projects are actuated for the first time in years.

The federal government's non-oil general receipts have doubled to about 2.5 billion dirhams from 11.6 billion dirhams [sic] in 1987, while the actual budget deficit shrank substantially from 1.9 billion dirhams in 1987 to 667 million dirhams last year, thanks to rationalized and reduced spending.

The federal government's budget for last year puts spending at 15.645 billion dirhams but year-end statements of actual income and expenditures are expected to show a much lower figure, at around 13 billion dirhams.

Aggregate allocations in the UAE federal budget are mostly earmarked for current expense.

Emphasis is placed on the service ministries. The highest federal budget allocations are earmarked for the Ministries of Education and Culture, Health, and Electricity.

The Ministry of Education and Culture was allocated 2.2 billion dirhams in 1990. UAE University, which is an autonomous organization with a separate budget, was allotted 522.8 million dirhams while the consortium of Colleges of Advanced Technology was provided 172 million dirhams. The Ministry of Health was earmarked 2.41 billion dirhams and the Ministry of Electricity 884.2 million dirhams. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs last year received the fourth largest allocation—537.6 million dirhams. Allocations for the other ministries were much lower.

Dams, Water Storage Projects Funded

91AE0477A *Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic* 6 Jun 91 p 1

["Zayid Praises Initiative of Sultan al-'Uways; Several Dams Built at His Personal Expense"]

[Text] Shaykh Zayid Ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], praised the initiative of citizen Sultan Ibn 'Ali al-'Uways, who has had several dams built in various areas of the country at his own expense in order to dam up and store underground water. The cost of these dams totaled 120,113,416 dirhams. In addition, three other dams are currently under study; their cost would be approximately 129 million dirhams.

After receiving a report submitted to him by Sa'id al-Raqbani, the minister of agriculture and fisheries, the president expressed his great delight and happiness over this "good initiative from this substantial citizen, which merits praise and esteem on our part, and from the government and people of the UAE, because this contribution will return well-being and prosperity to the nation and citizens."

The storage capacity of these dams, built by citizen Sultan Ibn 'Ali al-'Uways at his personal expense, amounts to 24 million cubic meters of water per year, that is, the equivalent of 5.28 billion gallons. This amount could double with the repetition of floods in the rainy season in one year.

The citizen built a dam on Wadi Hadhaf, near the area of Masfut in 'Ajman. Its storage capacity is 3 million cubic meters, i.e., 660 million gallons. Its total cost was 25,228,051 dirhams. The Wadi al-[Quz] Dam, near the area of al-Huwaylat in Ras al-Khaymah, has a storage capacity of 4 million cubic meters, i.e., 880 million gallons, and cost 31,368,274 dirhams.

The citizen also erected the Wadi al-Tawiyayn Dam in al-Fujayrah emirate, with a reservoir capacity of 14 million cubic meters, i.e., equivalent to 3.08 billion gallons, which cost 34,875,442 dirhams, and the Wadi Zikt Dam, near the village of Dadnah in al-Fujayrah emirate, with a capacity of 3 million cubic meters, or 660 million gallons, at a cost of 28,641,649 dirhams.

There are three other dams under study in different areas of the country whose storage capacities are 6.7 million

cubic meters, i.e., 1.474 billion gallons of water. The total cost would be 129 million dirhams. They are the Wadi al-[Busayrah] Dam, the Wadi al-Naqab Dam, and the al-Wurayyah Dam.

These dams will help fill underground reservoirs, safeguard private and public property, improve water quality, and reduce the shortage of water.

Women's Group Initiates Door-To-Door Health Programs

91AE0477B *Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic*
8 Jun 91 p 10

[Article by Shahirah Ahmad: "Project Success Lies in Sound Planning"]

[Text] Their joy is overflowing. They are receiving certificates of their graduation as pioneering health leaders in the Zayid national project for health training, after a year and a half of effort, study, and applying this information to women in remote areas, in order to assist them. With their own eyes, they reaped the experience that bears the fruit of health consciousness and protects children. This is reflected in the hygiene of the region in general. They have not had the opportunity to perfect the arts of nursing, child care, and the other matters they received in the courses, but that does not lessen their joy in meeting with women's groups, serving the community, and improving family conditions in various areas.

Because of the significant importance of the project in raising awareness, developing special abilities for women, and the positive repercussions on the totality of family and social life, AL-BAYAN investigated these issues with several of the health leaders participating in this project.

Najah 'Abd-al-Qadir, directress of the al-[Wathbah] Branch, said that this large national project will expand its importance by contributing to achieving the values of volunteer work in areas of community and environmental service, through seeking help for national cadres of women, resources, and advanced facilities. It will transfer sound health concepts and values to a larger number of family members in order to overcome health obstacles, problems, and harmful customs in society and the environment. "We should also not exclude the importance of this project in bolstering a system of voluntary cooperation and work.

Goals Achieved

"In our tours to clean the environment, and with regard to personal hygiene, we have concentrated on the avoidance of contagious diseases; dehydration illnesses; problems of fluids; domestic accidents and the required first aid measures; implementing healthy nutritional regimens, with their relationship to disease prevention; and unhealthy behavioral actions, such as refusing to take, or taking too much, medicine when afflicted with disease. In my opinion, all of this has contributed greatly to

achieving the goals for which this project was established, with evidence of a tangible increase in environmental cleanliness and significantly improved health conditions among the targeted families, who responded and cooperated with the leaders for the success of the project."

A Good Influence

From her point of view, Nura al-Mansuri thinks that this project has had a good impact on the people of the community that came in contact with the leaders, since it gave many of them the opportunity to carry out their role more completely. "Many of our sisters wished to join with us in the project because of the advantages they had heard of, and because it enables the female citizen to pursue a job that returns benefit and profit to her, instead of her wasting her time uselessly.

"At the outset, we also felt fear. We didn't know how the people would react to us. Would they welcome or reject us? My tour began with people of the district in which I live. I felt proud when they called me a health leader. I showed them the methods and lectures that I had studied, which had been explained to us by the best doctors in the country. If I began kindly and gently with the newest housewife, so as not to embarrass her or hurt her feelings, she would promptly respond to me and welcome me. Everyone cooperated with me, which encourages me to ask all the good daughters of my country to exert their utmost efforts to join in the parade of progress that the state is experiencing in all areas.

Response and Welcome

Concerning her experience with the project, [Mauzah] 'Abdallah from 'Ajman said: "We applied the project in three areas of 'Ajman—Murbah, Qidfa', and [Qayrat]. The people's response to us was very good. They used the instructions we explained to them. It is true that I met with some difficulties at first, such as poor awareness and a lack of receptiveness toward inoculations, but now it's different. They are responsive to inoculation and to our comments. The project is very successful."

Hasan Sa'id from Umm al-Qaywayn stated: "At the beginning, we met with great difficulty in reaching people. Some of them shut their doors in our faces, but after they learned our purpose and the project's benefits, they opened their hearts and doors. They welcomed us, and the housewives were delighted with the new information that we explained to them, especially on nursing, child care and pregnancy, and how to safeguard her health and the health of her unborn child.

"As for me, I benefitted considerably from this course and I learned a great deal about how to care for public health and the health of children and infants. We have learned important health information that will protect our children and community. We had no difficulty in understanding these matters during training, because they were close to our reality and the demands of our

daily lives. Now, after the course, I can treat and relieve any sick person—God willing—even enroute to the hospital."

Gains

Isma' Khalifah stressed the same thing, but she added that this course gave her experience in dealing with others, the development of social relationships, and making friendships. She also learned many scientific facts about man and his health, about children and ways to deal with their problems, and about precautions that must be followed in daily life to reduce domestic and traffic accidents, and to avoid the dangers that result—in many cases—from neglect.

New, important, and honorable success is added to the record of women in remote areas, as well as in major cities.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Increasing Disillusionment With Unification in South

91AE0490A Paris LE MONDE in French 10 Jul 91 p 7

[Article by special correspondent in Aden, Jean Gueyras: "Yemen: Fragile Unity; Part 2: The South in Distress"—first paragraph is LE MONDE introduction]

[Text] One year after unification, disenchantment is still greater in the South than in the North (LE MONDE, 9 July). To such an extent that, as Aden is edged out by the Sanaa government, many "Southerners" almost regret the "desocialization" of the southern part of Yemen, although at the time it was received with much relief.

The last of the countless red stars that used to adorn Aden's official buildings has vanished. The slogans of the Yemenite Socialist Party (PSY) have been carefully washed off the city walls, and most portraits of the four "historical" leaders whose assassinations on 13 January 1986, triggered a bloody internal civil war in South Yemen, have had the same fate.

On the hills that overlook the harbor, the huge color picture of Abdel Fattah Ismail, the martyr ideologist of the PSY, has been replaced by an imposing peace dove. The Abdel-Fattah Ismail and Ali-Antar museums, and the museum where the assassination of the four "martyrs" has been reconstituted, in the former headquarters of the political bureau, are in a state of neglect, for lack of funds and visitors. They may soon be regrouped, we were told, in a single building devoted to South Yemen history. The monumental complexes housing the PSY and the Institute of Scientific Socialism—gifts from East European countries built in the purest Soviet style—look like ships adrift, abandoned by their crews. Before leaving for Sanaa, the PSY leaders kept their promise and did all they could to clean Aden of anything that might remind that it had been a center of socialist influence. At the time, the "desocialization" of South

Yemen was enthusiastically welcomed by the people, eager to believe that a new era of prosperity was about to begin.

Disenchantment soon set in when the people in the South discovered that interventionist socialism was gradually replaced by the wild capitalism imported from the North. "Before, our socialist leaders would exploit us," a worker told us bitterly, "now, the Northerners are systematically bleeding our country.

"A Figurehead on a Shelf"

Northern traders coming to the South with their pockets full of rials exchanged on the black market never intended to invest in the country; all they wanted was to get rich. They engaged in thousands of speculations, buying on the cheap anything that might some day increase in value, and they brought with them all of the vices of the north. Since last year, the stalls at the Aden market, which used to be hopelessly bare, have been overflowing with vegetables, fruit, and other victuals.

But their prices are prohibitive (subsidies were abolished after unification) and many people cannot afford them. The market where "quat" (the local euphoric drug) is sold, which did not exist one year ago, looks exactly like its counterparts in Sanaa working class neighborhoods. It drains a considerable part of the meager wages of the South Yemenites, who are now free to use every day this substance that ruins their health and is a burden on the family budget.

"The former South Yemen," an academic stated, "has become the East Germany of reunified Yemen." Actually, the explosion in prices has affected the Southerners more than the Northerners because the latter find ways to double or even triple their salaries by moonlighting or engaging in black market and smuggling. An attempt to introduce an unofficial foreign-currency market in the South was thwarted by the police, which is now headed by a Northerner.

"There is every indication that higher up, i.e., in Sanaa, people want Aden to become a provincial town," a journalist commented; "even government employees' salaries are paid late, in extreme cases up to seven months late. As if some circles wanted the Southerners to lose confidence in unity, and especially in their leaders in Sanaa."

This is about what is happening now. Invectives against PSY officials are a common occurrence. "They have betrayed us and abandoned us," an employee in a large hotel stated; "we are disappointed; we were better off before unification. The high cost of living is killing us and we no longer have the subsidized staples that helped us survive." Another employee compared the PSY to "a figurehead on a shelf," without any real control over what happens.

The "Achievements of Socialism"

The South Yemenites, who rejected the PSY in the hope that President Saleh's General Congress Party (PCG) would improve their lot, find that they are "worse off now." Totally adrift, they no longer know where to turn, especially when they see corruption setting in slowly but surely through Northerners working at the customs, at the port and at the airport. The customs director (a Northerner) was recently seen imposing arbitrary duties on Somali women carrying parcels of clothing for the local markets. Diplomatic missions cannot escape what amounts to an unofficial racket if they want to get their diplomatic bags quickly. Even when violently hostile to the former Southern regime, most of the people of Aden remain faithful to what they call the "achievements of socialism," which they now see disintegrating among the widespread laxness of the supposedly reunified Yemenite society.

There have been recent reports of intense arms smuggling from Saudi Arabia and North Yemen to the Chabwa and Hadramaut governorates, in the South, where armed tribes can be found, as in the North. At nightfall, "organized gangs" spread terror on the beaches of Aden, where only recently lovers were perfectly safe. The number of break-ins has markedly increased, and car owners must now lock their vehicles.

In order not to be bothered, women increasingly wear the Islamic veil and dread the promulgation of the law allowing polygamy and divorce, like in the North. Some South Yemenites do not wait; they go to Taez, a one-hour drive to the North, to contract an entirely legal second marriage, or to get a quick divorce from a religious judge. "We have the impression that they are systematically destroying anything that was good in the South," we were told by an intellectual who is beginning to believe that there is a plan to keep the former South Yemen in a state of permanent underdevelopment. A UNDP (UN Development Program) employee told how UNDP officials refuse to allocate to the South credits that are not used in the North.

The Sanaa government's oft repeated promise to turn Aden, which at the time of unification was called "Yemen's commercial and economic capital," into a free port capable of competing with Dubai or... Hong Kong, may remain a dead letter. After being postponed several times, the law turning Aden into a free port was supposed to be promulgated on the first anniversary of unification. It was not, and one of the project officials recently said, half-joking, half-serious, that it was as difficult to turn Aden into a free port as to "turn a church into a nightclub."

Lay People Against Islamists

The committee in charge of studying the project has also adopted the name "Committee for the Development of Free Ports in Yemen." That hints that Aden may not necessarily be chosen as the site of the future free zone. There is increasing talk that Hodeida, in the North, is

best located to play that role. The very active "Hodeida lobby" praises the advantages of the Northern port, equipped with more modern equipment than Aden, which lacks infrastructures, modern communication means, and a skilled labor force.

The dropping off of Aden, which some see as a deliberate decision of the central government to weaken the PSY's rear base in expectation of the elections that will decide on the future course of reunified Yemen, is beginning to worry the party officials that have remained in the South. Although they, too, like the Northern leadership, have rejected socialism for good—seeing it as the PSY's major historical mistake—they refuse to give up some of its positive aspects. They reject any concession to Islamism, which proved its strength in the North at the time of the referendum, and they remain faithful to the secularism that is strongly rooted in the South.

Nevertheless, the Islah, the union regrouping the religious and the tribal leaders, has achieved a breakthrough in the South since unification, with the help of the League of the Sons of Yemen, a Southern party of tribal origin. Its constituency, repressed under the socialist regime, is reorganizing with the help of Islah. This alliance between tribes and Islamists, however, failed to establish itself in Aden, where secular traditions are stronger. The losing battle that Northern Islamists have been fighting for over a year against the Aden beer brewery, which they call "a center of communism," has increased their unpopularity. Especially as these most fierce enemies of the "diabolical brew" do not mind spending a weekend in Aden once in a while to enjoy this forbidden pleasure.

One thing is certain: the struggle against the tribal-Islamist alliance is a trump card in the hands of Southern leaders. It enables them to boost their popularity among their traditional constituents who are in a state of utter confusion.

YGR Speech Upon Opening Headquarters in Ta'izz

91AE0508A Sanaa AL-SAHWAH in Arabic
13 Jun 91 p 5

[Article: "Speech by YGR Higher Committee on Occasion of Inauguration of YGR Headquarters in Ta'izz; Our Foreign Policy Is Based on Adhering to Freedom and Equality, Achieving World Peace, and Supporting International Cooperation; Grouping is Founded on Constants Entrenched in Heart of Nation That Has Displayed its Distinguished and Unique Features and has Defined our People's Cultural Identity According to These Features; We Must all Bolster Consultative Option and Work To Preserve Single Yemen Through Sound Action Far From Political Machination, Deception, and Intrigue"]

[Text] At the ceremony held last week to inaugurate the YGR [Yemeni Grouping for Reform] headquarters in

the Governorate of Ta'izz, brother Muhammad Ibn-'Abdallah al-Yadumi delivered the YGR Higher Committee's address. Following is the full text of that address:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful, may God alone be thanked, and prayers and peace be upon the last of the prophets.

Attending brothers, God's peace, mercy, and prayers be upon you:

It pleases me to address you in the name of the YGR Higher Committee, on the occasion of the inauguration of the YGR headquarters in the Ta'izz Governorate, in these blessed days in which our people celebrate the first anniversary of creation of the Republic of Yemen and restoring their unity on 22 May 1990, in this valiant city and from this square, in which columns of martyrs fell while carrying the torches of freedom and sacrificing themselves for their beliefs and convictions.

Brothers, the YGR has materialized in response to positive developments that have affected our country, and that are embodied in restoring Yemen's unity. This is the dream that had tickled our people's imagination for a long period of time as an important strategic step on the path of bolstering and nurturing the elements of the awakening and progress of our people, with cultural dimensions and positive characteristics which have their roots deep in history. This step has been coupled with another important strategic step embodied in the tendency to entrench the democratic option, and to bolster the mainstays of political and party pluralism. This is in order to ensure the principle of the peaceful rotation of power, and to underline the value of dialogue as a civilized means of interaction between the various political forces in a give-and-take aimed at serving the national causes in a positive and effective manner that seeks to elevate, develop, and advance the country, and to restore the country's vanguard image as a country which founded a lofty and well-built civilization.

Reform Equals Deep-Rooted Constants

Brothers, I wish to stress at the outset of my address that this grouping is founded on constants which are deep-rooted in this nation that has molded its identity, highlighted its unique characteristics, and defined the people's cultural identity accordingly. These constants are summed up in two mainstays: Islam and Arabism. Islam, with its tolerant creed that lays down the mainstays of rightness, goodness, and justice, and shari'ah [Islamic law] in which virtuous values and the causes of charity, right guidance, and upright behavior prevail. These have molded this nation and prepared it to lead the entire world. "You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in God." [Koran 3:110] [God also says:] "Thus have We made of you an ummat [nation], justly balanced that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Apostle a witness over yourselves." [Koran 2:143]

It is no surprise that the second constant is Arabism. Yemen is the source and cradle of Arabism, and the sons of Yemen are the supporters of Islam, the carriers of Islam's banners, and the vanguards of Islam's conquests and victories. The Apostle, may Gods' peace and prayers be upon him, was true when he said: "Faith is Yemeni and wisdom is Yemeni."

Therefore, no doubt tarnishes our belief that the only way our proud people can rise is by their adherence to this orthodox religion and their following it as a system that controls our words and deeds, belief and action, imagination and behavior—a doctrinal system that controls our vision of the universe, of man, and of life and a legislative system that regulates man's cultural, political, economic, social, and informational relations. [God instructs:] "Say: Truly, my prayer, and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death are (all) for God, the Cherisher of the Worlds. No partner hath He. This am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to His will." [Koran 6:162, 163]

I also wish to stress that this religion should be understood purely and clearly and far from narrow religious fanaticism and from the hateful racist tendency that dons the attire of religion and then turns religion into a mere instrument to accomplish its narrow political whims and aspirations.

This religion has only come to release the freedom of man versus man with sincere worship to God alone and to emphasize the values of justice, unity, and consultation. Whenever it has descended upon a nation, this religion has united that nation after division, has spread learning in it after ignorance, and has created in it sufficiency and stability after starvation and fear.

Any condition that seeks to stultify a nation after learning, to disunite and divide it after unity, to spread fear and disease after security and health, to entrench class distinction after equality and fraternity, to monopolize power after a wise consultative system, is a condition that has no connection whatsoever with Islam even if it raises Islam as its slogan and dons Islam as its robe.

Need To Unite Efforts

While establishing its reform program upon our people's genuine beliefs and values, the YGR asserts that keeping these constants pure and clear requires that the efforts be focused and united, and that selfless sacrifice in lives and money be made to protect this identity from the imports of an intellectual invasion that is futilely trying to infiltrate it, and from a secularism that is attempting by all means to break and fragment the unifying principles and values. This should be done so that we can embark on a sincere effort to develop this beloved homeland, and so that we can work to lay down the foundations of the homeland's modern social, political, economic, and cultural awakening.

Honorable brothers, while underlining these constants, we hope that all of the political forces will rally behind

them and will crystallize them in our life, in pursuit of chaste and pure political action, and in order to strengthen a uniting effort that gives our dear homeland the benefits of economic development. This development should free our economy from subservience and be comprehensive and balanced: A social development that deals objectively with the social maladies which are ailing us, which have infiltrated our society. These maladies undermine the strength of our family unity, and arouse anger against our social solidarity, whose mainstays are laid down firmly by the teachings of our tolerant Islam and a cultural awakening that restores to this nation's culture its purity and its cultural pioneering in all spheres. Islam and this cultural awakening open up this culture to the entire world in an influential manner, entrenching this nation's heritage scientifically, and absorbing innovations of the world's peoples while steering clear of blind emulation, which sees only the froth and dumb attachment to everything, from which only further ignorance and subservience can be reaped.

Our people are glad to be living under the umbrella of the united state which has restored to them their glory, and rescued them from the malady of partition that prevailed over them for a long time—a state which has unified their efforts so that they would flow strongly into the course of building and advancing the country. We underline our adherence to the single Yemen on the basis of Islam which establishes unity on the foundation of faith: "And hold fast, all together, by the rope which God stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves" [Koran 3:103]. We appreciate and bless all the efforts that have turned the dream into reality, and we hope that the united state's constitutional institutions will be completed in accordance with the constants of the people, who believe in a creed that refers all of life's affairs to God and in a system whose lines of action emanate altogether from the Islamic vision of the universe, of man, and of life. We hope that this will be done so that we can enjoy reassurance, abundance, and a carefree life: "Eat of the sustenance provided by your Lord, and be grateful to Him: A territory fair and happy, and a Lord oft-forgiving" [Koran 34:15].

It has become everybody's fate to safeguard the single Yemen. Any endeavors to break this people's unity must be confronted by bolstering the domestic front and keeping it firm, and by devoting vigilant and focused attention to modernizing and developing our armed and security forces and strengthening their spirit of giving and sacrifice on the basis of firm belief in the principle of: "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including your steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of God and your enemies, and others whom ye may not know but whom God doth know" [Koran 8:60]. This must be done far from cheap partisan oneupmanship, lowly base personal ambitions, false allegations, and hollow statements. Therefore, we honestly and sincerely urge all the political forces and the Yemeni people in their entirety

to agree on a word of truth and to rally behind all the fundamental national issues so that we can keep the country single and united.

Honorable brothers, we must all work to entrench the consultative option and to exert ceaseless efforts to preserve this gain through sound action far from political machination, deception, and intrigues. We should do this by opening the channels of dialogue with all the political forces existing in the Yemeni arena so that we could reach agreement, without fanaticism or arrogance, on all the issues that concern the country and the citizen.

Brothers, we in the YGR follow in foreign policy a course that is not confined to achieving the national interests. We are allied with the world through human instinct and we interact with all of the world's issues with this instinct. Our positions on these issues are based on clear principles that proclaim what is right and tip the scales in its favor, so as to ensure that which is straight and constant. In light of this, our foreign policy is based on adhering to freedom and equality, achieving world peace, strengthening international cooperation, and establishing international justice. In all this, our objective is to enjoy national independence, safety, security, and an economic and social awakening.

We also view with hope the intifadah [uprising] of our struggling people in Palestine. This intifadah carries in its belly the seed for liberating both land and citizen from the oppressive occupation.

We also view with hope this Islamic awakening which has spread in the entire world, and in our Arab and Islamic world in particular. This awakening carries in its bowels the seeds of the comprehensive, humanitarian, Arab-Islamic cultural plan on which we rely to lead this world away from the courses of oppression and into God's wise path, from the tyranny of earthly principles to the justice of Islam, and from the narrowness of this world to the vastness of the here and the hereafter.

Finally, honorable brothers, this is our vision of a number of domestic and foreign issues. We have not dwelt on their details but have summed them up, because this is not the place for lengthy dissertation. We wish to assert that the YGR represents a comprehensive reform movement that derives its vision from the Islamic vision of reform which covers all aspects of life.

In conclusion, we urge the Yemeni people with all their sectors to rally behind our grouping so that we can achieve a comprehensive awakening for our dear country, in order that it could assume a position of leadership in the world. Thank you for responding to our invitation to you to attend this celebration.

"I only desire your betterment to the best of my power; and my success in my task can only come from God. In Him I trust and unto Him I look." [Koran 11:88] God is always true.

God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

Leader of Grouping for Reform Interviewed

91AE0445A Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Jun 91 p 7

[Interview with Yasin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, leader of Yemeni Grouping for Reform; place and date not given: "We Disagree With the Rulers Because They Insist on Separating Islam From the Laws of the State"]

[Text] Our interview is with Yasin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, a leader of the Yemeni Grouping for Reform and a leading figure of the Islamic movement. As you know, the movement led broad popular actions before the plebiscite, demanding a clearer expression of Islamic commitment in the proposed constitution. My first question therefore was:

[AL-SHA'B] What is the general situation in fraternal Yemen, given the disagreements between the ruling parties and the Islamically oriented opposition groups over the issue of the constitution? What were the reasons for boycotting the plebiscite, and what factors lay behind this position?

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Happily reunified Yemen, like any Arab country, contains agreements and disagreements in its midst. Its people are assailed by the age's entire contradictory intellectual and ideological legacy which reached Yemen after having grown old in its cradle in the East and West and after bearing fruit in innovations that are distorted births. However, an atmosphere in which a country's people are given a chance to air their pent-up opinions through Third World democracy, though this may not please their rulers, and though the light may not find a way into their everyday life, is easier than an atmosphere that suppresses freedoms, kills abilities and energies, and stifles the spirit. Such now is the relatively free overall atmosphere in Yemen—a country of faith, wisdom, understanding, and blessed unity.

The phenomenon of Arab disagreements at the state level and the political parties, organizations, and institutions with differing principles, goals, and purposes can be traced to the view of enemies that these countries and institutions should not be in a secure position.

The nature of the disagreements between the present rulers of a country like Yemen and the popular opposition with its peaceful and sound Islamic orientation becomes clear in this light.

The real opposition and disagreement is between the government and the people. The Islamic opposition expresses and represents the latter, along with all the political forces that identify with the people and express their aspirations.

However, the insistence and extremism of those in power regarding eliminating the supremacy of Islamic law over the legislation and daily life of the Muslim Yemeni people; their insistence on making Islam only an inward belief with no power over the daily life of the people; their insistence (after the manner of the church or nonreligious secularism) on separating Islam from the

state and detaching it from its unique relation to legislation for the life of community and state—these things have driven the Muslim Yemeni people, its ulema, and its political forces that believe in Islam as a doctrine, law, and way of life to oppose the ruling government and offer it the following two points of sincere advice:

1. Certain sections of the constitution must be amended to agree with Islamic law. Provisions appropriate to the current period in reunified Yemen must be added.
2. The method of the plebiscite must be corrected. It must be bound by the Shari'ah principles in which the nation believes.

The popular opposition has followed peaceful, legitimate ways and given lawful advice out of respect to God, the Prophet, and those in authority. Unfortunately, it has encountered only rejection and extremism from the government and insistence on treating the problem in the modern Arab way—which is to treat a problem by something even more problematic. The government has ignored advice from ulema, political forces, and the entire people that certain sections of the constitution should be amended to agree with Islamic law and with the current period of unity, and that the way of putting the constitution to a plebiscite should be corrected, so that it agrees with the principles of Islamic law and makes Islamic law a standard against which the constitution is measured. The government obstinately refuses to amend and correct the constitution because it desires to maintain its own interests embodied in the proposed constitution.

The government's extremism and insistence became manifest in its refusal to amend or correct and in its campaign to make people say yes to a flawed, defective, contradictory, patched-up proposal—one that has been imposed by the autocratic method of Third World rulers whereby the rights of the people are habitually suppressed.

You should know that this proposed constitution consists of patched-up ideas put forward by a few people nearly 19 years ago between two conflicting, hostile, and warring regimes before the blessing of unification.

The people, with all their devoted ulema and sincere groups, have therefore objected to it. They have demanded what would be easy for the rulers to implement. When the latter did not respond to these demands and sincere advice, Yemen's ulema issued a fatwa to boycott this kind of plebiscite on the unamended proposed constitution. All the people and political forces supported them. The ruling authorities nevertheless stubbornly insisted on launching the proposed constitution with its defects and contradictions. They insisted on a plebiscite conducted in the manner of those who do not respect their people or the knowledgeable decision-makers among them.

They insisted upon launching a constitution that places God, the drafters of the constitution, and human legislators on the same level—that places God's law and man's law on the same level. God is far exalted above such a thing!

The ulema's fatwa and their stand on the need to amend some sections of the constitution and correct the method of the plebiscite therefore obtained broad popular support from the people, political parties, organizations, and trade unions. This became obvious in the people's response to the large march called by ulema who enjoy the people's confidence. Never in its history had Yemen witnessed such a march.

[AL-SHA'B] What is the situation, now that the plebiscite has been held and the constitution approved?

[Abd-al-'Aziz] As for the position after the plebiscite, the demands of the ulema and the people will remain. They will be expressed in all peaceful ways, until sections of the constitution are amended to agree with Islamic law, safeguard rights and freedoms, and safeguard the nation in its religion, persons, minds, interests, property, and homeland.

[AL-SHA'B] How do you view the economic situation in postunification Yemen? What are the ways to cope with the situation?

[Abd-al-'Aziz] Yemen's economic problem is the same as the region's. It does not arise from lack of national resources, overpopulation, or lack of specialists. Its primary origin is the departure of the economy from God's path and the seeking of imported solutions in other Eastern and Western paths. It also arises from mismanagement, bad planning, and ill-considered plans by those responsible for the economy. The bad situation and economic decline are not attributable to reunification—an achievement for which our people long yearned. Rather, they can be entirely attributed to bad planning and mismanagement by those in authority. They manipulated the people's resources for the narrow partisan interests and advantages of those in the regime and to the detriment of development requirements and the people's priority needs. Furthermore, there was endemic bribery, malfeasance, irresponsibility, opportunism, and profiteering. We consider Yemeni unity a source of economic solutions that will prepare for a life of stability, brotherhood, happiness, and prosperity. But this will happen only on the basis of the path of the Creator and Provider, may He be praised, and then by making use of such modern experiments as agree with the intent of the Shari'ah and further the interests of the community. Thank God, we in Yemen have the resources to enable us to contain the economic crisis. These include oil resources, the encouragement and development of agriculture, and the possible founding of banks.

[AL-SHA'B] What is your position on the fraternal Arab countries? What is your position toward America?

[Abd-al-'Aziz] In fact, our position is based on principle. We are not hostile to persons, organizations, political parties, countries, or nations, but to the use of principles and methods that contradict the principles and methods of Islam. Our way of dealing with these contradictions is to correct them by fair means, following the guidance of the Koran: "Call thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and good admonition, and dispute with them in the better way. [Koran, 16:125]"

Our position toward America and other countries is dictated by our Islamic principles and the interests of our Arab-Islamic nation. It also takes account of America's stand toward us and toward our rights, independence, stability, and security, her respect for legitimate mutual interests, and her position on our just causes, one of the most important of which is the Palestinian cause.

[AL-SHA'B] What is your position concerning Yemeni women?

[Abd-al-'Aziz] Our position toward women is that of Islam, which made women the likes of men. As the Messenger of God, upon whom be peace and blessing, said: "Women are the likes of men." Islam gave women what no other law or system ancient or modern bestowed upon them and set them in the place that is fitting for them.

[AL-SHA'B] What influence have Islamic trends in Yemen had on groups of the Islamic tendency in Egypt, the Sudan, Yemen, and the countries of Arab North Africa?

[Abd-al-'Aziz] The Islamic trends in Yemen are not alien to the Yemeni people—a people of faith, wisdom, understanding, and unity. These trends flow from the people's real feeling that they must contribute to realizing the Islamic cultural alternative in the area of

Islam's world mission and its humanity-encompassing system. These trends and influences finally lead us to further Islam's cultural project through active and earnest solidarity with all workers in the Islamic field throughout the world.

[AL-SHA'B] Do you think the multiparty experiment in Yemen could be a source of benefit to the other Arab countries?

[Abd-al-'Aziz] The multiparty system in Yemen is a fruit of unity. Still in its infancy, its features have not yet emerged fully in everyday political and economic life and elsewhere. The periods of political autocracy whose vestiges are still a threat have not yet been transcended. This will be true until people can put the system in order and present it as a model whose advantages can be put to use and whose negative aspects can be avoided. We hope that it endures and succeeds and that it remains safe from tyranny and political autocracy. Then it will be an experiment whose positive features will be a source of benefit. But the text of the constitution is still vague and unclear when it comes to guaranteeing the permanence of a multiparty system and the transfer of authority by peaceful, consultative means. We do not know what the authorities may come up with after the plebiscite. They may start interpreting constitutional texts in a way that serves their political goals, at the cost of any guarantee to base the political system firmly on a multiparty system and peaceful transfer of authority. There are indications of this in the government's idea of a broad national front. This could be considered a system of one leading party, with all other political parties submitting to the leadership of the ruling authority and its ruling party. We do not know how the political parties law will turn out. Will it follow the lead of the text of the constitution in its generality and vagueness, or will it clarify the text to guarantee a multiparty system and peaceful transfer of authority?

AFGHANISTAN

Guerrillas Offer POW Swap With Soviets

91AS1220A Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL
in English 10 Jul 91 p 7

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan (AP)—Muslim guerrillas have offered to release a captured Soviet soldier in exchange for 25 fighters imprisoned by the Kremlin-backed government of Afghanistan, sources said Monday.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said serviceman Qurban 'Ali would be freed if the Kabul government agreed to release the guerrillas.

Qurban, a 30-year-old soldier from Nauabad village in Soviet Tadjikistan, was taken prisoner in 1984 in north-western Herat province.

A spokesman for Jabha Shaheed Afzali (Martyr Afzali Front), the group holding Qurban, said he had been moved from Herat to a base near the border with Pakistan. The group is affiliated with the militant Jamiat-e-Islami, or Party of Islam, considered to have the best military organization of the seven major resistance parties.

The exchange offer was made to the Soviet Embassy in Islamabad two weeks ago, the sources said. The Soviets, however, denied they received it.

"It's news to us," said one Soviet diplomat, also speaking on condition of anonymity.

Moscow sent the Red Army into Afghanistan in December 1979 to prop up successive communist governments and to help Afghan troops fighting the guerrillas, known as Mujahideen or Islamic holy warriors.

Since the last soldiers left Afghanistan in February 1989, the Kremlin has demanded to know what happened to 312 Red Army soldiers who didn't return home.

Scientific Cooperation Discussed With Hungary

91AS1208A Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
5 Jun 91 p 2

[Text] Mohammad Anwar Shams, Minister of Higher and Vocational Education met in his office yesterday with Mr. Mihaiy Golub, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Hungary in Kabul.

Views were exchanged on expansion of cultural, scientific relations and other interesting issues between the two countries. The ambassador expressed further cooperation in grant of scholarships and fellowships, scientific relations and exchange of scholars in different fields.

Likewise, Eng. Abdul Ghafoor Rahim, Minister of Water and Power received in his office economic counsellor of the embassy of Czech and Slovak Republic in Kabul on 3 June.

They talked on the Water and Power projects due to be established with the cooperation of the Czech and Slovak Republic in Afghanistan.

Women's Council, Soviet Delegation Sign Protocol

91AS1208C Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
29 Jun 91 p 2

[Text] A protocol was signed on 27 June, between the All Afghanistan Women's Council (AAWC) and the delegation of the mothers of the Soviet veteran soldiers.

On behalf of the Afghan side the protocol was signed by Belqis Chairperson of AAWC and from the Soviet side by head of the delegation Present were B.N. Pastokhov ambassador-extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union to the republic of Afghanistan, Soraya, Secretary General of the Afghan Red Crescent Society, and Roshan Selan, deputy head of the international relations commission of the National Assembly.

According to another report, the delegation attended a press conference on the same day was participated by local and foreign journalists in the Soviet house for science and culture.

The head of the delegation highlighted gains of their tour to the Republic of Afghanistan.

Soviet Delegation, YUA Sign Protocol

91AS1208B Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
20 Jun 91 p 2

[Text] A cooperation protocol was signed between the central council of the Youth Union of Afghanistan (YUA) and the central committee of the Soviet Komsomol in the headquarters of the union yesterday.

On behalf of the YUA the protocol was signed by Mohammad Ibrahim chairman of the Union while from the Soviet side the protocol was signed by Dorrdey Habibullah secretary of the central committee of the Komsomol.

According to another report the Soviet delegation left Kabul yesterday.

Technical Cooperation Protocol Concluded With Soviets

91AS1208D Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
29 Jun 91 p 2

[Text] A technical cooperation protocol covering repairs and rehabilitation of some systems of Salang tunnel was concluded on Thursday by the Ministry of Construction Affairs and the economic counsellor of the Soviet embassy in Kabul.

Present were also Dr. Faqir Mohammad Naikzad, Minister of Construction Affairs and the leading staff of ministry and some members of the Soviet embassy.

On behalf of Afghanistan, the protocol was signed by Eng. Abdul Salam Muhtasebzada deputy minister in construction affairs and on behalf of the Soviet Union, by Petrinski, caretaker of the Commercial Consulate of the Soviet Embassy in Kabul.

New Governor Appointed in Badakhshan

91AS1209A Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
5 Jun 91 p 4

[Text] Badakhshan, 5 June (BIA): The new governor of Badakhshan was introduced by Abdul Samad Qayoomi President of the CM Department for Local Organs to the officials and peoples representatives of the province in a function held in the province yesterday.

Abdul Razaq, new governor extended his gratitude for the trust laid in him by the government and promised every cooperation for serving the people and realisation of national reconciliation policy.

Government Encourages Private Enterprise

91AS1210C Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
25 Jun 91 p 4

[Article by Nafisa]

[Text] On the basis of the policy on promotion and protection of the activities of the national traders and private entrepreneurs, Chambers of Commerce and Industries (CCI) is functioning to the benefit of the national economy in the country. Achieving of the socio-economic progress in the country stands as the main objective of this institution.

This organ as a trustworthy organisation are composed of the broad strata of traders, capital holders, national entrepreneurs and the owners of the small and medium scale industries. Keen attention is paid to the light of the fruitful guidance of the government. This organisation renders commercial services and establishes industrial enterprises throughout the country.

Construction and setting up of small and medium scale production units aimed at raising domestic production is one of the main work directions of this organ. Taking advantage of the 50 million ruble credit of the Soviet Union, the department for industries of the CCI cooperates with the national entrepreneurs in setting up of the joint venture production projects. On the basis of this credit, 41 small and medium scale public production projects including the bakeries will be established with the participation of the national capital holders in our country. The construction work of some of these projects have been completed and commissioned.

For example, to meet the need for bakery products, Asmaie, Herei, Omar and Amu bakeries were set up in Kabul city and two others were established in Herat and Kunduz provinces. The construction work and montage of the projects are going on and some of them will be completed and commissioned in the current year.

Moreover, on the basis of this credit practical measures have also been adopted on the establishment of the construction projects and joint venture forwarding and transportation institution. Some joint venture industrial projects will also be set up with the cooperation of other countries in Afghanistan in future. For example in the light of the constitution of the country which has paved the ground for foreign investment and the establishment of foreign private enterprises in the Republic of Afghanistan, some industrial projects will be set up with the participation of India and Turkey in our country.

Manufacturing of medicine, conservation of meat and vegetables, manufacturing of non-alcoholic beverages, sponge making, manufacturing of paint, paper production, manufacturing of bicycle tires and tubes, production of toilet utensils and different kinds of cremes and etc. are included in the projects.

The construction and establishment of these projects will be a positive step toward upgrading the domestic production on the one hand, and can be regarded as a positive way for the consolidation of economic and technical cooperation of the Republic of Afghanistan with other countries.

Three New Power Stations Installed

91AS1210B Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
25 Jun 91 p 4

[Text] Kabul, 25 June (BIA): Three power stations have been recently installed in Masjid Etifaq, Sari Tapai Kartinau and Pashtun Kot, Chehl Soton, Kabul.

The spokesman said that each of the stations had a capacity of 40 KVA power at a total cost of Afs. [afghanis] 64.3 million from Bulgarian credit and local sources.

The installation of these power stations have been completed by the employees of Power Construction Department in a serious effort before the target plan.

Reconstruction of Qandahari Bridge Finished

91AS1210A Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
17 Jun 91 p 4

[Text] The Kandahari bridge in Logar province, damaged earlier was reconstructed recently and commissioned yesterday by Dr. Faqir Mohammad Nekzad, Minister for reconstruction affairs.

The Minister thanked the work-team and the staff of the Tsarandoy general operative command in Logar province for reconstructing the bridge and ensuring its security.

A related source reported that the reconstruction work has cost Afs. [afghanis] 15146000.

Promotion to Rank of Major General Announced

91AS1209D Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
29 Jun 91 p 1

[Text] As per a decree of Najibullah, President of the Republic of Afghanistan Colonel Pilot Mohammad Basir s/o Mohammad Mousa has been promoted to the rank of Major General in appreciation of his outstanding and praiseworthy services in defending the homeland and the people.

Election of New Mayor Reported in Kunduz

91AS1209C Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English
2 Jul 91 p 2

[Text] Kunduz, 1 July (BIA): The first meeting of the elected deputies of Kunduz municipality was held in Kunduz city on 29 June.

After recitation of some verses from the old Quran Engineer Shah Wali was elected Kunduz mayor.

Sheberghan Elects New Mayor

91AS1209B Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in english
29 Jun 91 p 4

[Text] The first session of the elected deputies of Jauzjan municipality was held under the supervision of the electoral commission of municipalities in the headquarters of Sheberghan city municipality yesterday.

The session began with the recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran and then as per the law on municipality elections, Awliaqul Hamkar was elected as the Sheberghan mayor.

NEPAL

Consolidation of Democracy Viewed

Prime Minister's Speech

91AS1341A Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 11 Jul 91 pp 1, 7

[Words in boldface, quotation marks as published]

[Text] Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, replying to questions on the policies and programmes of his government raised by the members of the House of Representatives, hoped today that the Opposition would accept the harsh realities of the country and provide active support to the government in accordance with the democratic tradition in the day to day administration of the country, in institutionalizing the development of democracy and in eliminating poverty from the country. For his part, Mr. Koirala promised: "The government will accord priority in its policies to the sentiments of the Parliament in accordance with the constitution and commitment to the rule of law."

Right Advice: The Opposition in a democracy, according to Mr. Koirala, is not a stream of negative protests but it consists of colleagues who provide the right advice to the government. The Opposition has an equal load of responsibility to the people as the government does. "In my view, there is Opposition and not antagonism in the parliamentary democratic system."

Mr. Koirala identified hunger, illiteracy and poverty as the common enemy of the government and the Opposition which should be eradicated through the joint efforts.

The Prime Minister prefaced his reply to questions at the House by paying tributes to leaders like the B.P. Koirala and Subarna Shumsher and said how 32 years ago when Nepal had its first democratic parliament historic decisions relating to the abolition of the status of 'Raja and Rajautas,' zamindari, land reforms and forest were taken at the House.

"It was from this parliament 32 years ago that the late Mr. B.P. Koirala cherished a vision of a democratic and prosperous Nepal. I am here today to pick up the thread and continue the chain started by those great people," he said.

Then he moved on to pay tribute to the martyrs who laid down their lives for the restoration of democracy in Nepal and reminded the House of the gigantic task of building a new Nepal. We are here in the Parliament to create a prosperous Nepal."

Mr. Koirala, who began his own political career from among the peasants and labourers said that the priority should be for the uplift of those poor people who cannot speak out for themselves. "Not only are our people watching us doing this but the entire world is looking at us as we consolidate our democracy."

Concrete Shape: "From the debate and discussions in the Parliament and the positive conclusions I feel that our resolution and commitment to democracy has now begun to take a concrete shape," he said.

Prime Minister Koirala, stating that in the past days there had been comments, advices and criticisms of the policies of the government in the Parliament to which the attention of all had been drawn, cautioned the members against forgetting the national priorities, commitments made to the people and the agreement for fighting against poverty in the process of playing the Opposition role. "Let us not deviate from our common objectives."

He reiterated the government's commitment to the sovereignty of parliament. "We believe not in the secrecy of the government decisions and activities but in the openness of the government in accordance with the democratic traditions and practices."

The Prime Minister said that his government had fulfilled one commitment to the people by presenting the Mallick Commission report to the Parliament.

Mallick Report: The Mallick Commission was set up by the interim government to look into the economic and political crimes during the Panchayat regime and the report was under the consideration of the government. Mr. Koirala presented the report to the Parliament earlier this week.

He said the government believed in taking action against any individual in accordance with the law. Therefore, the report had been submitted to the House, he said.

Mr. Koirala informed that the government had already decided to recover the amount of money taken as advance or in other context from different agencies by various people under the Panchayat rule for political objectives. Concerned agencies have been instructed for the implementation of the same.

Prime Minister Koirala reminded that the Opposition like the government was responsible to remove the scarcity and sufferings of the millions of poor people who cannot speak for themselves and not only to the employees of the government who are already getting some facilities.

The sentiments and aspirations of the poor people must be reflected in all political ideologies whatever their names may be.

Employees' Demands: Referring to the support to the employees' demands, the Prime Minister said that it was not the government's view that the demand for additional facilities by fixed income employees are wrong. In a democracy, any section of the society can put up its demands within the constitution.

Mr. Koirala said the government wants to resolve the problem through dialogue and all should understand the economic condition of the country, the limitations and compulsions of the government. But, the process of resolving the problems cannot go against the norms of social justice, he added.

The Prime Minister asked who was the first beneficiary of the development of the country, the unorganized poor agricultural labourers of the village who have been just liberated from the constant exploitation of the arbitrary Panchayat rule or the organized section of the society who is already enjoying some benefits even in limited quantity.

The government will, however, endeavour to provide facilities to all sections of the people within the means and resources of the country, he added.

Mr. Koirala warned at a time when the reactionary forces were looking for the opportunity to inflict a blow to the new born democracy, any trouble originating from the demands can pose a danger to democracy.

National Consensus: Prime Minister Koirala appealed for a national consensus to make the multi-party democracy meaningful. For this, he said, the section of the society already receiving some facilities should, instead of demanding additional facilities, show the ways to the

government to invest the country's means and resources for the benefit of that section of the people which is deprived of the minimum facilities of life. The government policies and programmes were presented to the Parliament with this expectation.

Then Mr. Koirala moved on to explain the government policies on different subjects.

There will be no discrimination of any one on the basis of the language, caste, religion and creed. The government is committed to develop various languages spoken in Nepal in the form of national languages and the places of religious and cultural importance will be protected and preserved.

On the citizenship question, the Prime Minister said, the problem arose because such a sensitive issue as this was politicized during the Panchayat regime.

He said: "It is not proper to use serious subjects like the citizenship issue related with the country's unity and integrity for political purpose."

Citizenship: The government will adopt the policy of providing citizenship to all Nepalese permanently living in Nepal without any discrimination and administrative hassles, he said.

Prime Minister Koirala said the local level units at the villages, towns or districts will be made effective and powerful on the basis of decentralization. Formulation and implementation of local projects will be done through these units.

Agriculture is a high priority area for the government. Despite this, however, problems of declining production and the growing dependence on agriculture of the people for employment have further compounded the problems in the agricultural sector.

The government will gradually resolve the problems confronting the agricultural sector.

The Prime Minister said the objective of the green revolution is to increase production instead of organizing political meetings on the farms.

Support to Farmers: Support to farmers involves improving their condition and reach modern agricultural tools to them.

Provisions for fertilizers, improved seeds and agricultural loans should be made simple.

Dual ownership of land was a problem left over by the Panchayat regime and the government is committed to end this. An end to this practice in accordance with the law can alone solve the problem and establish the right of the tiller on the land.

Referring to the process of organized destruction of natural forests over the last several years and the resultant problems, Mr. Koirala said that the government had launched an extensive programme to inform

the people about the adverse effects of the destruction of forests on environment. The government had also started the process of taking action against the defaulter, remove encroaches from the government forests and seize trees felled illegally.

On the problems of the landless people, Prime Minister Koirala said that the arrangement for the settlement of the landless people on the available land will be made by collecting records of such people.

Agro-based labour oriented industries based on the indigenous raw materials will be set up to promote export and produce items to substitute imports.

The government's privatization policy was not a mere transfer of property but an effort to get maximum returns. Likewise, the foreign investment in Nepalese industries will be encouraged in accordance with the national requirements and priorities.

Private Sector: Mr. Koirala said that importance was attached to the role of the private sector in development activities which was an attempt to mobilise the participation from the people's level for raising the national production. The government policy of encouraging the role of the private sector in industries, irrigation, education and health is guided by the fact that the supply of consumer goods cannot be improved by controlling industries producing them.

Nepal's commerce policy is to diversify its trade on the basis of the countries and items of trade and import development construction and consumer goods required for the country.

The transit policy includes uninterrupted right of transit for the imports and exports to the sea. Trade and transit treaty with India will be concluded in accordance with the requirements and benefit of Nepal and to resolve the problems in this front.

New Industrial Policy: A new industrial policy is being formulated in which emphasis will be laid on the indigenous raw material and protection to industries based on labour and local skill.

An improvement has been seen in the country's trade and balance of payment situation with India. The revaluation of the rupee against the Indian currency, although a modest one, was to reflect this change. This will stabilise the prices of certain commodities and efforts will be made to reduce the prices of some goods if there is the possibility for the same.

The government has adopted a policy of encouraging the private sector to maintain the supply of consumer and construction goods to check artificial price rise. A programme to control rising prices is under the consideration of the government which will be gradually implemented.

The Prime Minister said complete freedom had been given to the press and the government has accepted the press as the Fourth Estate not only in theory but in practice also.

Press Act:

On the recent press act which was prepared by the interim government, the Prime Minister said no act was complete in itself. In a democratic society, laws can be changed in accordance with the people's requirement even after they become effective. The same also applied to the press act.

The government will prepare a new communication policy to suit the changed political context in the country. Independent experts on communications and journalists will be consulted on this.

For the development of the private press, the government will initiate measures as a matter of policy to protect and develop the private sector press by giving them the status of industries.

The policy to set up a pay commission was to determine the pay scales of the employees and recognize their ability and qualification and raise prestige. This is necessary to make the administration effective and efficient.

The government wants to develop the administration not as a political weapon but as an able and impartial unit. Therefore, there has been no discrimination of employees on political grounds, the Prime Minister said.

RSS Adds: Later, Mr. Koirala has spoken of the need to formulate a concrete policy through the coordination of the agreement, cooperation, views, aspiration, and needs of all the people in keeping with the new age just ushered into the country.

Prime Minister Koirala said this in justification of replies furnished by him to the points raised during the debate on the Royal Address at today's session of the House of Representatives.

He clarified that no acts were formulated on the advice and with consent of the Council of Ministers after the beginning of the first session of the parliament.

However, he said, in accordance with the constitutional provision some acts were enacted before the start of the first parliamentary session.

Education Commission: The National Education Commission formed during the tenure of the interim government had worked out its modus operandi after two months of study, he said and added notwithstanding some delay in the commission activities because of the general elections and some other technical reasons, His Majesty's Government had already taken necessary measures to resume the commission activities.

The preparation of the commission report might still take some months, he said.

His Majesty's Government has adopted a policy of taking action indiscriminately against any one disturbing peace and security but providing equal status to all the citizens, he said, adding HMG [His Majesty's Government] will ever remain effortful to muster a national consensus in this matter.

Jail Improvement: The task of releasing those imprisoned during the Panchayat period in political vendetta has already been completed and if some of these are found still serving such sentences, HMG would initiate action to release them after necessary investigation, he said and assured that gradual improvement would be made in the condition of the jails.

Formulation of an act is under way to make the local development committee people's representative-oriented and no change has been made in the arrangement in this connection by the interim government, he said and added that HMG would work for making the local development committees more effective through decentralization.

His Majesty's Government has adopted a policy of making education free in a gradual manner and providing the private schools with grant.

In the transport front, he said, it would not be economic to operate expensive railway services unless there were adequate movement of passengers and transportation of goods.

He further said though a large amount of foreign aid is needed for laying railway lines which cost about twenty million rupees per kilometer in the current rate, His Majesty's Government had adopted a policy of operating railway services.

In this connection he said talks were being held with India to improve the Jayanagar-Janakapur Bijalpura railway lines and to initiate this service in border areas in Biratnagar, Bhairahawa and Nepalgunj.

He also informed about the progress being made in the construction of Koshi and Seti-Mahakali highways and the plan to construct Sagarmatha highway.

Privatization: In reply to questions on privatization, he said the privatization scheme of the government aims at directly involving the general public in national economy through maximum mobilization of indigenous capital and skill.

According to this policy only certain sectors that are most essential for the larger interest of the country will be kept open to foreign technology, he added.

As compared to the 16,645 metric tons of foodgrains earmarked for 38 remote hill districts last year 1,171 metric tons have been increased in this year's quota for the region, he said and added that the region has now 188,00 metric tons of foodgrains in stock.

Dual Ownership: As both the tenants and the land owners did not benefit from the dual ownership of land, a policy has been adopted to uplift the economic condition of the tenants by shifting the ownership of land to them but in view of the existence of land owners holding small lands, a new plan needs to be made, he said.

Replying to questions relating to the issues of common river, the Prime Minister clarified that the matters of common river as mentioned in the joint communique issued after the talks between Nepal and India during the time of the interim government was not meant for defining the legal condition of any river and the rights to them, it was mentioned just to express the geographical fact.

So many of the rivers of Nepal originate in Tibet, China and flow through Bangladesh to reach the Bay of Bengal via India and rivers like Mahakali and Mechi serve even as a border between Nepal and India, he said, adding three, four countries are thus bound up with the geographical situation of such rivers. The matters of common river were mentioned in the communique on the basis of these facts.

These facts should not be distorted and misinterpreted, he said, adding there is no reason for Nepal to lose its rights as prescribed by the international law for just mentioning the rivers as 'common river.'

His Majesty's Government will ever remain alert to gear up its economic development through the utilization of water resources, he said and added that there is no reason for anyone to be doubtful about the signing of treaties which the government will do by upholding the national interest.

Difficulties Detailed

91AS1341B Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 19 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Sushil Sharma: "No 'Honeymoon' For Govt"]

[Text] Rarely has any government anywhere been caught, in its first few weeks, in such a tight fix as the present Nepali Congress government.

Not Fortunate

Usually, a new government does enjoy a trouble-free beginning. The first few weeks, if not months, are considered a period of "honeymoon" for the new dispensation.

But Nepal's first democratically elected government in over three decades does not seem to be fortunate enough to taste the "honeymoon."

Everyone knew it was not going to be a bed of roses for him and his homogenous team when Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala took over after being elected the

leader of the parliamentary party of the Nepali congress, the majority party in the 205-member House of Representatives.

But only a few thought the road ahead would be as thorny as it has turned out to be, for the Girija outfit.

The mountain of problems and challenges places the government in a very testing time. More than that, the gravity of the matter would tend to put the very democracy at great risk unless it is handled with care.

National consensus is therefore quite imperative in warding off threats to democracy stemming from the myriad of problems and challenges confronting the country.

Sadly, such a consensus does not appear in sight thus making the job of the government more difficult.

In parliamentary democracies, the Opposition parties give the government some time to "work" and opt to wait and see before indulging the familiar political maneuverings for one-up-manship.

The responsibility of the Opposition further grows in cases like present day Nepal's where the success or the failure of the elected government can make a lot of difference to the very future of the democratic polity.

In sharp contrast, the Opposition parties in Nepal seemed bent on becoming a pain in the government's neck no sooner had the latter started functioning. This despite being the Opposition being fully aware of the country's realities and the constraints and limitations the government faces.

The Girija outfit may have been right or wrong in its way of handling the statecraft, but, like any new government in a democracy, it also deserved a chance to prove its mettle for which a trouble-free beginning was a must.

This is more so given the mess the new government inherited from the 30 years of Panchayat as its predecessor, the interim coalition government, was too preoccupied with its two major mandates—drawing up a constitution and holding free and fair elections—to clear the mess.

Now that the main tasks of institutionalising the hard-won multi-party democracy have been fulfilled, the government still finds itself too preoccupied with other matters to clear the mess thanks to the role of the Opposition. A sad commentary on the political situation, indeed!

Four factors may explain the present position of the Opposition especially the communists' who have a combined strength of 81, including 68 of the main Opposition, the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist), as compared to 112 of the ruling party in the House.

One, like the government, they too have virtually no experience of parliamentary exercises hence their less than mature behaviour.

Two, their belief in and commitment to the present policy is still suspect hence such activities on their part as to erode the people's faith in the parliamentary democracy. Though they have time and again reaffirmed their commitment to multi-party democracy, their stand (or is it a strategy?) vis-a-vis the government on the issue of the civil servants' agitation has only reinforced such suspicion, because the pitfalls of the agitation at this stage are not difficult to fathom.

Three, the Opposition's feeling, right or wrong, that the government has not been sincere in taking them into confidence and striking some understanding on key, if not all, issues. In this regard, they have made a big issue out of the ruling Congress Party's refusal to concede the House Deputy Speakership to them.

Four, in the absence of another strong but democratic alternative Opposition in the parliament, the Opposition has gone unchecked the way a government with a big majority and weak opposition usually goes. The country's nascent democracy may not have been ready yet, practically, for a two-party system the way it has functioned-successfully-in, say, the U.S. and Britain.

Perhaps the presence of two strong opposition parties and a majority government would have been advisable for a truly effective checks and balances so important for the success of the parliamentary democracy.

It is possible that one or the combination of all these four factors is responsible for the present posture of the Opposition vis-a-vis the government.

Given the complexity of the situation, the government and the ruling party would also do well to look at each issue with a cool mind and act tactfully to deny any opportunity to the Opposition to have a dig at it.

The past seven weeks have shown that the Opposition is not going to let even the slightest opportunities go to embarrass the government irrespective of the consequences.

The government's difficulty in maintaining an understanding with and taking the Opposition into confidence is understandable given the deep division in the rank and file of the main Opposition which continues to manifest in their speeches both inside and outside Parliament.

What the government can do to preempt the Opposition designs to discredit it is to let the stark realities of the country known before the people in a systematic and convincing manner by explaining the facts and figures as they are, instead of the haphazard way being followed presently.

Besides inheriting economic mess and empty coffers, the government is also left with a bureaucracy that was tuned to the needs of the ousted system. On the other

hand, the expectations of the people, reeling under severe economic pressures, are at a dizzy height. External factors which are beyond our control have added to the people's woes.

Only hard and unpopular decisions of the government can tide over the crises besetting different sectors. But without doing necessary preparatory works, they can prove counter-productive, let alone fruitful. The people need to be better informed and explained about the matters that matter to them most.

On this score, the government seems wanting with the result that the Oppositions are having a field day making propaganda gains an art in which they are master as was also evident during the reign of the interim coalition government and the elections.

From the issue of Deputy speakership to the devaluation of the rupee in terms of the dollar, the government's, or for that matter the party's, position and compulsions or otherwise have hardly been explained to the public the way they should have been so as to make the people understand the stark realities.

Clear

With the Opposition's posture of "constructive cooperation" or "critical support" becoming clear, the government will have to work harder than under the normal circumstances to get through the test of skill and acumen it has been put to.

Opposition Role

91AS1341C Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 13 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Gyan Rai: "Extending the Olive Branch."
Words in boldface as published.]

[Text] The Prime Minister, Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala's replies to the numerous queries raised by the members of the House of Representatives the other day on the policies and programmes of his government have, among others, managed to bring to the fore two pertinent points and revelations.

Commitments

The premier, by firstly touching upon the whole gamut of problems that are at present confronting and impeding the nation's march and efforts in fulfilling the hopes and aspirations as enshrined in the new Constitution and secondly by bringing under his purview the numerous measures that his government will be enacting and implementing to remedy the social, economical and political maladies afflicting the nation, gave the strong impression that he is all out for fulfilling the promises and commitments that he and his party stalwarts had made while going before the people during the momentous general elections.

Similarly, when he expressed the hope that the Opposition would accept the harsh realities of the country and further called upon the Opposition to be forthcoming with active support to his government in accordance with the democratic tradition in the day to day administration of the country as well as in institutionalising the development of democracy and in eliminating poverty, he was, in effect, tacitly sending the signal to the Opposition that it has an equal amount of responsibilities in the parliamentary democratic system in bringing about the realisation of the people's heightened hopes and expectations.

Furthermore, his observation "in my view, there is Opposition and not antagonism in the parliamentary democratic system" and that the "Opposition in a democracy is not a stream of negative protests but it consists of colleagues who provide the right advice to the government" would undoubtedly vouchsafe this writer's assertion made above.

Also, the premier's promise that his government would be according priority to its policies to the sentiments of the Parliament in accordance with the Constitution and commitment to the rule of law" would obviously go down well with the Opposition.

While Mr. Koirala's promise to the Opposition should be welcomed by one and all, especially by those who were apprehensive that the session of the House would be marked by tumultuous proceedings, what cannot escape many observers' keen insight is that fact that the premier's promise is more or less conditional. In other words, provided the Opposition is forthcoming with the necessary cooperation and goodwill in assisting the government in solving the multitude of complex problems confronting it, the premier, on his part, is bound to keep his expressed promise.

What all this brings to this writer's mind is the oft repeated saying that "politics is the game of the possible." Especially in a nation where a multi-party democratic system is in vogue.

It should be recalled here that the Nepali Congress [NC] Party, despite its projections and expectations of winning at least two-thirds of the seats in the House in the recently held general elections, had to settle for a working majority in the Pratinidhi Sabha.

And those who had been following the Nepali Congress's march into the treasury benches before the general elections and immediately after it was installed at the helm of state affairs on the strength of its innings in the polls, saw a perceptible change in its outlook and dealing with the major opposition party, the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist-Leninist).

And by no means the NC has been the only party which underwent a seemingly sea change after the general elections. In fact, the NCP (UML) [Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist)] also effected a somewhat "confrontation" posture vis-a-vis the NC

after it managed to secure 68 seats in the 205-member House of the Representatives.

From amongst the numerous reasons which many observers are wont to tick off what brought about a change in the NC and the NCP (UML) outlooks, one is obviously the fortunes of the respective party in the hustings.

While the NC had to undergo an excruciating experience at the initial stages of the counting of the ballots and which later gave way to much rejoicing and jubilation, the NCP (UML), by winning more seats than what many political pundits had predicted, was, to say the least, overjoyed.

And with the passing of each day until, that is, when the new government was sworn in and the first session of the House commenced, both the parties—one forming the government of the day and the other sitting in the opposition benches—left no opportunity to snub and snipe at each other go unutilized. So much so that it created a sense of foreboding and apprehension in the minds of the people who were following the parties for whom they had voted for within and without the House.

That the subsequent orderly and peaceful proceedings in the House completely belied their fears and forebodings can be said to be the members of the Parliament's gain. And of course, this could be due to their understanding of the onerous duties and responsibilities bearing down upon their shoulders in fulfilling the people's heightened hopes and expectations on the one hand and the gigantic and complex problems facing the nation in its forthcoming endeavours to realise the people's dreams and aspirations on the other.

Undoubtedly, from amongst the numerous reasons, this realisation by MPs [Members of Parliament] of both the treasury and Opposition benches could be one of the causes for the proceedings of the House moving on smoothly despite the periodic threats by the opposition to walk out or boycott the business of the Pratinidhi Sabha.

In a multiparty democratic system, the Parliament is not only sovereign, but the very fact that it is the highest legislative body, the affairs of the state are thoroughly thrashed out between the MPs sitting in the treasury and Opposition benches. And it is a fact that any untoward incidents by way of boycotts and pandemoniums whilst in the conduct of the business of the House would undoubtedly lead to the hampering of the government's development endeavours.

And just as the proverbial adage "for the want of a horse-shoe, the war was lost," it cannot be denied that the war against the common enemies of all the Nepalese people—hunger, illiteracy and poverty—would be lost until and unless the government of the day and the Opposition members of Parliament work hand in hand.

Hence, at this critical juncture of the nation's history, not only should the Opposition be forthcoming with pertinent and relevant comments, advices and constructive criticisms on the policies and programmes of the government in the Parliament, but the government, on its part, should, whenever impediments come to the fore to divert it from fulfilling the national priorities and commitments made to the people, take the Opposition into confidence and evolve a joint strategy in surmounting the challenges.

Consolidation

Needless to say, any shortcomings in this score would be just too appalling to even think of—especially when, as the Prime Minister had aptly pointed out, that not only are all the Nepalese people watching the members of the Parliament going about their business of the day in the nation's highest legislative body but also when the entire world is looking at the honourable MPs as they deliberate in finding out the ways and means to consolidate the nation's democratic norms and principles as enshrined in the new Constitution of the land.

Cooperation Given Grudgingly

91AS1341D Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 15 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Yuba Nath Lamsal: "Reciprocal Cooperation"]

[Text] Consolidation of democracy and economic reforms have become buzzwords in the Nepalese political scene now. Both the ruling and the opposition parties have been emphasizing these terms in their pronouncements. However, no concrete example has been demonstrated by either of the sides.

Bumpy Road

There is, of course, a bumpy road ahead. Given the country's resources and present situation, it is almost impossible to reverse all the past social, economic and political evils over night. They need long-term strategy and political commitment which, if done honestly, can be fulfilled within a certain period.

Ever since the country witnessed a great democratic change after the last year's pro-democracy movement, the political parties had been promising the people a better future if they were voted to power. The elections were also held and the Nepalese people gave a mandate to the Nepali Congress to govern the country. It remains to be seen how the government of the Nepali Congress fulfills the promises made during the elections.

Although it is still premature to predict the success or failure of the Government as it has just taken off, it can, at least, be said that it has begun with good intentions which can lead to success ultimately.

Since the formation of the government, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has been reiterating his emphasis

on providing economic relief to the most deprived people of the rural areas. People have, indeed, taken Girija's priority as an appropriate step to pay first attention to the most needy section of the society, provided work was done honestly in accordance with the promises.

Every aspect of the country, now, is in a mess due to the inaction and corrupt tendencies of the 30-year Panchayat regime. The call of the hour is to set right every odds and ends of the past. Even after the political change in the country, no measures have yet been initiated to change our economic situation. In other words, the country has yet to witness an economic revolution. Moreover, our young democratic set-up is also not strong enough and has yet to be strengthened and further developed.

It is a point of national consensus that the legacy of the past Panchayat regime—a grave economic situation—has to be improved for which understanding and cooperation between the ruling and the opposition parties are needed. Although the approach for improvement differ from party to party, the goal is the same.

However, initiatives to bring consensus for solving the pressing problems do not appear anywhere in the national political forum. The posture the Nepali Congress has shown is that it wants the opposition to support its every step while the opposition is not bound to do so. However, the main opposition party the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist and Leninist) has promised to extend constructive support to the government.

Cooperation does not come solely from any one side; it should be reciprocal between both the ruling and opposition parties. Despite the pledges to provide constructive support, the opposition claim that the ruling party itself has created obstruction in bringing about consensus and cooperation by ignoring the opposition's role and its genuine call.

They cite instances of the elections of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives to justify this claim. The main Opposition the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist and Leninist), withdrew its candidate for the Speakership to bring unanimity, with the understanding of "giving the Deputy Speaker to the opposition in the same manner."

But in the election of the Deputy Speaker, the Nepali Congress, as the Opposition claims, violated the understanding and fielded its own candidate. This led the Opposition candidate to be defeated in the race.

The CPN(UML) [Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist and Leninist)] was aware of the defeat of its candidate in the race of the Deputy Speaker. The party said, it simply contested to promote a democratic culture as its commitment to promote democratic tradition can be seen from the open election for the parliamentary party leader. The ruling party could have agreed to give the Deputy Speaker to the opposition setting a precedent

for the future. The opposition withdrew candidacy from the race of the Speakership only to create an atmosphere for consensus, understanding and cooperation, it claims.

This instance has given ground to some for the accusation that the Nepali Congress is not serious about understanding and cooperation. The Opposition is after all the opposition and the ruling party should not expect support in every action. Cooperation depends on understanding and give and take. If the ruling party is not prepared to leave anything and always expects only to take from others, understanding and cooperation, in no way, is possible. Given this, the CPN (UML)'s stand is that it is not to be blamed for breaking the atmosphere of understanding.

The 12 May elections clearly demonstrated that the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist and Leninist) are the true representatives of the Nepalese people. People poured to the streets to topple the Panchayat at the call of the Congress and Communist leaders and the movement succeeded in a very short period of time. People even now want these two political forces to work together to bring about positive changes in the country's political, economic and social fabrics.

These two forces worked together for the common cause of democracy in last year's mass movement and stayed one year in the government for bringing about the new Constitution and holding general elections. One can just wonder why these parties cannot develop understanding and cooperate with each other for the progress and prosperity of the country.

With the emergence of the leftist force, which is advocating radical changes by dismantling all the vestiges of feudalism from the country, in the national, political scene, the long-rooted feudal system has been shaken. Obsessed with the fear of being completely eliminated, this feudal force sided with the Nepali Congress with the hope that it could safeguard the feudal interest, although the Nepali Congress itself has been against feudalism.

This feudal force within the Nepali Congress has become the main obstruction for creating understanding with the leftists although the progressive section in the NC still wants cooperation for the consolidation of democracy and to give the country's social and economic fronts a new direction.

The Nepali Congress, since the beginning, had been fighting feudal exploitation in the country. When the representative of the feudal system—the then Gorkha Parishad—entered into the Nepali Congress, it is said to have become one of the dominating factors in the Nepali Congress by sidelining the progressive forces. This is said to have gradually damaged the revolutionary character of the Nepali Congress.

This trend still continues in the NC which in no way benefits the party. It is the class interest that always plays a strong role in any party. The Nepali Congress is

basically a progressive party, if its ideal—democratic socialism—were brought into practice, the feudal characters within the party will be sidelined.

understanding among the political parties and further develop and strengthen the people's rights.

Feudal Vestiges

Thus, the revolutionary character has to be revived and it should be geared to abolish feudal vestiges than protecting them. Only this could create an atmosphere of

Paper Reports New Budget Figures

BK2607103391 Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 12 Jul 91 p 1

[Text]

The Budget: A Close Up Rs. [rupees] in million

Head	1989/90 Actual	1990/91 Revised Est.	1991/92 Estimate
Total Expenditures	19,669.264	24,478.842	26,640.900
Regular Expenditure	6,671.768	7,927.881	9,745.887
Development Expenditure	12,997.496	16,550.961 *	16,895.013
Total Resources	11,262.869	13,092.943	16,068.466
Revenue	9,287.532	10,698.261	12,557.050
Normal Revenue	—	—	12,057.050
New Measures	—	—	500.000
Foreign Grants	1,975.337	2,394.682	3,511.416
Bilateral Grants	1,674.021	1,883.969	2,979.042
Multilateral Grants	301.316	510.713	532.374
Fiscal Balance (-Deficit)	(8,406.395)	(11,385.899)*	(10,572.434)—
Sources of Financing	8,406.395	11,385.899	10,572.434
Foreign Loans	5,959.613	6,280.860	8,317.079
Bilateral Loans	1,000.617	1,419.567	1,810.275
Multilateral Loans	4,958.996	4,861.293	6,506.804
Domestic Borrowings	2,150.000	4,887.558 *	2,082.204
Banking System	1,450.000	3,937.558 *	1,182.204
Non-Banking System	700.000	950.000	900.000
Cash Balance (-Surplus)	296.782	217.481	173.151

* Including Rs. 3,272.7 million for Financial Sector Reforms.

Budget Speeches, Reaction Detailed

Royal Address Summarized

91AS1205A Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 2 Jul 91 p 1

[Text] Kathmandu, 1 Jul—His Majesty King Birendra, in the royal address to the joint session of the country's first democratic parliament in over three decades, said today that it is our common responsibility to preserve and develop the democracy brought about by the will and aspirations of the people.

His Majesty the King, expressing his sincere wishes for the success of the parliamentary system, said only when the fruits of economic development reach the poor and the destitute within the framework of the well accepted system will democracy thrive and be lasting in the country.

Stating that the majority of the Nepalese people are afflicted with hunger, disease and illiteracy, His Majesty the King said: "For our rural population deprived of basic needs and amenities, life with dignity has become increasingly difficult."

"A large bulk of our population has not at all benefitted by development efforts so far in the country. The people who should have been the real beneficiary of economic development have remained the most backward and deprived of social justice," His Majesty the King said.

Social Justice

The greatest challenge before the newly emergent democracy is to ensure social justice primarily to the poor and the destitute who are so far relegated to the last place, so that they reap the benefits of development.

If the multiparty democracy is to be made meaningful and just, it is imperative that a national consensus is evolved in the country in this regard, he said.

His Majesty the King said that the people fortunate enough to enjoy certain facilities and services, however meagre, should not clamour for the increase and extension of their own amenities; they should rather goad the government towards investing the country's wealth and resources for the benefit of the less fortunate and scarcity-laden people.

The government's entire programme will be governed by this egalitarian attitude and commitment to establishing social justice.

His Majesty the King said that the policy and programme of the government will be aimed not only at the optimum growth of national production but also at its equitable distribution.

With the highest priority to rural development, the policy of increased national investment in the rural sector will be pursued and the priority will be accorded to the policy and programme of increasing productive employment opportunities with a view to eliminating poverty and also of providing drinking water, education, health and road transport services to the rural population.

Price Stabilization

The government will take concrete steps towards price stabilization with a view to providing relief to the common people. "To that end, along with desired reforms in the fiscal and monetary policies, private sector will be generally encouraged to ensure regular supply of consumer goods as well as development and construction materials," His Majesty said.

His Majesty said: "However, should any trend towards price rise through artificial scarcity in supply be discernible, the government will not only intervene in the market but also take necessary steps to arrest artificial price rise through stern administrative measures."

Reform

The government will initiate a process of appropriate reform to make administrative machinery more efficient, productive and people-oriented in order to provide development benefits to the most backward sectors of the population.

His Majesty said the past 32 years had witnessed the ever-expanding administrative machinery beyond the capacity of the economy to sustain and added that the existing administrative structure will be reviewed and redundant agencies closed down, keeping in mind both the interests of the service personnel and the country's needs.

The quality and self-respect of competent and honest civil servants will be protected by means of a more

effective Public Service Commission and tendency towards corruption and dishonesty will be eliminated.

Pay Commission

The government will constitute a Pay Commission to submit suggestions based on analysis of the country's existing economy and the pay scales of government employees.

To make the agricultural sector more productive, the government will ensure easy availability of agricultural production-inputs to the farmers by effecting reforms in the functioning of village level cooperative societies.

Steps will be taken towards making loans, agricultural inputs and services available to the farmers under a single umbrella arrangement.

Easy Term

The government will provide agricultural loans to the farmers on easy terms.

Setting up of fertilizer factory within the country will be encouraged as a matter of policy to increase supply and the use of organic fertilizer will be stressed.

The government will adopt the policy to purchase agricultural produce from the farmers at reasonable prices and in time. There will be broad extension of animal husbandry and medical services.

His Majesty said that the government will initiate action aimed at abolishing dual ownership of land based on thorough examination of experiences to date concerning land reforms and will strictly implement the policy of preservation and scientific management of forests.

Environment

Efforts will be made to sensitize the general public to the need to prevent environmental degradation like deforestation, floods, landslide, land erosion by developing school curriculum on the inter relationship between forests and environment.

In the field of industry, His Majesty said that the government will give priority to agro based, labour intensive and indigenous content based industries and encourage such others which are export oriented and make import substitution possible.

The government will extend cooperation to private sector, promote private sector's participation and create an atmosphere conducive to investment.

Monetary and fiscal policy reforms will be effected in order to divert the existing flow of private sector capital from unproductive and non-priority areas to productive and employment generating sectors. The prevailing licencing system in trade and industry and the attendant administrative procedural complexity will be simplified.

Quality Control

The government will adopt a commercial policy of promoting exports through maximum production of export oriented goods and better quality control.

His Majesty said policy based encouragement will be provided for control of imports of luxury goods and for easy availability of goods of daily necessities for the people.

Small traders participation in commercial sector will be encouraged.

His Majesty said that the government will remain effortful for the conclusion of trade and transit treaties and agreement on cooperation to control unauthorised trade with India.

Tourism

The government will promote tourism activities and extend services and amenities at places of tourist attraction.

Airline services will be made competitive and necessary incentive will be provided also to private sector with a view to extending air services and facilities to additional areas in the country.

Fair Journalism

His Majesty said that the government will introduce decentralized administration so that the local people are able to carry out local level development works and solve their problems locally. Towards that end, legislations will be enacted so that the local units in the village, town and district are made effective, endowed with necessary powers, His Majesty said.

His Majesty said that the government will encourage the development of free, healthy and fair journalism which alone can guarantee the freedom of press and the people's right to information.

The government will effect timely reforms to make the home administration clean and effective.

His Majesty said: "In the changed context of multiparty democracy, necessary guidelines and reforms will be evolved in respect of police responsibilities and organisation.

"Police force will be developed as an institution endowed with self respect, high morality and humility and dedicated to service to the people."

For the sake of stability and consolidation of democracy, the government will pursue the policy of generating public awareness and taking effective administrative measures against those engaged in social unrest, criminal activities and use and trafficking of contrabands.

On foreign policy, the objective will be the preservation of the nation's independence and sovereignty and promotion of national self-respect and interest, keeping in mind the government's commitment to democracy and human rights.

UN Ideals

The government will pursue the policy of peace and friendship with all countries of the world as well as support for the United Nations and adherence to the ideals inherent in its Charter.

His Majesty said that the government will consolidate the strong bonds of friendship and mutual trust with India and China. Nepal will continue the policy of deepening regional cooperation and understanding between the countries of South Asia.

Nepal will play an effective role at the United Nations in such questions as controlling conventional arms-race, saving mankind from the scourge of nuclear weapons, seeking peaceful settlement of all international disputes and preserving fundamental human rights.

Full Text of Speech

91AS1205B Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 2 Jul 91 pp 1, 7

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] The following is the full text of the royal address:

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Chairman of the National Assembly and Members of Parliament.

At the outset of the Address to the first session of the highest legislative body under the multiparty political system, we would like to offer our respects to all martyrs, known and unknown.

It is known to all that in accordance with the aspiration and will of the people, we, on Kartik 23, 2047 Bikram era corresponding to 9 November 1990 AD, proclaimed the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 2047, incorporating such basic features as multiparty democracy, constitutional monarchy, sovereignty of the people and guarantee of fundamental rights. It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to address for the first time the members of both Houses of the newly constituted Parliament following the general elections on the basis of adult franchise under this Constitution. On this momentous occasion, we welcome the popularly elected representatives and parliamentarians and express our sincere wishes for the success of the parliamentary system.

It is now our common responsibility to preserve and develop the democracy brought about by the will and aspirations of the people. In view of My Government, only when the fruits of economic development reach the poor and the destitute within the framework of the well accepted system, will democracy thrive and be lasting in the country. The truth has to be accepted without

reservation that the majority of our people are afflicted with hunger, disease and illiteracy. For our rural population deprived of basic needs and amenities, life with dignity has become increasingly difficult. A large bulk of our population has not at all benefitted by development efforts so far in the country. The rural people who should have been the real beneficiary of economic development have remained the most backward and deprived of social justice. The greatest challenge before the newly emergent democracy is to ensure social justice primarily to the poor and the destitute who are so far relegated to the last place, so that they reap the benefits of development. If the multiparty democracy is to be made meaningful and just, it is imperative that a national consensus is evolved in the country in this regard. People fortunate enough to enjoy certain facilities and services, however meagre, should not clamour for the increase and extension of their own amenities; they should rather goad the government towards investing the country's wealth and resources for the benefit of the less fortunate and scarcity-laden people.

My Government's entire programme will be governed by this egalitarian attitude and commitment to establishing social justice. The policy and programme of the government will be aimed not only at the optimum growth of national production but also at its equitable distribution. With highest priority to rural development, the policy of increased national investment in the rural sector will be pursued. Priority will be accorded to the policy and programme of increasing productive employment opportunities with a view to eliminating poverty and also of providing drinking water, education, health and road transport services to the rural population. It is not possible for the government alone to bear single-handedly this heavy responsibility of nation-building. For this reason, it will be the policy of My Government to expand broad participation of private sector in development activities, to encourage national and foreign non-governmental capital, and in tune with national priorities and interests to attract foreign investment. To attain these objectives, a beginning will be made in the formulation and implementation of the next Eighth Plan with the participation of the people and their representatives. Appropriate reform will be effected with regard to the composition and functioning of the National Planning Commission.

My Government will take concrete steps towards price stabilization with a view to providing relief to the common people. To that end, along with desire reforms in the fiscal and monetary policies, private sector will be generally encouraged to ensure regular supply of consumer goods as well as development and construction materials. However, should any trend towards price rise through artificial scarcity in supply be discernible, the government will not only intervene in the market but also take necessary steps to arrest artificial price rise through stern administrative measures. My Government will lay emphasis on greater revenue mobilization by making the revenue administration simple, clean and

efficient through introduction of necessary reforms and dynamic restructuring of the existing tariff rates. My Government will set a tradition of accepting external assistance only in such projects as would provide direct benefit to the people in terms of employment, investment and result in accordance with our national priority. The ongoing development projects will be reviewed in this light.

With a view to making the administrative machinery more efficient, productive and people-oriented in order to provide development benefits to the most backward sectors of the population, a process of appropriate reform will be initiated. The past 32 years have witnessed the ever-expanding administrative machinery beyond the capacity of the economy to sustain it. The existing administrative structure will therefore be reviewed and redundant agencies closed down, keeping in mind both the interests of the service personnel and the country's needs. The quality and self-respect of competent and honest civil servants will be protected by means of a more effective Public Service Commission and tendency towards corruption and dishonesty will be eliminated. My Government will constitute a Pay Commission to submit suggestions based on analysis of the country's existing economy and the pay scales of government employees.

In order to render the agricultural sector more productive, My Government will ensure easy availability of agricultural production-inputs to the farmers by effecting reforms in the functioning of village-level cooperative societies. Steps will be taken towards making loans, agricultural inputs and services available to the farmers under a single umbrella arrangement. The government will provide agricultural loans to the farmer on easy terms. Setting up fertilizer factory within the country will be encouraged as a matter of policy to increase supply and the use of organic fertilizer will be stressed. The policy of My Government will be to purchase agricultural produce from the farmers at reasonable prices and in time. There will be broad extension of animal husbandry and medical services.

The skill and knowledge of youth, women and educated sections in the rural areas will be channelized into various productive and income-generating programmes of agricultural development. Employment opportunities will be generated through the promotion of agro-industries. Efforts will be made to maintain environmental balance through improvement of land-use situation by means of appropriate agricultural and forest development in Terai, Mountain and Himalayan regions.

My Government will initiate action aimed at abolishing dual ownership of land based on thorough examination of experiences to date concerning land reforms. New technology and methodology will be used in the collection of land revenue as well as in land administration. Programmes to ensure the tiller's right over 'Guthi' lands will be formulated, without prejudice to the operation of

the Quthi'. Basic maps so useful in the formulation of development projects will be prepared through the establishment of geodetic control points.

My Government will strictly implement the policy of preservation and scientific management of forests. Structural changes will be effected for ensuring broad public participation in forest development programmes. Priority will be given to community forest development programmes and regular output and supply of forest produce will be increased. Efforts will be made to sensitize the general public to the need to prevent such environmental degradation as deforestation, floods, landslide, land-erosions by developing school curriculum on the inter-relationship between forest and environment.

With a view to ensuring optimum use of the existing irrigation projects, their efficient operation and maintenance and also for their additional extension, My Government will favour local participation.

Efforts to secure resources and means for multi-purpose projects with a view to meeting the long-term irrigation needs will continue. In the next fiscal year, facilities will be provided to irrigate additional 38,000 hectares of land. Priority will be accorded to river-training works to prevent erosion of agricultural lands.

Extension of electric transmission lines in rural areas and private sector participation in small hydro-electric projects will be the policy of the Government.

With regard to large hydro-electric projects, dialogue with friendly countries and international agencies will continue and efforts for developing infrastructural works will persist.

The programmes to ensure pure drinking water to every individual in the urban and the rural areas in the next ten years will be implemented as a matter of high priority by My Government. Appropriate and economical rural cleanliness programmes will also be implemented. In order to provide comfortable settlement in rural areas, rural housing schemes will be taken up. Appropriate urban development and housing projects will be undertaken with a view to solving the problems relating to services, facilities and housing resulting from population growth and haphazard settlements in the cities.

My Government will review the effectiveness of the relief programmes carried out for the victims of earthquake of 1988 AD.

My Government will accord priority to the construction of the remaining sector of the East-West Highway, North-South Highways and feeder roads linking these highways with district headquarters as well as to the repair and maintenance of the roads already completed. To facilitate agricultural market extension and rural transportation, construction of motorable roads of local

importance will be undertaken with government assistance and voluntary labour, cooperation and participation of the people. The Government will encourage the construction and maintenance of mule-tracks, foot-paths and suspension bridges in remote rural areas. Feasibility studies of electric transportation and rope-way services in various parts of the country will be conducted.

In the field of industry, My Government will give priority to agro-based, labour-intensive and indigenous content-based industries and encourage such others which are export-oriented and make import substitution possible. My Government will extend cooperation to private sector, promote private sector's participation and create an atmosphere conducive to investment.

Necessary policy measures will be initiated with a view to privatizing several of the sick industrial and commercial public sector establishments or inviting private sector participation in their management.

Monetary and fiscal policy reforms will be effected in order to divert the existing flow of private sector capital from unproductive and non-priority areas to productive and employment generating sectors. The prevailing licencing system in trade and industry and the attendant administrative procedural complexity will be simplified.

The "one-window system" for facilitating administrative services to investors in industrial and commercial sectors will be strengthened. Encouragement will be given to the development and promotion of cottage industries and stress will be laid on the establishment of a centre for development and transfer of technology necessary for small-scale industries.

My Government will adopt a commercial policy of promoting exports through maximum production of export-oriented goods and better quality control. Policy based encouragement will be provided for control of imports of luxury goods and for easy availability of goods of daily necessities for the people. Small traders' participation in commercial sector will be encouraged. My Government will remain effortful for the conclusion of trade and transit treaties and agreement on cooperation to control unauthorised trade with India.

While protecting the country's cultural heritage and maintaining environmental balance, My Government will promote tourism activities and extend services and amenities at places of tourist attraction. Along with attracting domestic and foreign investment in tourism sector, joint international tourism promotion programmes will also be carried out in order to increase private sector participation in this area. Airline services will be made competitive and necessary incentive will be provided also to private sector with a view to extending air services and facilities to additional areas in the country.

My Government will introduce decentralized administration so that local people themselves are able to carry

out local-level development works and solve their problems locally. Towards that end, legislations will be enacted so that the local units in the village, town and district are made effective, endowed with necessary powers.

By orientating local development programmes towards poverty elimination, programmes will be carried out for direct benefit to remote areas, to women, children and the deprived sections of the society. Programmes for preparing records and inventories of the Kingdom's religious establishments and their priceless heritage will be carried out and their preservation will be undertaken.

My Government will formulate a new policy relating to education and culture, based on evaluation in totality of the existing policies and programmes in this field. Within the next ten years, opportunities for primary education will be provided to all children of school-going age at the primary level. Education up to high school level will be expanded and made free in a gradual manner. The scope of literacy campaign will be broadened.

Emphasis will be given to the development and extension of technical schools to prepare basic and middle-level skilled manpower so useful for rural development. Education for women will be encouraged and opportunities for education in remote areas further developed. Population education will be expanded.

Policy incentive will be provided to the opening of additional universities. To enhance the quality of education, programmes for appropriate curriculum development, reforms in examination systems and teachers' training will be encouraged. My Government will pay special attention to the preservation of cultural and religious heritage and development and promotion of arts, music, dance, culture, language and literature of various social and ethnic groups.

My Government will take effective steps to provide basic health services to all people within the next ten years. To that end, preventive health services will be extended to each village and curative medical services made easily available. Health posts and hospital services coupled with referral system will be improved with a view to making primary health services available to one and all. Population growth rate will be brought under control. Special programmes to substantially reduce infant and maternity mortality rates will be carried out. My Government will encourage Ayurvedic system of medicine and herbal processing and research.

My Government will expand such skill-oriented development training as would further generate employment in the country. Employment and information centres will be set up to render necessary advisory services to educated skilled manpower regarding employment. My government will be effortful to promote understanding between labour and management and to maintain industrial peace by contributing to the healthy development of trade unions.

My Government will take steps to improve the lot of the economically and socially backward classes and to secure social justice for the helpless, old and the disabled. Social and economic development programmes for women will be carried out further as a matter of priority. Programmes for upholding children's rights and welfare will also be taken up. My Government will remain alert to safeguard the judicious rights and facilities of the workers and to establish social justice.

My Government will encourage the development of free, healthy and fair journalism which alone can guarantee the freedom of press and the people's right to information. In the context of extending the telecommunication services to the rural areas, telephone facilities will be extended to different places in each development region. Along with an increase in telephone-exchange capacity at various places, digital exchange services will also be expanded.

The Government will explore the possibility of using satellite to expand the telecasting area of Nepal Television. Extension of efficient postal services covering each village development committee in the country will be the policy of the Government.

My Government will effect timely reforms to make the home administration clean and effective. In the changed context of multiparty democracy, necessary guidelines and reforms will be evolved in respect of police responsibilities and organisation. Police force will be developed as an institution endowed with self-respect, high morality and humility and dedicated to service to the people. For the sake of stability and consolidation of democracy, the government will pursue the policy of generating public awareness and taking effective administrative measures against those engaged in social unrest, criminal activities and use and trafficking of contrabands. Programmes aimed at developing the efficacy of home administration as an agency capable of creating infrastructure to deal with natural disasters and events and providing immediate relief will be carried out. My Government will initiate necessary actions with regard to declaration of martyrs.

My Government will operate the Royal Nepalese Army as a reliable and cooperative force of the people, by making it efficient and capable and involving its participation in various development and relief works in the country. It will also continue to be used in fulfilment of the nation's role in peace-keeping operation at the call of the United Nations.

My Government will make judicial administration people-oriented, impartial, independent and easily accessible to all. Necessary legislations will be enacted for the protection of children's rights, in conformity with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 AD.

The objective of Nepal's foreign policy will be the preservation of the nation's independence and sovereignty and promotion of national self-respect and

interest, keeping in mind My Government's commitment to democracy and human rights.

My Government will pursue the policy of peace and friendship with all countries of the world as well as support for the United Nations and adherence to the ideals inherent in its Charter.

My Government will consolidate the strong bonds of friendship and mutual trust with our neighbours, India and China. Nepal will continue the policy of deepening regional cooperation and understanding between the countries of South Asia. My Government will play an effective role at the United Nations in such questions as controlling conventional arms-race, saving mankind from the scourge of nuclear weapons, seeking peaceful settlement of all international disputes and preserving fundamental human rights.

My Government expresses its gratitude to all friendly countries and international organisations for their cooperation in the country's economic development. It is the hope of My Government that in the open, multiparty democratic set-up of a developing country such as ours, more liberal cooperation will be forthcoming on their part.

May Lord Pashupatinath bless us all.

Jai Nepal

Call for 'Team Work'

91AS1205C Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 3 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Gopal Sharma: "Unveiling the Agenda"]

[Text] When the members of Parliament met Monday at the joint session to hear the policies and programmes of the government headed by Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, they were writing yet another chapter in the country's parliamentary history. Sunday's address was also the first from the throne after the restoration of the multiparty democracy last year and the first in more than three decades to a multiparty parliament.

Programmes

Between 1960 when the country's parliamentary democracy met with a tragic end and 1990 when democracy was restored many Nepalese people lost their lives in the struggle for the restoration of democracy. During this period not only were all political organizations banned and leaders and workers of political parties jailed, but the country's natural resources were mismanaged and the economy rendered one of the world's poorest.

The interim period after the success of last year's movement for the restoration of multiparty democracy, did not take up the task of economic development as it remained preoccupied with the framing of the new constitution and making preparations for the elections to the House of Representatives.

Therefore, the Koirala administration, though taking over a little over one year after democracy was restored in Nepal, has to begin afresh as far as the economic development is concerned.

When the Koirala team assumed office it inherited the deteriorating law and order problem in the country, rising prices of the essential commodities and resource constraints to improve the situation.

The interim administration gave every body to understand that their problems would be over once the elected government took office. This further raised popular expectations while the country's capability to address to these problems was limited.

It is easy to promise but delivering the goods is indeed a difficult task. Sunday's address to the Parliament, which unveils the agenda of the Koirala government, therefore, has given a direction to which the government intends to take the country.

The country's economic development is a team work. Political leadership at the top has to provide the vision and provide guidelines for executing its programmes and policies. This is then taken up by the bureaucracy which has to make administrative and financial arrangement for the implementation of these schemes.

Nepal also lacked the vision or clear cut policy guidelines in the three decades under the panchayat regime when it became no one's job to develop the national economy. As a result all aspects of the national life were stagnant and the people were highly demoralized. Intellectuals had no role to play in the national life and bureaucracy lacked initiatives.

The first major challenge before the Koirala government, therefore, is to inject fresh life into all these fronts to make them responsible organs capable to share with the government the responsibility to take the country out of the stagnancy it was in all these years.

As is the parliamentary practice in all democratic countries, the policies and programmes incorporated in the speech from the throne reflect the agenda of the government in the following years. The Parliament, composed of the elected representatives of the people, will now debate each of the government policies and schemes.

While the programmes of the government are debated in both houses of Parliament, the government is busy in yet another important task of preparing the budget for the next fiscal year.

The promises made by the ruling party during the elections are reflected in the royal address to Parliament and the budget to be presented by the present government next week will have to make financial and resource provisions for the implementation of these schemes.

The preparation of this year's budget is again a difficult task. An important thing the framers of the budget estimates must keep in their mind is to become realist.

There are popular expectations for immediate economic relief, sources for government revenue are limited and prices are rising very fast. How the government, working within strict limitations of these constraints, can deliver the goods to the people, is a task the financial and budget experts have to do.

Introduction of ration cards to the government employees for the supply to essential commodities could help check rising prices to some extent and give some relief to them. This can also be expected to bring the market prices of these goods down. Control in government expenses is important to check inflation. Supply side should be streamlined and the production increased to keep the prices under control.

Prime Minister Koirala has asked all his cabinet colleagues to declare their assets. This should be seen as a step designed to check corruption and give clean administration the Prime Minister has promised.

But why is it that only ministers are asked to declare their assets? All officials should declare their assets. If the details of the property given by the politicians and government officials is made public this will work as a major factor to discourage corruption.

Many people can be brought into the tax net by simplifying the tax paying procedures. What incentives can the government offer to the people who volunteer to give their income tax returns to the concerned authorities can also expand the government's scope of revenue generation.

Implementation

No matter how well prepared and planned the programmes are, they cannot deliver the goods if they are not implemented well. The government, therefore, should ensure whether it has the necessary bureaucratic, technical and financial requirements to implement the programmes it has come out with. Now that the policies of the new government have been announced, there is the need for effective implementation of the same. Unless these schemes are implemented in a time bound manner and their progress strictly monitored and difficulties removed in time, they will not have the desired effect.

South Asian Market Seen

91AS1205D Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 4 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Hari Uprety: "South Asia Next?"]

[Text] With new pacts and alliances in the offing, not necessarily political, the group of countries which have committed themselves not to be affiliated with the Cold War, especially South Asia, may have to redefine their priorities.

Subsistence

In a world of prosperity, most of these countries are situated at the far end where only a trickle of economic benefits reaches them to keep them at the subsistence level.

Nonetheless, these countries have decided to come together to weather whatever comes their way. Though the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) grouping has yet a long way to go before it is economically integrated, it has not prepared itself for any other alternative to talk about one.

If the SAARC becomes a powerful economic bloc, with perhaps the largest market potential, it can influence developments for its own benefits. But the question is, what kind of an economic bloc can the world's poorest countries form, if at all?

One of the reasons for the dilemma before these countries is that world developments are taking place much too fast for them to comprehend.

If it was only the end of the Cold War they had to cope with, it would not have been as difficult. They could still think about a place in world politics. The Non-Aligned Movement could be geared towards a new role from which these countries could benefit.

If it was only economic blocism that threatened their existence, but the Cold War still intact, they could still find sympathisers to their problems on either side of the barrier who would help them to work for their own economic good.

The matter was complicated even more by the fall of communism. Many nations might have had to face the determinant of political philosophy gone. But more than that, it is the economic effect countries throughout the Third World are finding hard to cope with.

South Asia finds itself in the midst of all these developments.

It is not that South Asia is bereft of any development itself. The very fact that SAARC was established ensures that if the countries are willing, they can come out with a solution collectively. There is no other way the whole region will benefit.

Another development, a more recent one, is the realization of the value of free market economics by the economic giants of South Asia. This is a break from the past when countries in the (?) region advocated and applied protectionist policies for development.

India's experiment with openness, several years back, has started showing results. Its population that demands consumer goods is increasing and its policymakers are finding themselves pulled towards making policy changes by forces that get freed when a beginning is made towards market economy.

The leadership, to go through the process of openness, will be forced by these developments to take quick decisions in the days ahead as the past policies of protectionism will not fit in the new context. It will be forced to scrap them for new ones that are more market oriented.

The transition from protectionism to openness has never been smooth anywhere in the world. The first of the problems are appearing in the form of balance of payments deficits. This happens when the country's need to import capital goods outdoes the existing exports produced from the older technology.

India is replacing outmoded technology with more efficient imported ones. This furthers the BOP [balance of payments] deficit initially, but in the long run, its goods will acquire the competitive edge they need in the world market.

The present economic crisis in India is just the beginning. It has yet to go through a series of shocks before it can stand on its own feet in the market. One future development that will come as another crisis for the country is when the costly distribution system it has developed over the years needs to be scrapped.

This problem can be identified when there is a large fiscal deficit and will not easily go away unless the cause, that is price subsidy, is done away with. The bitter medicine has to be taken when health of the economy becomes priority. In the long run, it should prove India's worth in the world economic community.

Another South Asian giant, that usually found itself at odds with India, is Pakistan. The country has come out with bold measures towards practical market economics. It has already announced plans for privatization of its public companies.

If both the countries are seen as competitors for openness, this step is one ahead of India's which has yet to scrap its government financed distribution system, including its public enterprises. Pakistan has already started it. It will also be seen travelling from crisis to crisis, like India, as a first step towards reform.

In the future Pakistan and India will find little time to confront each other. Competition for a market will be able to keep them busy. An example of economics gaining priority over politics. Outside interest also should slowly be limited to economics only.

Both India and Pakistan are huge countries and steps initiated now will take time to bear fruit. Other countries in the region will deeply be affected with changes in the two countries. Since, both are following a path of economic reform, the effect on their neighbours will be positive. Positive in the sense that if the whole region is to make something out of the cooperation pact they have committed to, they will have to remove any barrier that prevents economic integration.

The first step will be for all the member countries to resort to similar economic policies. The best pact is seen to be functioning in those countries that freely allow market forces to operate in their countries.

Economies run by the state have proven themselves to be an utter failure. If countries resort to state interventionism to some extent only, then their success as an economic bloc will be hampered to that extent.

The smaller countries of the South Asian region should also start thinking in that direction. Most have already shown their commitment for openness, but much still needs to be done towards harmonizing openness with SAARC objectives.

What should be borne in mind while deciding about economic cooperation is that benefits, if not shared and instead directed exclusively towards one country, will produce the opposite of what is originally envisaged.

At the regional level, some sort of understanding has to be reached among countries so that each country starts working for the development of the resources they are endowed with. Therefore, gearing these economies towards one goal should be the second step.

In some cases it may even be required to let countries pursue some unique technology without anyone's interference.

Fruits of Cooperation

The whole thrust should be directed towards making the region more wealthy without any of the members losing to the other. The idea behind an economic bloc is to help everyone within the countries to take a share of the fruits of their cooperation.

Call for Export Promotion

91AS1205E Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 4 Jul 91 p 4

[Article by Shanker M. Singh: "Overhaul of Institutions"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The performance of the trade sector over the past remained unsatisfactory although some limited success has been achieved in direction and structure.

Geography

For geographical and other reasons, Nepal's trade with her southern neighbour, India, has remained traditionally voluminous and regular, about 50 percent of total trade turnover came down from over 99 percent three decades ago. On the other, Nepal's trade with her northern neighbour, China, is also expanding rapidly.

As a part of the national development plans to develop a wider and diversified economic base, Nepal pursued a trade diversification policy with a view to reduce her dependence on the traditional markets. The history of planned economic development in Nepal is very short as

it was only since Nepal's Fourth Five Year Plan (1970-75) that she adopted the policy of trade diversification in both, countrywise and commoditywise.

The policy of trade diversification of the last two decades reduced the dependence on India but the benefits are not reflected in expansion of total exports.

Currently, Nepal's trade is conducted with more than 50 countries, including those 16 with whom bilateral trade agreements have also been signed. The trade diversification policy helped Nepal to become increasingly exposed to the international community through avenues for trade expansion and economic cooperation which ultimately results in expanding the national economic base.

The existing institutional mechanism is, however, geared towards the promotion of exports. Apart from the government bodies including the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Finance, Nepal Rastra Bank, Department of Customs, a number of public sector agencies have been established to take care of the production and marketing of selected Nepalese exportable products.

Institutional arrangement for export has to be looked from a multidimensional perspective. The organisations that are engaged in export should function as the catalysts role. When we talk of institutional set up for export this is more than doing well with export documentation or custom formalities for export.

Export product development, quality control, export credit and banking, export training, publicity and marketing are some more but not necessarily the complete aspects of export promotion.

The question of export institutions may also be examined in terms of their assignment or existence in the government and the private sector. At the government level the role of institutions like the central and commercial banks, Department of Commerce, Department of Industries and Department of Customs should provide more coordinated and concrete services to the export community as the function of one Ministry or Department to the other Ministry and Department is inter-linked.

At the private sector level, the adequacy or inadequacy of services like export product and pricing certification should be provided. Country of Origin Certification done by FNCCI [Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry] and private sector associations can also be evaluated.

In regard to commodity associations viz. Nepal Carpet Industry Association, Leather Industry and Trade Association of Nepal, Readymade Garments Association's activities should be reviewed taking into consideration the expanded export of exportables.

The Trade Promotion Centre (TPC) right from its inception in 1971 is engaged in providing a sound footing for increasing and diversifying the export trade of Nepal through various promotional measures.

Despite its concerted efforts, the centre is hitherto working more or less in isolation due to the lack of proper authority and coordination from and within the concerned agencies. In pursuance to this, a matter of grave concern to the centre is the absence of a clear and well directed export policy of the government and non-existence of an apex body to look after the export sector in its entirety.

This has repeatedly hindered the centre's becoming a real national focal point for export promotion and development. The centre has insisted that the government give serious thought towards framing and implementing a clearly guided export policy so as to clarify the government's commitment in export promotion and development.

The centre's effort has brought fruit. During the period of the interim government a commerce council was formed and the TPC was the secretariat of the Council.

For promoting exports, considerable recommendations have been made to change concern with title and rank to concern with task, generalists to specialists, trade promotion to export promotion, trade fairs to buyer servicing, ad hoc activities to planned and narrowly focussed activities and so forth.

In order to secure an effective implementation of the national export development policy, plan and related sectoral programmes, the existing Export Product Development and Promotion Council (EPDPC) and its associated Export Trade Development Management Committee (ETDMC) should be abolished, due to their demonstrated ineffectiveness, and replaced by a cabinet committee on export development constituted as a policy body composed of Ministers from appropriate Ministries and chaired by the Prime Minister.

The Ministry of Commerce should be restructured to make it more effective as a 'developmental' entity, and its professional manpower and expertise upgraded.

The Trade Promotion Centre (TPC) is assessed as being a weak and generally ineffective organization, mainly due to its lack of legal status, restricted mandate and financial and manpower constraints.

It should rather be 'converted and upgraded to the Nepal export development authority as an autonomous body under special legislation in terms of its status, capabilities and role as the core organization responsible for export development promotion.'

The financing of the export development authority should be made from HMG's [His Majesty's Government's] annual budget; private enterprise subscriptions; revenue from the sale of services; and from an export development fund created on the basis of 'taxes imposed on export and import trade from convertible currency transactions.' This fund should be used for the financing of 'schemes/projects/activities intended to stimulate fast export growth and promotion.'

It is emphasized that the executive director of the export development authority should be given a much higher status, within the Nepalese public service structure than that now accorded to the General Manager of the TPC, but there is no explicit recommendation focusing on the particular qualities, qualifications and experience that would be desirable in connection with the appointment to this post.

Not Easy

In view of the disappointing experience recorded by TPC over the years, it will not prove easy to secure the adoption by HMG of these institutional recommendations. Furthermore, the financial and human resources required to strengthen Ministry of Commerce and to establish an effective export development authority will not be forthcoming, unless and until HMG is persuaded that export development should be given a very high priority within the national economic development framework.

Devaluation of Rupee Viewed

Move Defended

91AS1206A Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 5 Jul 91 p 4

[Text] The devaluation of the Nepalese rupee in terms of other convertible currencies, though inevitable in the face of the devaluation of the Indian rupee, has brought many questions about the economy to the forefront. The rupee has gone down 20.9 percent against the U.S. dollar in two days. The Indian rupee went down against the Nepalese counterpart, although marginally, for the first time in decades. The IC came down to 165 Nepalese rupee as against 168 of a few days before.

The value of a currency is determined by its demand and supply. In Nepal's case nothing was evident until the day before the devaluation that anything drastic was about to happen to the currency. The reason behind the Nepalese devaluation can squarely be attributed to the need for adjustments that became imperative after the Indian government, ridden with economic crisis, announced the inevitable, especially given the demands of the IMF as against New Delhi's application for loans of several billion dollars. Since our own trade is heavily dependent on India's, repercussions were bound to hit it. Trade, a vital component in determining the demand, and hence, the value of a currency, with India hovers over the fifty percent mark out of the total. And trade means more imports than exports for Nepal. This tells a part of the story why Nepal had to go along with India. If only trade determined the value of the currencies, then Nepal's devaluation would have been about fifty percent of the Indian one. But it is not so. The dependence is further aggravated by the illegal, unauthorized and unrecorded transfer of cash across open borders of the two countries. The trade figure available tells only of authorized volumes and not that which takes place otherwise. Even if

the Indian currency had instead appreciated against other currency Nepal's too would have gone up without any effort on our part. The dependence factor is strong.

For India, its export industry should get a boost after the devaluation, making imports less voluminous due to the resultant price rise. As a result, Indian goods dependent on outside factors of production will be even more dear in its market and consequently Nepal's also. Nepalese imports from other countries naturally will be costlier to the extent of the devaluation. The revaluation of NC by a little over a percent against IC will make little difference to the Nepalese consumer. The rise in transport cost in India as a direct consequence of the devaluation will more than offset the 1.79 percent revaluation of the Nepalese rupee vis-a-vis the Indian rupee. There might be complaints as to why we should suffer for a crisis that is not our own? For this, the simple answer, but a near impossible practice, is to correct the balance of trade with India. If we do not learn to sell our products and if we keep on buying only, we will not only suffer for our own mistakes but also some that are not of our making. The reason for the devaluation of the rupee is this harsh reality facing the Nepalese economy. In this respect, the government has done the best in a bad situation.

Called 'Hasty Measure'

91AS1206B Kathmandu *THE MOTHERLAND*
in English 4 Jul 91 pp 1, 4

[Article by Dr Pant: "Revaluation, Devaluation of Rupee Hasty Measure"]

[Text] Ex-Finance Minister Dr Yadav Prasad Pant has remarked the government should not have revalued and devalued Nepali currency so hastily without thoroughly studying its likely impact on Nepali economy.

He said that HMG should not have revalued and devalued Nepali currency the way it did few hours after India had devalued its currency against US dollar.

Dr Pant was of the opinion that the government should have duly taken into consideration the impact such an action would have on the foreign exchange reserve the government had with which it could manage its imports for about eight months.

He noted the revaluation or devaluation of a currency should be done by taking so many factors into consideration and said that revaluation of Nepali rupee vis-a-vis Indian rupee could not be justified at a time when the country was buying Indian currency by paying U.S. dollars because of the massive trade deficit with India.

Dr Pant in a statement here yesterday remarked that the exchange rate of one U.S. dollar fixed at Rs 42.90 would naturally make imports from third country costlier.

Nepali rupee though revalued against Indian rupee would not also help Nepal as Indian products would become more expensive following the devaluation of Indian rupee against U.S. dollar, he added.

He said that the step taken would not only make things costlier, it would also have its impact on development expenditure.

He said that this would also inflate development budget and make repayment of foreign loan burdensome.

Dr Pant has suggested control of price rise, new fiscal measures to give relief to the people in the budget and a careful follow-up of the Indian fiscal policies in order to off set the impact of revaluation and devaluation.

Termed 'Disconcerting'

91AS1206C Kathmandu *THE MOTHERLAND*
in English 4 Jul 91 p 3

[Text] The expected has happened. Radical devaluation of Indian Currency by the newly installed Indian government has had its repercussions on the Nepali currency. Already the dollar has been devaluated twice in a week against the Nepali currency and a slight revaluation of the Indian currency has been maintained even after the second measure effected by New Delhi.

The currency adjustments were expected since the electoral debate in India had repeatedly underlined its economic malaise, demanding a massive dose of borrowed capital. Lending institutions were pressing the Indian government to introduce strict restructuring measures among which a devaluation of currency has come handy. The concern lies as much on the parallel steps in Nepal the measure will have on the Nepali economy.

Having undergone similar fiscal measures some years ago, this country was acknowledged to have made a five percent growth rate until the Indian embargo of 1989 and the mass agitation that followed. The past two years have escalated economic interactions with our southern neighbor thus boosting I.C. reserves in the country. This has been accompanied with a corresponding decline in third country trade and tourism, diminishing convertible currency reserves here. Whether cheaper I.C. can boost internal production is a question that perhaps renders a further adjustment with I.C. inevitable. Of equal concern will be the diminished value of Nepal's bloated I.C. reserves. Higher convertible currency rates have already shown their effects on the consumer market of course. There is room for much concern indeed.

To Harm the Poor

91AS1206D Kathmandu *THE MOTHERLAND*
in English 4 Jul 91 p 3

[Text] Since government has promised to reorient national policy towards the poor, it is time to have a realistic identification of the poor and equally realistic policy designed to actually help uplift the poor. The national policy for uplifting the poor does not mean taking from the rich to give to the poor. It means the upliftment of the poor in a manner so that mobility channels are opened to allow the poor the opportunity to become better off.

The rich in this country are too few and seem to be paying more through direct and indirect taxes for their consumption. The country does not have a large consumer society on which the rich can thrive. The industrialists, if there are at all any, pay much less than what they manage to get from the government. There are in fact no industries worth the name which can massively contribute to government coffers. This is why the poor are becoming poorer. Moreover, the government have mostly benefited the politicians and the bureaucrats. For the proper use of government resources, care should be taken so that organizational aspect of politics is not given advantage at the cost of the poor.

Escalating Social Violence Decried

91AS1207A Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 5 Jul 91 p 5

[Article by Yug Bahadur: "What is Kathmandu Coming to?"]

[Text] Boy stabbed to death. A gang of youths armed with knives, chains and other weapons arrested. A shop looted in daylight. Youths on motorcycle rob a man. Class 9 girl student stabbed by school friend.

These are but a few violent incidents that have rocked the otherwise peaceful Kathmandu society. And it definitely has jolted both the people and authorities out of their complacency and resort to action.

Not that there were no violent incidents or some fights between youth gangs before. As can be naturally expected those things existed. But really violent cases which resulted in serious injury or even death were very rare.

At the most there were some fist fights in which no one got hurt that badly.

A neighborhood in any part of the Capital was completely different just ten or fifteen years back. Youth groups did hang around in the streets. They did tease girls and there were some fights between boys from different parts of the City.

But anyone carrying weapons, intentionally using them in fights and actually going to jail for their actions were rare things.

Similarly, the youngsters making life unbearable to the girls with obscene remarks and physical confrontation, not giving a hoot to the elders in the area and openly doing mischief was not the in thing in those days.

Perhaps it was the small communities of that time in which everyone knew everyone in a neighborhood that restricted the unsocial actions of the youth. Or perhaps it was the lack of exposure the youths had to a violent and stressful urban life. Or perhaps TV had not been able to make an inroad inside Nepalese life and the violent entertainment serials and films had not also come in such a big way here.

The scene has completely changed now.

Any neighborhood within the City limits is no longer the small community it was before. While everyone knew everyone that time, knowing just one face in ten, on an average these days is a rare thing.

Urbanization has made its mark in the City and its surrounding areas. The life is more hectic and impersonal. People have become more materialistic and with development, even if only in pocket areas, the purchasing power of the people has risen dramatically.

TV, video and drugs have made their entrance into Nepalese life.

One may naturally ask why take the name of TV and video, two technical boons that have contributed a lot for the development of mankind in the same breath with the social evil which is destroying whole societies all over the world. And one would be quite right. But here we are talking of the negative side of these two powerful media which can influence people in a big manner. The senseless violence, cultural decadence and other evil and vulgar things that are shown in the form of entertainment quite naturally affect a young mind. And these very things are a natural part of a young person's life these days.

Also aping the foreigners that come to Nepal, reading about life in other big and developed cities and even some youths getting exposure in some foreign cities have also contributed to the changing life style of the newer generation of youths in Kathmandu.

While just going along with the time in terms of fashion or in humming a popular tune even if it says things like "Papa Don't Preach" for instance, is not a bad thing at all. It's the learning the worst part of the urban life style of the youths of cities in developed nations that is bad.

The most shocking thing and a thing which did not happen as regularly before is that many young hangers-on in the many streets of the City are youngsters who have already had jail experience. A young person with a good family here itself going to jail was a very, very rare thing indeed. But now it is common. Whether the jail stint be in a drug case or just plain hooliganism these young boys roaming aimlessly have had their stint.

Just a visit to the Kathmandu district police office at Hanuman Dhoka will easily give one an idea of how many youths are taking the wrong road when they think that they are just acting their age and going with the times.

To what extent the mood of the youth has become violent can be taken from a recent incident in which two gangs of students of Shankar Dev Campus clashed.

According to the district police office the fight between the two gangs could have become more serious had not the police intervened in time. It seems the gangs had challenged each other and arranged to meet at a popular

ice cream parlour on Durbar Marg. But the police had also been informed of the challenge and the zone that was selected for the fight. A little bit of skirmishes it seems had started when the police swooped down and arrested the youths.

Twenty-two youths were arrested at the spot and the police themselves were shocked by the type of lethal weapons that were carried by the youth. Khukris, knives, motorcycle chains and sprockets and other such weapons were hidden in a guitar case by the members of the gang. One can imagine what would have been the result had the gang members been able to use the weapons.

Similarly, a boy stabbed a seventeen year old girl in the classroom of the school in which they both were studying. The girl had to be hospitalized and the boy is now on the run.

A group of young boys who used to mostly hang around in the streets first quarrelled with a woman shopkeeper near Majhitole and then they robbed some money and a cassette player in broad daylight. It seems some of the ruffians were arrested but most of them have absconded. According to some of the neighbors of these young boys, most of them were onto drugs.

There are many other incidents which are not reported.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala himself, as soon as he took office firmly said that the first priority of his government would be to maintain and strengthen the law and order situation in the country. But of course while the words law and order encompass a much broader form there, on our part we are talking of the juvenile violence which has become quite epidemic specially here in Kathmandu.

But whatever, it still is perhaps from the time and again reassurance given by the Prime Minister in this direction that had led the police department to start a nation wide drive to clean up the criminal minded segments from the society.

Just in Kathmandu district after the drive was started on June 24, more than one hundred persons have been arrested. Those arrested include a person charged of rape, some drug dealers and of course many who were involved in fights.

Picketing and patrolling specially during the peak traffic hours and mainly from 8 p.m. to 11 in the night has been resorted to in a massive manner and the police are, it seems very optimistic about the present programme. Ordinary peace loving people are also quite relieved.

Giving an example an officer said that where as more than fifteen offenders were arrested on the first day of the drive, only one person was arrested on the ninth day.

But how much room for optimism and satisfaction is there, is still a matter of much question.

The police themselves are aware that, all type of offenders, including traffic violators are on their toes knowing that the present vigil of the police force is going on. But the police drive is just for three months. What happens then? Will all have learnt their lessons or will the same old days be back?

But while the above programme of the police deals with all sorts of criminals and offenders of public acts, it is the youth violence and their other socially bad habits that is of much concern.

One has to just pop into any popular restaurants, bars or even tea stalls to see members of the new young brigade in action. Or one can even just walk around the streets of the City.

The loud talk, the profanities that frequently punctuate their conversation, the swagger, the alcohol that they drink which makes them so reckless and their readiness to fight at the drop of a hat even if it is them who deliberately drop the hats, all these make you flinch if and when you meet these young hoods.

You better not look at them in the eye, this is something which they don't like, walk quietly away even if they act as if they are going to devour some girl or lady who is with you, get out of their way on the streets if you happen to be walking and don't you dare press your horn when they non-chalantly stroll in front of your vehicle.

You could get anything from some dirty talk with a dirty look to even a punch on your nose.

The mood is such everyone is rough and reckless. Specially the young. If one gets on the wrong side of the law it's just too bad is their thinking.

A person who has been dealing with young offenders of the law believes that most of the problem children come from problem home where either the parents have separated, the father is an alcoholic and mistreats his family or if one or the other parent is away from home for a long time on work.

While this may be true, other influences like the children's exposure to life styles in other parts of the world, the heavy dose of violence they see in movies and television even in the news and peer pressure and the fast development taking place also play a big part for the young people's attitude.

Strict vigilance on the part of the law enforcers, more understanding and better dealings with the children from the parents and specially cooperation from all the people of the City are all required to curtail these type of problems of the youth.

There is still time to save the cities of our country from becoming infamous for the rate of crime and violence like so many other big cities of the world like New York, Washington DC, Rome and other cities closer home like Karachi, Calcutta among others.

All is not lost yet. If there are so many things we have to accept as the sign of the times, there are many things which can be controlled and curbed. For example not selling alcoholic drinks to minors, not letting unlicensed shops sell alcohol, vigilance and action from the law enforcers not for a limited period but at all times and cooperation from the people could all contribute in creating a safe and happy environment in the City in which all could live without fear.

Whether this will be a reality or only an idea discussed in newspapers and among some sections of the society is a thing which will probably be seen and experienced as well very soon in the future.

Choice of Language Becoming Hot Issue

91AS1207B Kathmandu *THE MOTHERLAND*
in English 5 Jul 91 pp 1, 4

[Text] Speaker of the House of Representatives yesterday also faced the question which language MPs [Members of Parliament] should use if some of them cannot speak the national language, that is, Nepali in the House.

Speaker of the House Daman Dhungana asked Hridayas Tripathi whether he could speak Nepali or not when the latter spoke in Hindi while taking part in the discussions held yesterday on the programmes and policies contained in the Royal address and others objected to the use of Hindi language by Tripathi on point of order.

Tripathi of Nepal Sadbhavana Party in reply to the question of the Speaker said in Nepali that he could not speak Nepali.

Giving the ruling on the objections raised by members of the parliament, the Speaker said if Tripathi could not speak Nepali he was free to speak in the language which he knew. He also advised Tripathi to try to speak in Nepali in the House.

Speaker Dhungana was accommodative but members of the House of Representatives objected to the ruling of the speaker contending that his ruling was against the regulations of the parliamentary regulations.

Challenging the ruling of the Speaker, Ram Baran Yadav of Nepali Congress said that Hindi was spoken in no village and city of any part of Nepal.

He said that Abadhi, Maithali or Bhojpuri languages were spoken in villages of the country's terai regions but not Hindi. He added that Hindi was not Nepali language and as such its use in the House was objectionable.

It may be noted here only Nepali can be used for the conduct of the business of the House of Representatives under the regulations of the parliament.

Prakash Chandra Lohani of Chand Party also drew attention of the speaker to the provision made in the

regulations and Bhim Bahadur Shrestha NCP (Democrat) objected to the ruling given by the Speaker on the issue yesterday.

Earlier, Drona Acharya of UML [United Marxist and Leninist] challenged that not even the House of Representatives not to speak of the Speaker had the right to give such a ruling against the regulations of the House of Representatives. [as published]

Editorial: Regrets Bhutan 'Ruled So Mercilessly'

91AS1207C Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 26 Jun 91 p 4

[Text] Several senior Bhutanese officials of Nepalese origin recently fled their country and are now in Nepal seeking political asylum. They are among the tens of thousands of such Bhutanese who have sought refuge in various parts of India and Nepal ever since the popular movement for democracy was launched in that landlocked, Himalayan kingdom last year. Human rights organizations both in the South Asian region and elsewhere along with political organizations have urged the Bhutanese King to concede to popular demands for introducing political pluralism, constitutional monarchy and guarantee of basic human and fundamental rights. King Jigme has, however, not shown any signs of sharing powers with the people. An absolute ruler, he introduced Driglam Namzha two years ago under which the rest of the population is mandatorily to follow the Drukpa way of lifestyles, including dress, hairstyle and the like. The regressive policies which ignore the culture and background of communities other than the ruling minority

community of Drukpa, have come under heavy criticisms, including those from the people of Nepalese origin who constitute some fifty percent of the total population of one of the poorest nations in the world.

Criticism of the ruling coterie's policies are not brooked and any opposition movement is ruthlessly suppressed. The international news media and Bhutanese sources estimate that no less than 100 persons have been killed by the Bhutanese forces in the last eight months or so. Moreover, bent as the King's advisors are on crushing the popular dissent so as to perpetuate their privileges and unrestricted powers, a "no objection certificate" has been introduced in the country with the intention of harassing not only those sympathizing with or participating in the popular movement for multi-party polity but also their family members, relatives and close friends. The "no objection certificate" is required to be compulsorily produced for health services, school admissions, training, jobs, selling goods and a host of other similar services or opportunities. Those blacklisted by the regime are not issued the certificates and they consequently face considerable hardships.

At a time when various corners of the world as well as South Asia in general have recorded sweeping political changes and political pluralism, it is regrettable that Bhutan continues to be ruled so mercilessly. But the popular movement seems to be gathering fresh momentum and it would be well advised that King Jigme listened to reason and conceded democratic rights to his own people in tune with the changing times and demands of democracy.

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