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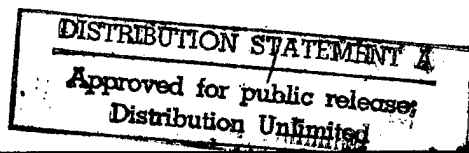


JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia

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Near East & South Asia

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'Consolidation' of ArSSR State Urged

91AS0556A Paris GAMK in Armenian 14-15 Jan 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Consolidation of the Fatherland State"]

[Text] The avoidance of slogans and easy and cheap pretenses at key moments of history is generally a sign of maturity. In our times, the pretense of "consolidating the Fatherland state" has the attributes of cheap sloganeering.

Let us immediately affirm that one cannot be against the "consolidation of the Fatherland state." It is clear that the Armenian, wherever he may be, must contribute to the consolidation and productive functioning of his state. Governments change, but the state, the country's backbone, stays on. National and political figures have embarked on the task of building a contemporary and modern state in Armenia. We acknowledge that they operate under demanding conditions. Even so, we have no right to err, as is often said without much conviction. If we err, the former one-party, tyrannical and centralized regime may return, or our traditional enemies may devour Armenia seizing its territories piece by piece and leaving to us perhaps just a city for a museum of history. Consequently, it is neither necessary nor useful to follow up the slogan of "consolidating the Fatherland state" with the assertion that the new leadership has no experience and that, therefore, we must be forgiving toward its flawed statements or acts.

For a moment, let us think about where we can err:

a) Nations which have already become strong states and which are endowed with powerful means can allow themselves the luxury of playing the game of majority-minority, democracy and parliament. That is useful and desirable. However, in our present situation this game must be superseded by a democratic consensus by forming a government with the participation of all forces—in other words, a coalition government. The Fatherland is in danger, and we cannot lose time over theoretical and academic exercises. To confront the threat we must be together; we must not be against each other and we must not be indifferent. If we do not demonstrate this approach, we would err before history.

b) The destiny of the Armenian nation and Armenia sets them apart from other nations and countries. They face complex problems. Pragmatic approaches to resolve temporary and immediate problems cannot lead us to denials, rejections and renouncements. Turkey, on whom we have claims, remains at the center of our history and policy. It would be a historical mistake to conclude that the issues of western Armenia and the genocide concern only western Armenians, that is the Diaspora (although modern Armenia is also inhabited by western Armenians). Relative to Armenia, neither the western Armenians nor the Diaspora are different nations or nationalities. Remarks to that effect can lead to our division and certain demise.

c) Every new concession on the struggle for the recovery of an integral Armenia is a national disaster. Artsakh is Armenian, and every concession contributes to the success of the Turkish policy to Turkify Artsakh. Armenia is in a state of war. It may have shortages of gas and meat, but it would be a political and historical mistake to leave Artsakh to its fate.

d) Finally, the Armenian Diaspora must be viewed as an inseparable and living component of the nation, and it must be made a participant in the administration of the Fatherland. In other words, it must be made a citizen of the Armenian Republic; this is a right that it has earned through its tragedy, struggle and loss of homeland. Even the slightest discrimination between the Armenians of Armenia and those of the Expatria would be a historical mistake which would condemn at least half of our nation to oblivion.

For the "consolidation of the Fatherland state," besides overcoming economic and other concerns, the four mistakes enumerated above must not be committed even as a result of inexperience. Otherwise, we will pay a heavy price as a nation.

This "consolidation" is neither good will nor a desire. It stems from a consensus that has been created in the internal front and a straight and stark perception of our history.

ArSSR To Issue Passports to Diaspora Residents

91AS0556D Istanbul MARMARA in Armenian
16 Jan 91 p 1

[Text] In a story originating from Beirut, TERCUMAN reports today that the government of Armenia will issue Armenian passports to all Diaspora Armenians who wish to travel with the purpose of immigrating or visiting another country. This Armenian Republic passport will be issued as a second passport to the said Armenians.

The paper also says that Diaspora churches have decided to prepare lists of the names of Diaspora Armenians using 1918 as a reference. The work to prepare lists of names has already begun.

Return to Classical Spelling Demanded

91AS0556B Paris GAMK in Armenian 16 Jan 91 p 1

[Editorial: "To Secure the Reinstatement of Mesrobian Spelling"]

[Excerpts] Today, as in the past, there are people who do not consider cultural, literary, artistic and religious matters as "political" issues and would like to shove them aside. Theorists, the unproductive reiterators of ideologies and slogans, and their mimickers have always thought that the "Armenian question" is a map, a count of those subjected to genocide, or anti-Turkish propaganda and pro-Soviet enunciations. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation [ARF], with its "Platform" of December 1990 emphatically raises the issue of the

"reinstatement of Mesrobian [classical] spelling" declaring it a "solid footing."

They eviscerated the Armenian language from its roots artificially. Today, many argue that so much literature and so many books have been written [in the new spelling] that such a reinstatement would be a colossal undertaking. They argue further that several generations learned their Armenian with the present spelling and that, consequently, time is needed for this "revolution." The seriousness of these arguments are understandable, but the umbilical cord with this absurd spelling must be severed at some point so that the nation can rediscover its true and genuine character. It is with this understanding that the issue of "reinstating Mesrobian spelling" finds a place in the proposals of a national party as part of its vision of rebuilding the Fatherland. [passage omitted]

Some believe that in these times such issues are superfluous. On the contrary, our people are united by the awareness that we were subject to aggression and occupation not only in terms of our borders but also in terms of our economy, spirit and culture and that we must be liberated.

The December 1990 "proposals" of the ARF can be complemented with a demand for the purification and refinement of the Armenian language. Difficulties will be encountered during implementation. That is natural, but those difficulties are not insurmountable.

Let us not forget that the Armenian language has been the force that has bound us together in the course of the numerous oscillations of our history. If we let it become a rusted tool, our ties to each other and to our past would also rust. [passage omitted]

EGYPT

Opposition Parties View Gulf Crisis

91AA0208A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
26 Jan 91 p 9

[Article by Muhammad Yusuf al-Misri: "Party Attempts To Use Popular Diplomacy To Pressure Iraqi President To Withdraw"]

[Text] The leaders of the Young Egypt Party, the Socialist Labor Party [SLP], the National Progressive Unionist Grouping [NPUG], the Green Party, the Liberal Party, and the Ummah Party met on 21 January at the headquarters of the Young Egypt Party. The latter had invited these party leaders to meet and discuss developments of the Gulf crisis, the ongoing war, and the role that Egyptian political parties could play vis-a-vis the crisis.

'Abbas al-Misri, secretary of the Young Egypt Party, and the organizer of this meeting, told AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI that this meeting was intended to find out the general views of political parties in Egypt, as well as to ascertain the various party views with respect to attempting to find a practical way to stop the ongoing war in the Gulf. He added that this meeting was within the framework of popular diplomacy, which is the right and obligation of Egyptian political parties, and within the realm of flexibility of initiative with regard to practices followed throughout the world.

'Abbas al-Misri said that these party leaders consider themselves to be in a state of constant conference, until the end of the general obligation concerning what course of action should be taken by popular diplomacy in order to help to solve the Gulf crisis.

A second meeting was held in the headquarters of the NPUG on 25 January, and these two meetings have been described as a step in a process, by which the Young Egypt Party will try to bring together popular diplomacy from all political forces in all countries of the Arab world, in order to pressure Iraqi President Saddam Husayn to withdraw from Kuwait, as a condition to stop military actions on both sides, after a request to meet with President Mubarak.

Immediately after that, Arab armies would arrive to replace the Iraqi forces in Kuwait, and then direct negotiations could take place between President Saddam Husayn, King Fahd, and certain Arab heads of state, on the basis that direct negotiations are the language of the period.

On behalf of the NPUG, which hosted the second meeting, the secretary of the party's Central Committee, Dr. Raf'at al-Sa'id, said that the first meeting, conducted by the Young Egypt Party, issued a joint statement at the

conclusion of the meeting, calling for simultaneous withdrawal, replacement of the Iraqi occupation forces by Arab forces, and the start of negotiations between the two sides.

The first meeting resolved to continue its actions with regard to discussing the Gulf crisis, and to adopt joint positions concerning that crisis. It was agreed to hold the second meeting in the NPUG headquarters, where representatives of the Young Egypt Party, SLP, Ummah Party, Liberal Party, Green Party, Democratic Unionist Party, Nasserist Party, and the Communists participated.

Dr. Raf'at al-Sa'id stated that an invitation was not sent to the Muslim Brotherhood, on grounds that they were represented in the SLP. Moreover, an invitation was sent to the Wafd Party, but it refused to attend or participate. The party's statement was that its position vis-a-vis the crisis was public and well known.

Dr. Raf'at al-Sa'id added that it was indisputable that the Gulf crisis—and the war there—have impacted on Egyptian political parties, because the crisis has brought about a basic change in Egyptian perceptions, and has unleashed among Egyptians positions which one could say have been hidden or dormant for a long time. For example, these include anti-American positions, sentiments about the disparity of America's dealings with the Arabs on the one hand, and Israel on the other, and feelings about the importance of Arab solidarity. He added that these feelings are reflected by party members and cadres, and force Egyptian political parties into certain tendencies. Dr. Raf'at al-Sa'id went on to say that he thinks it necessary to recognize a state of change in the general climate. Public opinion, perhaps, was opposed in the beginning to Saddam Husayn's invasion of Kuwait, and was content with that, but now it looks at Saddam Husayn as being capable of striking Israel for the first time in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and sees him directing his strikes at the heart of Israel and not outside it, just as America can direct its power. Citizens also feel that America should be compared with Machiavelli in this issue, since it pampers the aggressor Israel, while launching a barbaric war against Iraq.

At the same time, America oversteps the bounds of the Security Council resolution; Kuwait is not being liberated, the Iraqi economic and military infrastructure is being destroyed.

The NPUG's Central Committee secretary said that the leaders of the Egyptian opposition parties stated their views and submitted their ideas about the Gulf crisis in the meetings that have been held, for the purpose of obtaining a cease-fire, along with a pledge from Iraq for a simultaneous withdrawal with the Western forces, and an effort to find a settlement for the Palestinian issue. Dr. Raf'at al-Sa'id added that, when the Arab people find rational and logical slogans, they will rally around them.

Minister Praises Increase in Rice, Wheat, Cotton Crops

91AA0203A Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 14 Jan 91
p 5

[Interview with Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister, agriculture minister, and NDP [National Democratic Party] general secretary, by Raja' 'Abd-al-Malik; place and date not given: "Rice Achieves Highest Production, Wheat Exceeds 3 Million Tons, 11,000 Young People Given Ownership of Land in Three Years"; first five paragraphs are AL-AKHBAR introduction]

[Excerpts] In a frank interview, Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister, agriculture minister, and NDP general secretary, discussed Egyptian agricultural policy and its successes in all areas. The interview also inventories the ministry's achievements from 1982 to the present.

Although the interview with Dr. Yusuf [Wali] began with agriculture, it inevitably went on to include the party, its policies, its relations with other political parties, and other party-related matters.

Agriculture is Dr. Wali's life, and the party is the focus of his practical activity. He believes that each of them complements the other.

Egyptian agricultural policy has achieved great success from 1982 to the present. Production per feddan of all crops has increased so much that we have become self-sufficient in most crops, although we once imported them from abroad—this despite the tremendous uninterrupted rise in population. To curb the unemployment problem, thousands of feddans have been distributed to young graduates. We have become self-sufficient in meat, and the price of meat, which had reached fantastic levels, has dropped.

Dr. Yusuf [Wali]'s interest in scientific agricultural modernization methods has led him to work to develop agricultural research centers and introduce mechanization in order to raise productivity to the highest level and reduce crop loss. [passage omitted]

Increased Wheat Production

['Abd-al-Malik] Many newspaper reports and investigations have mentioned that the areas planted in wheat expanded and increased this year. Scientists of the research center have successfully invaded the desert and planted it with wheat. Production per feddan [1 feddan=1.038 acres] has risen to 18 ardebs [1 ardeb=198 liters], which bodes well and presages a decrease in the tremendous quantities that we import from abroad with hard currency. What is the ministry's plan in this direction?

[Wali] The development of wheat production from about 2 million tons at the inception of implementation of the first [five-year] plan to 4 million tons this year reflects the success of the ministry's policy in the following areas: discovering new varieties, employing modern agricultural methods, following a balanced price

policy guaranteeing the producer a real return for his production, and instituting the principle of voluntary delivery of wheat under which farmers deliver voluntarily. This has made the quantities they now deliver twice as much as what they used to deliver under compulsory delivery. In coming years new high-yield strains will be introduced into producers' fields.

Lowering the Import Gap for Wheat

['Abd-al-Malik] How many tons of wheat do we import a year, and how many do we consume?

[Wali] Total wheat consumption is around 8.6 million tons. Our imports used to be about 6 million tons, with no more than 6 million tons of wheat used to produce bread. This year our national production exceeded 4 million tons—a 25 percent increase over the previous year. This was an unprecedented achievement that won recognition from the World Wheat Council. This is another testimonial to the Egyptian farmer, and we are proud of it.

1 Million Feddans in Nine Years

['Abd-al-Malik] What has been accomplished to date regarding the policy of land reclamation?

[Wali] The land reclamation plan, which calls for reclaiming 150,000 new feddans every year, is being efficiently implemented. One of the plan's most important positive features is a yearly increase in the area where the private sector is a partner in reclamation. In the first year of the plan, this area was 68,000 feddans out of a total area of 153,000 feddans reclaimed. In the second year, this rose to about 100,000 feddans, exceeding the area reclaimed by the public sector (about 70,000 feddans). We believe that about 1 million feddans have been reclaimed in the nine years since President Mubarak took office. This has had an effect on Egypt's arable land area, which used to be 5.9 million feddans, but is now 7.2 million feddans.

Giving Ownership to Young Graduates

['Abd-al-Malik] What about the youth projects that the Agriculture Ministry has adopted? What efforts has the ministry made to overcome problems hindering the take-off of these projects—water shortages, power outages, and product marketing?

[Wali] The development of the project for giving ownership to young graduates—it began three years ago with grants of ownership to 2,183 young people; the number then increased to 5,500, and then to 11,000 in successive years—shows that the project is proceeding on the right course and is providing more and more productive jobs to young graduates. We are working in conjunction with other relevant ministries to solve the problems that graduates encounter.

Increased Cotton Crop

[Abd-al-Malik] What about this year's cotton crop? What efforts is the ministry making to prevent production from falling? What reasons led to last year's bad crop?

[Wali] When Egyptian farmers say that one should talk about cotton production only after the crop is bagged and sealed, this reflects the constant attention and care that this important basic crop in our national economy requires in all stages of its production. One must constantly review the different elements of agricultural operations and combat the pests that affect cotton at all stages of its growth—from seedlings, to boll formation, to opening of the bolls. That is why I carefully inspect cotton in the provinces while it is growing. Last year's setbacks have been taken stock of. The Agriculture Ministry has paid special attention to fully combatting aphid infestations, beginning with cleaning out canals and ditches, since weeds growing in these are a basic source of the infestation. The requisite insecticides are then provided, and the focus of the infestation is sprayed separately, so as not to destroy natural enemies of the pest. As a result, the extent of infestation decreased this year, and this was true not only with regard to aphids, but also in regard to all the kinds of infestation that affect seedlings.

Proposed Agriculture Law

[Abd-al-Malik] There is also the new proposed agriculture law that the ministry is preparing. What has taken place to date regarding it? What are its most important provisions?

[Wali] The proposal is now at the stage of study in the ministry's committees. In general, the proposal aims at providing a legislative framework that encourages productive activity and takes account of recent changes that have occurred in production economics and new models of production activity. It will thus reflect incentives, rather than the sterile point of view that concentrates on protecting the means of production and basic agricultural resources.

[Abd-al-Malik] What is our agricultural relationship with Libya now?

[Wali] As regards Libya, four Egyptian agricultural companies have been established there, with business amounting to \$200 million. One million Egyptians will be settled in Libya, after housing and facilities are provided for them, and they will be given ownership of land there. The Egyptian companies are now digging ground-water wells, studying and classifying soils, building plant nurseries, installing water tanks, and establishing the infrastructure for reclamation operations on land to be irrigated with water from the large artificial river on which work is now proceeding in Libya.

Election Results Source of Pride for the Party

[Abd-al-Malik] (Having finished my questions about agriculture, I moved on to my questions about the NDP.) How do you analyze the election results?

[Wali] The results of the elections, which for the first time in many years were held under an individual candidacy system, confirmed that there is a strong bond between the electorate and the program of the NDP, and that they appreciate the enormous achievements the political leadership has realized both at the foreign policy level and domestically.

The elections were held under an individual candidacy system. This was a demand that many people had been voicing for a long time. Honestly, everyone was grateful for it—as nobody can deny. Our obtaining a majority was a great source of pride for the NDP. This does not mean that we can relax; rather, there must be a greater sense of responsibility and continued work to preserve this high degree of trust. This will be reflected in party activity during the next few days.

No Democracy Without an Opposition

[Abd-al-Malik] Do you think the opposition will have an active role in deepening democracy in the People's Assembly?

[Wali] The opposition in the assembly is the other side of the coin. One cannot imagine democratic life without the existence of the opposition. Its active role assumes great importance in the circumstances of our country, with our limited resources, and with the importance of the opposition's oversight role. The opposition parties have stated that we in the NDP have responded to many of the ideas that the opposition has proposed. This is a source of pride for us.

Economic Liberalization Study

[Abd-al-Malik] What will the party's role in the next stage be? What will its role be with regard to the 1,000-day project that the president discussed in his speech?

[Wali] The party secretariat and various party committees have played a pivotal role in action on various important national issues—unemployment, developing the public sector, land reclamation, and others too numerous to mention. The program that the president asked to have drafted in accordance with the phases of the 1,000-day project to liberalize the national economy will form the focus of activity by the party's various committees in the coming period.

On this basis, party committees are preparing suggestions for the 1,000-day project, so as to draw up a working paper for submission to the government.

Concrete Activity by Special Committees

[Abd-al-Malik] The NDP's special committees have carried on extensive and concrete activity in all areas and are working to solve many of the problems that affect us in Egypt. Why have these committees not been a model for the governorate secretariats?

[Wali] The party's special committees have indeed made enormous efforts in recent years, undertaking research and study, and issuing recommendations about various domestic and foreign issues in an outstanding framework of democracy and constructive discussions. However, this does not obscure the party activity that has taken place in the governorate secretariats. Perhaps the objective difference between the nature of party activity in the special committees and in the governorate secretariats (including their committees also) is the reason why the activity of [provincial] secretariat committees has not been highlighted in the media.

Constant Evaluation

[Abd-al-Malik] Is there any inclination to make changes in party leadership in the governorates in light of the results of the recent People's Assembly elections, particularly since some successful experiments have been made by some governorate secretariats?

[Wali] Constant evaluation of basic party activity goes on all the time, with the result that new leaders are put into particular party positions as part of the process of taking account of the objective circumstances that surround party activity in a particular place. This applies to all party positions and formations both at the central level and at the level of the governorate secretariats. Certainly, the party's winning of an absolute majority at all election levels reflects the success of most party leaders in dealing with and solving the problems of the public. It reflects their awareness of the country's true interests, especially stability and promoting development. But this also means that work and necessary evaluation must continue so that the public's confidence in our party, its program, and its leaders will continue and be strengthened.

Issues Facing Assembly Discussed

Editor on Future

91AA0197A Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic 16 Dec 90
pp 5-6

[Article by Salah Muntasir]

[Text] No Third World country has witnessed such clean, antiseptic elections devoid of the germs of fraud, the microbes of doubts, and the poison of fanaticism. By this measure, it can be said that the recent election was one of the best experienced by Egypt in terms of enthusiasm (if we exclude Cairo), cleanness, and the representation of all the different political currents, even though some parties officially boycotted the elections. I feel that

the parties that boycotted the elections, especially the Wafd Party, gained nothing. The Wafd will spend five years on the sidelines, during which it might not be deprived of a popular presence given its active daily newspaper, but it will be deprived of the opportunity to develop political cadres, inasmuch as parliament is the most important ground for the emergence and growth of such cadres.

The outcome of the recent elections should not preclude us from examining several important phenomena that emerged in these elections:

1. Candidates who ran as "independents" won 176 out of 436, or 40 percent, of the seats. True, most of these independents were originally in the [ruling] National Democratic Party [NDP]. However, the important thing is that they ran on their own as independents. Moreover, some waged their campaigns precisely on the basis of their nominal independence from the NDP. However, as soon as their victories were declared, some of these independents joined the NDP. Such a turnabout raises, deservedly, the issue of whether a person in a specific capacity, who is elected in that capacity to the People's Assembly by the people, is entitled to join any party immediately after winning, even though the people voted for him in his original capacity as an independent instead of a candidate of the party which he has joined? Does such a switch mislead the people, limit its will, or mock political values?

2. Another aspect of the above-mentioned phenomenon, is the large number of NDP officials, who, having been excluded from running under the party's banner because they did not submit to their leadership's decisions, ran instead as independents and defeated candidates nominated by the NDP. President Husni Mubarak indicated, in a meeting with members of the parliamentary organization last Wednesday, that when the NDP candidate lists were submitted to him in his capacity as the party's chairman, he approved these nominations without reading them. He stated that if he had changed one name, it would have then been natural for him to defend it [i.e., any name added to the NDP list], which would reflect the president's personal concern with that name, and consequently his indirect interference to make that candidate succeed. To preclude such interference, of which there is no indication whatsoever, the president said that all governors had been informed by telephone to neither interfere in elections nor prevent any candidate from running. He added that the appearance of names on the NDP list does not mean that these candidates have been granted a deed of success. Rather, these are names by which to be guided, whose inclusion in the party's list does not preclude the right of any citizen to run.

I would not exaggerate if I said that this directive was among the most important reasons for the enthusiasm and purity of the elections campaign. This was aided by the desire of the Interior Minister, Major General Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa, to conduct a clean

election campaign. The interior minister expressed this desire long ago in a meeting with an official, in which he vowed that if he became the minister responsible for elections, he would supervise elections with all neutrality and fairness, which is actually what happened.

3. A third phenomenon that cannot be bypassed regarding the recent elections is the clear difference in voter interest between urban and rural voters. While the candidate in urban districts won by about 3,000 votes, the candidate in rural districts won by 40,000 votes!

The city is a showcase of education and the intelligentsia. All high-sounding discussions and dialogues about freedoms and democracy notwithstanding, the urban population has fallen scandalously behind the rural population in this greatest of tests of the exercise of democracy.

We can honestly say that this phenomenon is not restricted to the most recent elections, but is a persistent feature of elections in Cairo, which confirms that a crisis of trust remains in the psyches of the capital's residents, or that some procedural shortcoming exists regarding the locations of the committees or the examination of the candidates's names.

4. Another phenomenon of the recent elections concerns differences between the rules that are applied in each district. The ballots in the district of Justice 'Adil Sidqi were sorted out in a four-day period, because the candidates in that district adhered to their right to monitor the ballots, one by one, whereas other committees finished sorting in about four hours.

Another discrepancy concerns the process by which candidates can contest election results. Whereas some candidates contested results before the administrative judiciary, others did differently. For example, Dr. Hamdi al-Sayyid missed the opportunity to appeal to the administrative judiciary and had to submit his contestation of election results to the People's assembly, anticipating the principle of "the Assembly is the master of its decision."

A multiplicity of methods for counting votes or contesting results is unfair. Instead, everyone must enjoy full equality.

I am not among those who like to use the expression "we are facing a new or historical phase," or any other such expression from which the citizen or reader has wearied. True, this People's Assembly, if it is destined to complete its entire five-year tenure, which ends in 1995, would be responsible for sowing the fruits that we hope to reap in the 21st century after the year 2000.

Perhaps we can now ask: Can we enter 2000 when we are still prisoners of the principle of distinguishing workers and peasants by granting them at least half of parliament's seats, when the number of these workers and peasants is diminishing while the percentage of those belonging to the "groups" [a category in the Egyptian electoral system comprising other than laborers and

peasants] is increasing, and when every worker or peasant hopes to educate his children and add them to these "groups?!"

Those who were around when these "gains" for workers and peasants were created know that they serve the government, and that they do not serve the common good in any way.

They came about during the crisis of the intelligentsia, or what can be termed the ruler's weak confidence in the support of intellectuals and educated persons. He therefore decided to give peasants and workers a special distinction to ensure their support. Although the revolution was supposed to eliminate classes, this distinction between workers and peasants on the one hand, and "groups" on the other hand, has divided society into a new class structure. Two conflicting principles have thus been formulated in a single constitution: One principle stipulates that all citizens have equal rights, while another grants peasants and workers a special right in elections.

All of these pretexts for which the president was striving regarding workers and peasants have ended. Moreover, the principle is that we are all workers. Even a minister is considered a worker, and a civil servant is a worker.

If the door to amending the constitution is closed for many reasons, the amendment of the principle of peasants and workers does not require a constitutional amendment, but rather an amendment of the definition of a worker and a peasant to include, as workers, members of labor and professional unions. In that way, we will remove these unnatural walls of the "groups," which had to be at the head of the working classes.

Can we approach the year 2000 still circling around the problem of the public and private sectors?

Anyone knows that the most serious problem facing the economy can be summarized as follows: The population is increasing by 1.3 million per year, but is producing less than its needs, importing twice as much as it exports, and is barely able to carry loans, which it [certainly] cannot double!

Any thinker asked about a solution to our economic problems, would limit the solution to increasing the production of everything, except people. How can we do that?

Very briefly, the problem is that we want to achieve our goals based on capitalism, but under socialist constraints and burdens. As long as we have not dismantled, and become liberated from, these constraints, the slogan "increase production!" will remain a slogan which we repeat and an unattainable hope to which we aspire.

If in the past we were wise not to neglect the public sector's due and role, it is only fair that we not neglect the private sector's achievements in recent years, during which it has been given an opportunity to breathe and has found a place for itself in its homeland, after having been

viewed by state officials, agencies, and laws as a suspect, exploiter, swindler, and traitor. Perhaps there were some swindlers in the private sector, and they are actually present now. However, they are not in Egypt alone, but throughout the world. No one can say that swindlers representing no more than 2 or 5 percent of the private sector are killing all of the hopes, aspirations, and ambitions of the honorable. There are many models in the private sector. In the space of a very few years, they have become able to export their products to countries that are very advanced by all measures. These countries do not import Egyptian goods because they are polite and obliging toward Egypt, but because they have selected the best of what all markets offer, having found Egyptian products fit for sale in major stores in America, Canada, Europe, and Australia.

However, the problem of the private and public sectors has not been resolved yet. Laws that impede operations and production must be purged. As long as sacrifices are not made, as long as unproductive workers are not excluded, as long as productive workers are not rewarded, the uncertainty afflicting us, and the excesses practiced by the idle at the expense of those who sweat and produce, will remain.

Also, can the sun rise on us in 2000 when we are still unable to regulate landlord-tenant relations to achieve fairness? I mean landlords and tenants of agricultural land or dwellings. Without the achievement of fairness in these relations, the phenomena of which we complain will remain, the foremost of which is the feelings of hatred that fill longtime owners who see that their income from an entire old building is less than that from a three-room apartment in a new building! This hatred might seem to be limited to two parties in a limited relation. However, in reality, it extends boundlessly. Every person who hates tries to discharge his hatred in different ways. Thus, oppression, exploitation, spoilation, fraud, and deception prevail and will continue until successive rent reductions are made.

There are other major problems, such as free education, which seems like an idol that we are determined to worship, when we all know that our children are not receiving an education in the schools. The state's capabilities are insufficient. There are ample opportunities for fraud, the amplest being private lessons, which have created a front of beneficiaries that surpasses the beneficiaries of the public sector!

We hope the new People's Assembly will focus on these major problems, so that it will be able to bear the responsibilities of the current phase. This phase does not lack problems. We do not want the People's Assembly to itself become a new problem that adds to existing problems. We do not want it to become known by us as an assembly of branches [a word play in the original based on the orthographic equivalency of people and branches] with numerous orientations and deadlocked capabilities.

Opposition Outlook

91AA0197B Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic 16 Dec 90 p 17

[Interview with Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, general secretary of NPUG Party, by Mahmud Fawzi; date and place not given]

[Text] For the first time, the opposition is being represented as a party by a leftist leader, Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, who is the only member of the July Revolutionary Command Council who still has a position on the political map. What is in the depths of the new opposition leader?!

[Fawzi] Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, what is your appraisal of the elections? Were they fair elections?

[Muhyi-al-Din] First, the police did not interfere in most districts. That in itself is an important step forward. The police intervened in five elections in the past. I believe that this election is absolutely the best we have had. It is inarguably an enormous leap toward democracy.

True, some governors interfered in some governorates, and others did not, and some local councils interfered, while others did not. However, when we compare these elections with previous elections, by all measures, they are an important step toward sound political life.

[Fawzi] What is the true motive behind the entry of the NPUG [National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party] into elections and its exodus from the ranks of the opposition's boycott of these elections?

[Muhyi-al-Din] Our analysis of the political reality in Egypt in light of Arab and international changes constantly confirmed that these elections would be held in a completely new way compared to past elections. Therefore, we ventured to enter them confidently.

The fact of the matter is that the final picture has attested to more than what we expected! To a large extent, the elections were proof of Egypt's Islamic, Arab, and African leadership and desire to set an example. Hence, we expected that democracy would strengthen Egypt's standing. I believe that one of the elements of Egypt's strength is that its democratic position is better than that of others.

In addition, we could not continue to remain outside parliament, as we had in the two previous sessions. We want to present our views and participate in parliamentary debates, which necessarily aim to serve Egypt's interest.

Although we supported the validity of all of the guarantees sought by the opposition, we nonetheless estimated that a boycott of the individual candidacy system would not be useful. I was confident that we would obtain seats in the new Assembly.

[Fawzi] As the opposition leader, what are the most important issues that you will raise in the People's Assembly?

[Muhyi-al-Din] First, we will express our views regarding the Elections Law, the president's statement, the prime minister's statement, the budget, the State Workers Law, the Housing Law, the Law on Landlord-Tenant Relations, and legislation regarding unemployment. We will also express our views regarding the economic problem, inasmuch as it will be a top priority in the coming phase. We will present our ideas with complete candor, and we will submit solutions to problems.

If the problems are not presented in the Assembly, we will demand that they be presented. All of this comes within the framework of the debate agenda. We hope for new, stable, parliamentary life, and that the media will report what happens in the Assembly's sessions with all truth and candor.

[Fawzi] Is the view of the leader of the Egyptian opposition regarding opposition policies based on the view of a particular party, or is it a comprehensive view?

[Muhyi-al-Din] The leader of the opposition must first express [the orientations of] his party. However, he must also faithfully express all orientations of the opposition inside and outside the Assembly as best as possible. This is no doubt a difficult matter. In my opinion, we in the Assembly will conduct a dialogue with the government and the opposition, whether inside or outside the Assembly, because an opposition that remains outside the Assembly, no longer represents an important political influence in our political life.

[Fawzi] With absolute candor, do you believe that the opposition in Egypt is prepared to govern?

[Muhyi-al-Din] With the utmost candor, the NPUG is completely ready, disregarding the problem of its ability to obtain power. Its ideas, programs, and projects, along with the state's skills, qualify it to govern.

[Fawzi] Some say that the opposition leader must have fangs and claws, whereas Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, although a great politician, is naive, having lost the greatest opportunity open to a politician, when, in 1954, he was the prime minister of Egypt for only six hours. Could you have assumed power then?

[Muhyi-al-Din] In 1954, the relations of power did not permit me to continue in the government. If they had, I would have remained in the government. It is incorrect to say that I was naive. Some believe that politics is just "a coup [khabtah]." However, the situation was completely different. At the time, the Revolutionary Command Council was in a state of collapse. The situation changed when the second rank of the Free Officers rejected the resignation of the Revolutionary Council. We came to be in an unenviable political position; the majority of the Army was on one course, and the cavalry was on another course. We were on the threshold of a true civil war. I would never permit the outbreak of a civil war in Egypt. That was in 1954. The situation is necessarily different now.

[Fawzi] Does that mean that, this time, you will be an opposition leader with fangs and claws?

[Muhyi-al-Din] I have fangs and claws, but I do not display them! I do not have to scratch with my fangs and claws. I consider my fangs and claws to be my ability to persuade and discuss in a convincing, beneficial dialogue, to which the people inside and outside the People's Assembly listen. Those who sit in the Assembly's hall adhere to a certain political position. The people outside the Assembly listen and are convinced. This is the true, decisive criterion in having an influence. My fangs and claws are my ability to convince, influence, and engage in purposeful debate. [Fawzi] Do you not share my opinion that the number of opposition members is too small to withstand a sweeping attack by members of the ruling party? What are your expectations regarding the new People's Assembly session in light of its new composition?

[Muhyi-al-Din] I believe that this session will be intense, with very heated debate. The crucial point is not the number of opposition members. The 1938 parliament included only nine members of the Wafd Party. Nonetheless, they created an uproar, unleashed issues, and had a significant effect. Moreover, it is possible for the entire people to stand behind a single opposition deputy if he has a national view and strong arguments, as did Deputy Yusuf al-Jundi.

The important thing is not the number, but what one says. The important thing is a free opinion. Formally, the vote went in favor of the government, despite the large number of opposition members in the Assembly. The important thing is for the opposition not to be small regarding its effort and initiatives. It may be small in number, but it is great in value.

[Fawzi] As the opposition leader and the general secretary of the NPUG Party, you oppose the presence of foreign forces in the Gulf region. What alternative to these forces do you see in your capacity as the deputy chairman of the World Council for Peace?

[Muhyi-al-Din] We have learned through political and national life not to trust the intentions of Western colonialism. I consider the foreign presence extremely dangerous. Disregarding that it came to exploit the situation under the cover of legitimacy, or that it is alleging the need to liberate Kuwait and defend Saudi Arabia, I nonetheless believe that it has yet to reveal its true intentions, which are to control the oil at certain prices, weaken Iraq's power, and break Iraq's power and hegemony over the region. I saw the alternative in the Arab world. However, they did not agree. But that does not mean that I agree with the presence of foreign forces. I cannot formulate an alternative now, because the fait accompli stems from policies for which I am not responsible.

Committee Recommends Five Stages for Economic Reform

91AA0211A Cairo AL-MASA' in Arabic 3 Jan 91 pp 1-2

[Article by Rifat Khalid: "The National Democratic Party's Economic Committee: The 1,000-Day Plan To Be Implemented in Five Stages. Legislation To Be Made Uniform; Labor Laws To Be Amended."]

[Text] The National Democratic Party's (NDP) economic committee has conceived a timetable for implementing the 1,000-day Plan to liberalize the Egyptian economy as advocated by President Husni Mubarak.

The NDP Economic Committee chairman, Dr. Samir Tubar, emphasized at a meeting of the committee that the conceptualized timetable consists of five stages. During the first stage, lasting 180 days, legislative amendments will be introduced in line with the economic reform program. The 220-day second stage will be dedicated to reforming the country's economic structure. The third stage, to last 220 days, will be devoted to improving the performance of producing units. The fourth stage, spanning 200 days, will be used to upgrade utilities and prepare the economic sectors for new system requirements. The fifth and last stage, also to span 200 days, will be utilized to implement and monitor economic reform measures.

The NDP economic committee called for care in entrusting senior positions to leaders capable of implementing the 1,000-day program and attaining the objectives of the political leadership. The committee also advocated uniformity of legislation, amendments to labor laws, worker training programs, and controls for oversight and accountability.

It emphasized the need for removing rigid laws and regulations that restrain the national economy, for moving away from central planning towards a market economy, and for more diligently opening the way to the private sector. The committee also emphasized the necessity for price-wage equilibria.

Dr. Samir Tubar emphasized that the committee's concepts and recommendations for implementing the 1,000-day economic liberalization plan will be formalized in a report to be submitted to the party's secretariat general. The secretariat will in return relate the party's homogeneous position to the political leadership in a report to be submitted in advance of the government statement on 19 Jan.

The NDP economic committee chairman added that the 1,000-day plan advocated by President Husni Mubarak would create the societal climate needed to facilitate implementation of the economic-reform program, achieve balance and homogeneity in liberation policies, and provide equal treatment of the private and public sectors both.

Dr. Ibrahim Mukhtar, general manager of Misr-Iran Bank, said that President Husni Mubarak envisions a

controlled program to lay the groundwork by removing impediments and restrictions in less than three years, allowing economic reforms to take off and bear fruit for the nation's citizens.

He added that the 1,000-day program was neither a new economic reform program nor a substitute for development plans. The process of economic reform is fraught with many problems and complications brought about by wide-scale domestic and Arab developments that mandate a change of pace and the [diligent] pursuit of reform. The national economy is plagued with structural imbalances and the way to correct them is to abandon central planning techniques and allow market forces to drive investments and productivity. Private investment in Egypt must be governed by a single legislation rather than by multiple laws governing corporations, new communities, and investments.

Engineer Majdi Khalifah, a member of the economic committee, pointed out that implementation of the 1,000-day plan requires that many problems and obstacles will have to be handled by ministerial decree until the laws that restrain Egyptian economic performance are revised.

Mahmud Basyuni, also a member of the economic committee, called for updating cooperatives and their managements in step with the decade and for the need to expedite passage of the landlord-tenant bill in a format that would ensure justice, stability, and peace of mind for both parties.

Officials Set Requirements for Economic Liberation Plan

91AA0206A Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 9 Jan 91 pp 8-10, 55

[Interviews with economic experts, including Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation; Muhyi-al-Din al-Gharib, chairman of the General Investment Authority's executive agency; Mustafa al-Sa'id, a former economy minister; Husni 'Abbas Zaki, a former economy minister; Fu'ad Abu-Zaghlah, a former industry minister; and Wajih Shindi, a former minister of investment and international cooperation by 'Ala'-al-Din Mustafa; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] The Egyptian Government will sign a new letter of intent with the IMF in late January. This new agreement is the result of efforts made in previous years by Dr. 'Atif Sidqi's government in the scope of the economic reform program, inasmuch as a large percentage of the reform program's components—which have aimed, by increasing self-reliance, to reform the structural imbalance that has afflicted Egypt's economy throughout previous years—has been implemented.

This great effort which the government has undertaken has paved the way for a new phase to liberate the Egyptian economy from its impediments in the framework of a 1,000-day program, inasmuch as governmental

agencies are devoting themselves to drafting a reform program in the framework of the directives contained in President Mubarak's speech to the People's Assembly and the Consultative Council. AKHIR SA'AH interviewed economic experts to become familiar with their thinking regarding the components of this reform program. What do experts say about the 1,000-day program to liberate the Egyptian economy? What ideas do they present regarding this program? How can this program be implemented through earnest monitoring to evaluate performance? [passage omitted]

The Liberation of the Public and Private Sectors

[Mustafa] Dr. Maurice Makramallah, the minister of state for international cooperation, spoke first about the 1,000-day program to liberate the economy.

[Makramallah] It is first of all necessary to retain the public sector and its administrations based on sound economic foundations liberated from all constraints in the framework of limited liability for carrying out all of the responsibilities entrusted to this sector.

The private sector should also be liberated and allowed to invest in all fields, except those under state supervision, such as security, defense, and strategic projects.

Because it operates efficiently, the private sector can assume calculated risks and compete with the public sector. This ultimately benefits the consumer, because suitably priced products of an appropriate quality become available. This preserves the honest, legitimate element of competition, leads to the optimal use of resources, and consequently provides the consumer with the best quality.

The liberation of the Egyptian economy aims ultimately to increase production. Many problems [related to increasing production] have been the subject of careful studies. It remains to implement those studies that have been examined and discussed based on a fixed timetable. The 1,000-day program should be monitored from time to time to determine its rate of implementation and evaluate its performance. This requires setting up a monitoring method, so that we can become aware of the problems and obstacles and overcome them one by one.

The economic reform being pursued by the state has numerous components pertaining to financial, economic, and investment policies. In the scope of economic freedom, the business sector's view must be taken into account through its participation in a dialogue. Economic freedom must be accompanied by political freedom, with the understanding that the best possible use of available resources is ultimately achieved.

Economic freedom does not mean the absence of a state role. Rather, it means a state presence to protect the market from public or private monopolization trends, because there are relative limits to resources. Consequently, resources must be used optimally based on competition.

A Study of World Markets

[Mustafa] How is it possible, in the framework of the 1,000-day program, to establish a defined plan to narrow the gap between exports and imports and to increase exports to make foreign currency available?

[Makramallah] The 1,000-day program aims, among other things, to close the gap between exports and imports by increasing exports as much as possible through policies that guarantee high-quality goods at competitive prices. Consequently, exporters must study foreign markets to ascertain the goods and quality that are in demand. They must study demand based on the categories of a given commodity. Such studies make it possible to ascertain world market trends and develop domestic products to suit the needs of the world market. These studies are very important and, at the same time, available.

Regarding imports, the substitution of some imports with domestic products, if possible, would doubtlessly reduce imports, especially commodities needed for investment projects. If we have the capacities, we can produce these commodities for investment projects, taking into account the need to produce them with appropriate efficiency. There is a trend to deepen domestic industrial utilization by using available capacities, taking into account quality, to produce some machinery or machinery parts. This requires earnestness on the part of producers or exporters.

[Mustafa] How can new employment opportunities be created for youths in the program's framework?

[Makramallah] The problem of liberating the Egyptian economy has positive aspects, and it will have negative aspects. However, it is necessary to deepen the positive aspects and remedy the negative effects.

Unemployment usually stems from the lack of demand for a certain occupation or the limited nature of a worker's abilities. This requires training programs that allow workers to change their occupation by giving them new skills for activities and occupations in demand, or that boost their competence to the level required by the labor market's needs.

In conclusion, the 1,000-day program is an attempt to release the energies of the Egyptian economy, because economic freedom provides an opportunity for all to work and gain. The government alone cannot carry out the program. The people must undertake a greater role. Economic freedom provides this opportunity.

Fundamental Solutions to Problems

[Mustafa] Dr. Muhyi-al-Din al-Gharib, the chairman of the executive agency of the General Investment Authority, believes that, before discussing the liberation of the Egyptian economy, we must first ask: What is the goal of the process of liberating the Egyptian economy, and why has the period of 1,000 days been determined?

[Al-Gharib] I believe that the goal is to create a fundamental solution to the basic problems that afflict the Egyptian economy, the most important of which, in my opinion, is the high level of unemployment among youths with scientific and technical qualifications, which has economic and social effects.

The second goal is to increase production and boost its quality to meet the needs of the domestic market and to expand exports to increase self-reliance, inasmuch as great human and material resources are plentiful in Egypt.

Achieving this goal requires a fundamental improvement in the administration of the public and private sectors. That can only be achieved by developing thinking and liberating the will, so that everyone can move forward stridently, without fear or hesitation, especially insofar as the goal is clear. The fact that measures aimed at liberation have not proceeded with the targeted speed, even though the liberation process has been in progress for years, induced the president to establish a time limit for the completion of amendments to legislation and regulatory structures, and the development of resolutions that dovetails with the needs of liberating Egypt's economy. Among the liberation phase's most important needs are the removal of constraints and the unleashing of honest competition among producers, disregarding the ownership of production units. Unleashing competition first requires that the public sector be managed according to private-sector thinking, which entails the amendment of legislation and regulations, so that the public sector can become able to compete with the private sector and foreign imports. In addition, foreign imports must be subjected to a new customs tariff that conforms with the economic structures which we have developed in agriculture, industry, and tourism in this period.

Improvement of the Citizen's Standard of Living

We must not protect existing production entities at the expense of consumers, because the main goal of the development process is to raise the citizen's standard of living. Consequently, public and private monopolies must be limited, because monopolies only reduce product quality and increase costs, which must ultimately be born by citizens, especially those with limited incomes. Therefore, the entry of new investors into existing fields and activities must not arouse fear, because it enriches competition, hones aspirations, and induces the development of management, the application of innovations, and the improvement of the technological level of the manufacturing and production process. Hence, raising the rate of technological development to clearly outstrip the rate of population increase is extremely important. However, this is only possible through the provision of a competitive framework and freedom to enter and exit the market. Therefore, bold decisionmaking to liberate the Egyptian economy during the period determined by the president is a crucial matter that requires us all to make sacrifices for the sake

of a better future for Egypt's youths, whom we must provide with employment opportunities in Egypt before they seek work abroad, which also entails many sacrifices.

Following the Gulf crisis, Egypt must absorb the lesson, especially because it has proven to the world that it is committed to principles, morals, and noble values, and that it can defend its values and its nation's security. Efforts to liberate trade between Egypt and the Arab Gulf countries should be a main goal in order to expand the market's scope and repatriate investments in a way that enhances the relative advantage and efficiency of the productivity of Arab capital. Let Egypt become an oasis of investment that promotes the Arab economic and productive capacity in the nineties to face international economic blocs in Europe, America, and the Far East.

The Concept of Economic Liberation

[Al-Sa'id] (a former economy minister) I believe that a number of controls accompanied by a number of closely connected, well-ordered policies are needed to ensure the successful liberation of the Egyptian economy. Perhaps the first question should be: Are we clear on the content and meaning of this liberation? Economic liberation can be understood as a call to 1) reduce the shortcomings of the administrative bureaucracy, simplify laws and procedures, and eliminate inconsistencies; 2) liberate the decisionmaking will and unleash individual and collective talents in an explosion of energies latent in Egyptian society; 3) reduce the state's hold on economic decisionmaking and rely more on market mechanisms and supply and demand to guide economic decisionmaking; and 4) reduce the public sector's role and to sell the public sector to the private sector to encourage the latter and its role in the economy.

These are the four basic meanings of the content or concept of economic liberation. Because the current discussion and debate could produce additional meanings, concepts and dimensions, we must be clear about what we mean from the start. The goal is to try to liberate the economy through all of these meanings.

However, we must clarify and state these concepts, and there must be defined political programs for realizing them.

We should also be aware of the current reality of the Egyptian economy and the need for economic liberation policies that are compatible with this reality. In this regard, we can point to three general rules that should be taken into account:

1. When we speak of encouraging the private sector, we must realize that it is composed of a patriotic producer element, which should be encouraged, and an element that does not take into account the public good and has goals that are incompatible with society's goals. Policies must aim to reduce the role and dimensions of this latter element.

The Existence of Full Competition

2. When we speak of market and supply-and-demand mechanisms, we must realize that these mechanisms cannot achieve the targeted goals automatically under the auspices of competition. Competition is not present in all circumstances, which requires the state to consciously play a role to ensure the presence of the basic conditions for the market's efficient operation. 3. We must realize that we are a developing country. Any discussion of the public and private sectors' role and the sale of the public sector to the private sector must take into account this fact and what it means in terms of weakness in the financial market and in the existing private sector.

The preferred policy in this situation is to strive to encourage the private sector, but not to burden it or the state with discussion of the sale of the public sector to it. These are two different matters with different sets of results. Making a distinction between them requires astute, intelligent decisionmaking.

Another essential issue that arises when we discuss economic liberation is that this liberation cannot be effected adequately and efficiently unless it is accompanied by political liberation and a suitable democratic system.

The Regulation of the Egyptian Economy

[Mustafa] Dr. Husni 'Abbas Zaki, a former economy minister and the chairman of the International Banking Company, focusses his conceptualization of the liberation of the Egyptian economy on basic concepts, the gist of which is that it is necessary to reexamine different sectors and resource-use methods, because serious, scientific studies point to the squandering of hundreds of millions of Egyptian pounds worth of society's resources, which could be saved if we reexamined them.

[Zaki] I believe that the 1,000-day program gets ahead of defining what is actually needed, because Egypt is actually based on the planning system. We have a plan which expresses an economic strategy and a method for implementing it over a specific period. Is the 1,000-day program a plan? Certainly not. Is it an amendment of the plan? Certainly not.

The concept of the program is that it is a group of policies, resolutions, and legislation that ensures the regulation of the Egyptian economy and its improved performance in light of our past experiences. In this framework, concern with the individual is a primary requirement. Without concern for the individual, who is the basis of any program's success, we will fail to achieve our aspirations. Here, the importance of the individual's role means granting the individual freedom to innovate and take the initiative within the scope of the law, custom, and tradition. Any plan's success depends on the good selection of personnel for leadership positions,

because an aware leader guarantees the good implementation of the plan and the good selection of a sound [means of] implementation.

If we want to talk about economic freedom, we must agree on a clear concept of what is meant by liberation in order to define specific features of policies, which, in their totality, achieve the reform of our economic conditions. Regarding financial policies, whether pertaining to the state, companies, or the public sector, we must bear down on expenditures, reduce the budget deficit, reduce the balance of payments deficit, and improve the public sector's financial structure, so that it can bear the true nature of its losses. This can be achieved by leaving the public sector free to set prices according to production costs. If the state sees fit to subsidize a certain commodity, it can subsidize its distribution. In this way, social justice and fair pricing can be achieved based on true cost. Second, we can control consumption, and thus remedy inflation, by carefully studying goods and pricing them based on production quantities, and by avoiding excessive advertising that urges abnormal consumption and whets the consumer's appetite to buy, as we have seen in all the media.

Policies Require Reexamination

Third, we must establish an export policy that not only ensures the expanded production of import substitutes, but also specifies which goods are to be intended for export and the quantities to be exported. This information should be included in the plan as targets. For example, the spun-cotton-thread and textiles-production policy in Egypt must be revised by allocating large amounts of Egyptian long-staple cotton for export and expanding the importation of short-staple and medium-staple cotton for domestic consumption and reexport in the form of textiles. We must change these erroneous policies that have deprived Egypt of markets in countries which had imported long-staple cotton from Egypt for decades.

Fourth, there is a high rate of degradation of equipment, machines, and transportation means in Egypt, which reduces their hypothetical life. A car, which has a hypothetical life of five to seven years, lasts no more than three years, due to misuse, lack of maintenance, and the absence of a link between the driver's wages and the car's revenues.

Spare parts for factories or small workshops are also wasted. Numerous studies show that the misuse of several cables, which oxidized, increased our consumption of them by hundreds of millions of Egyptian pounds. The correction of this situation is very simple and would cost no more than the use of several wires and cables.

The upshot is that we have valuable studies that have yet to be implemented and a large increase of no less than 25 percent in waste in agriculture and transportation. Improving means of transportation, packaging, and

refrigeration can save hundreds of millions worth of products, which can then be exported.

The same applies to building materials. It is known that 40 percent of the plan's value is allocated for building and construction. It has come to light, through high-level technical committees, that there is a large increase of 20 percent in the amount of building materials included in the plan. Economizing on this increase could reduce by 80 percent the plan's cost, which is estimated in the billions.

These are examples. If we are merely satisfied with enumerating them scientifically and promulgating legislation or resolutions that remedy each condition separately, we cannot make great progress in the economic directions in which the country is moving. Therefore, we must reform what needs to be reformed, close the gaps that exist in agriculture and industry, and adopt administrative reforms that reduce supervisory agencies and activate idle capacities. Above all, there must be concern with the individual and with spreading feelings of social responsibility and positive participation.

Method for Monitoring Performance

[Abu-Zaghlah] (a former industry minister) Many solutions, studies, and ideas have arisen to solve the economic problem. However, they remain to be implemented through clear, defined programs in a 1,000-day or a three-year program. This means that there is a need for a program that starts within three months, and that gives priority to urgent problems. Executive and legislative measures must be taken regarding these problems. Such a quick program must be monitored annually. Any delay in implementation could affect the entire program. The program must be implemented precisely and monitored, because it has to end in three years.

[In this 1,000-day program,] the government has a more dynamic role and is more able to make definitive decisions. The policy is the policy of the entire government. Each minister or executive official implements the tasks that are required in the scope of his ministry. The implementation of the program is based on the concept of saving time. Those responsible for the program have the capability and the authorities to implement it.

This requires the selection of leaders to affect implementation. The legislative agencies will monitor implementation, take measures, and speedily promulgate and put into effect laws suited to the program's requirements. This does not mean the promulgation of deficient laws, but the drafting of priorities in relation to laws or legislative amendments for quick discussion and promulgation if necessary.

The program must be prepared quickly, because drafting and grouping studies to dovetail with the necessary legislation requires intensive efforts on the part of all agencies. I recommend that work on the new program start at the beginning of the new fiscal year, so that

implementation, monitoring, and performance audits start at the beginning of a new fiscal year.

An Endorsement Role for the State

[Shindi] (a former minister of investment and international cooperation) I believe that we must have a new outlook for the new liberation phase. This requires a basic change in concepts and in the outlook of individuals. In that way, society's different groups can be transformed into a productive hive, following a long period in which society demanded rights before fulfilling its duties.

Secondly, the role of the government and executive apparatus should be reviewed and evaluated. We must study whether they are actually carrying out the production process with full planning, and we must study the general level of prices, wages, salaries, and employment opportunities. The state controls everything. In my conception, the state's function in the new phase is to endorse plans and to induce individual economic activity by providing incentives and greater opportunities for the interaction of market forces.

A third matter pertains to legislative agencies, specifically the People's Assembly. It is necessary to review the enormous number of laws that have been promulgated during the past 20 years, in order to combine, cull, and simplify them, with the understanding that the Assembly has a general rule of not amending a law for at least five years after its promulgation.

These basic steps must be taken before entering into detailed aspects of liberating the Egyptian economy. As for economic issues, all Egyptians are preoccupied with high prices and unemployment.

Regarding the problem of high prices, the provision of quality goods at competitive prices is inarguably a national goal. But how can it be achieved? We have existing productive capacity, and we need to establish more. However, all capabilities have not been allocated to the existing capacity so that it can produce the ideal amount, because this capacity is subordinate to the public, private, or joint sector.

The public sector suffers from a great shortage of liquidity and a lack of concern with product quality. It has also inherited the problem of producing to satisfy the domestic market with a view toward exporting only its surplus. We must revise the public sector and its administrations by establishing a limited sphere of public-sector activity and applying to its remnant a specialized policy, the reform of financing structures, the conserving of foreign currency, and the linkage of incentives with production and export volumes.

Regarding the private sector, I call for the elimination of intervention in private activity, the guidance of private activity through incentives, and the need to review taxes and customs duties.

This issue is the key to remedying the essential problem, which means increasing exports to rectify the trade balance deficit through production for export and concern with the quality and price of exports.

Inasmuch as the world is now moving quickly toward the formation of large economic blocs, Egypt must also seek an economic domain, be it Arab, European, or African, with which it can form an economic bloc in the framework of other large economic entities. [passage omitted]

Raising Interest Rates Viewed Favorably, Cautiously

91AA0214A Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 23 Jan 91
pp 18-19

[Article by 'Ala'-al-Din Mustafa: "Position of Egyptian Pound and Economic Reform Steps; What Follows Raising Interest Rate; al-Dakruri: Curtailing Consumption, Imports; Reducing Demand for Dollar; al-Biblawi: Determining Arrangements of Transitional Phase and Taking Market Tendencies into Account"]

[Text] The Central Bank has issued a decree empowering the banks to set deposit and loan interest rates. The decree is part of the Egyptian economic reform which is moving with deliberate and well-studied steps compatible with Egypt's economic circumstances without leaping into the unknown, considering that the interest rate is one of the instruments with which fiscal and monetary policies are drafted in the next development plan.

What are the features of the new interest rate system? Why has the Central Bank made this decision? What are the likely effects on investment and can the decision attract more investments? What is the position regarding old contracts between loans [presumably meaning lenders] and borrowers?

AKHIR SA'AH has explored the opinion of economists and investors in order to shed light on the features and particulars of the new system and on all its effects on the Egyptian economy.

The decree to raise interest rates seeks to compensate savers for the inflation rate that affects their savings. It also seeks to curtail consumption tendencies and to absorb cash liquidity in order to curtail inflation.

Speaking at the outset, Dr. Muhammad al-Dakruri, chairman of the People's Assembly's Economic Committee, has expressed the belief that raising the interest rate is one of the monetary policies that determine the course of the economy in the sense that this step is an instrument to collect more savings and channel them through the banks for greater investment. On the other hand, this step absorbs the purchasing power that savers have. This power may move in the direction of greater imports which in turn lead to a greater demand for foreign exchange. This culminates in a direct impact on the balance of payments.

Moreover, raising interest rates is a means to compensate the saver for the drop in the real value, or purchasing power, of the Egyptian pound. Consequently, the saver is compensated at an acceptable level for the damage caused by higher inflation which may at times double, or more than double.

Even though the statement that higher interest rates will lead to higher production costs and will culminate in higher prices for goods represents a normal consequence insofar as calculating the profit [presumably meaning production] cost is concerned, this increase rate will not have a tangible or major impact. If more suitable facilities, policies, and climate are made available to production and if we assume that the increase in the interest rate for loans will represent 3 percent of the volume of a loan available for producing a certain commodity, then this increase may be reflected in a rise of less than 1 percent in total production costs. If we compare the benefits accruing from higher interest rates for savings and from the aforementioned effects of this increase with the impact that higher loan interest rates will have on the price of the final product, then we will find that the ultimate outcome is in the interest of the Egyptian economy.

Dr. al-Dakruri added: The interest rate must be enacted in a healthy economic climate that encourages the national economy to surge forward. This dictates a comprehensive review of the laws, bylaws, policies, and regulations governing economic performance. It also dictates that we liberate economic activity, especially in the area of economic management, from the shackles that tie it down, that obstruct its movement, and that impede its progress.

Transitional-Phase Arrangements

Dr. Hazim al-Biblawi, the Export Bank chairman, believes that the idea of releasing the interest rate is a serious idea that, among other instruments, seeks to fight inflation and compensate savers for the damage they suffer as a consequence of the declining value of the Egyptian pound.

Dr. al-Biblawi has questions regarding the conditions preceding enactment of the new system, especially since prior transactions and contracts exist between banks and clients.

Dr. al-Biblawi believes that the reform policies must be preceded by detailed arrangements for the transitional period and that the side effects must be observed. He believes that it is not enough that we define the objective that we seek to achieve and that we must also determine in detail how this objective is to be accomplished.

It is no secret that the banks have been surprised by application of the new system, especially since this system is different from the previous system. Moreover, bankers' opinions were not taken into consideration. Therefore, several observations must be underlined so that the picture can be made clear. The first observation

is that the change will harm some parties and favor others. The second point is: What has been done to shoulder temporarily in a certain period of time the burden of the elements whose position will be weakened? Raising the interest rate amounts to a burden to the borrowers and a burden to the banks which are committed to prior obligations. When banks are harmed, they will remit this harm to the borrowers. The question is: Can the borrower withstand this new burden and is there a specific plan or a temporary arrangement to lessen this burden? All these are questions which require that clear answers be provided to banking officials.

Dr. al-Biblawi believes that the most serious thing in economic reform is the so-called transitional period in which the objectives, paths, arrangements, set timetables, and specific roles must be determined so that we can accomplish the ultimate objective.

Taking Market Tendencies into Account

Dr. al-Biblawi added: The second thing is that releasing the interest rate does not mean that matters are left entirely up to the market because the interest rate is an instrument of monetary policy. Consequently, it is used to control the market and not to submit to spontaneous considerations. The release will not mean discarding the interest rate as an instrument of monetary policy on the strength of the argument that the matter should be left entirely up to the market. Inasmuch as it is influenced by the market, the instrument also influences and directs the market because the interest rate leads the market. When we use this instrument, we must take the market's general tendencies into account.

Summing up his evaluation of the new system, Dr. al-Biblawi has said: Releasing the interest rate is a reform policy because it seeks to influence the savers' behavior, to enhance local savings, and to encourage those who have savings in foreign exchange to maintain these savings in Egyptian pounds. The release also seeks to influence the investors' behavior by streamlining the use of funds in successful investments. It is thus evident that this is a policy that seeks to alter savings and investment behavior at the national level. But at the same time, we must not saddle banks with the burden of this policy. This is why when moving from the old system to the new system it is required to establish careful and sound arrangements to protect the banks.

It Is Time for Step To Be Taken

Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Aziz, vice president of the National Bank and chairman of the Union of Egyptian Banks, believes that implementing the new system of higher interest rates and the freedom of the banks to determine rates is a step among the economic-reform instruments for which the time has come. Starting to enact the system with the onset of the new year is intended to promote and mobilize savings, to invest them for development, and to diminish consumption tendencies. Offering an interest rate that is lower than the rate that should be

enacted promotes consumption or the so-called "commodity acquisition," meaning that people prefer acquiring goods to keeping their money because this acquisition protects their money against the deterioration of its purchasing power.

On the other hand, the interest rate must reflect the true value of the capital saved in a developing society like the Egyptian society so that the value of this money is not squandered.

Releasing the interest rate and giving banks the freedom to determine this rate have begun with a new system through which the budget deficit is financed by way of treasury permits. In light of these permits, the Central Bank will determine the discount rate on whose basis it will provide loans to other banks.

Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Aziz added: It is my opinion that conditions will stabilize, that the saver will get a true interest rate for his savings, and that the money user or borrower will pay the true price for the funds he uses in order to operate with other people's money. This will enhance the feasible and capable use of loans.

Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Aziz noted that applying the system of treasury permits to finance the budget deficit is an important corrective step to control inflation rates in the economic course, considering that the deficit is financed with real savings and that the issuance of money is reduced. This leads to a further squeezing of government spending and puts pressure on the government to increase its revenues and to boost the efforts to collect these revenues. This is a most important means of dealing with inflation, instead of dealing with it by printing more money. This system is enacted all over the world, considering that the deficit is financed through treasury permits which the government offers to financial institutions and individuals for subscription. The rate is determined according to a free rate set by the short-term market.

Enhancing Productivity

Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Aziz believes that increased interest rates will have a limited impact on the cost of commodity production and that there is exaggeration in this regard because what is important is having balanced financing structures in well-managed projects. In such projects, the interest rate does not, as one component of a product's general cost, represent more than a small percentage. For example, if the interest rate is raised by 2 percent in a well-managed and balanced company, this will only increase the production cost by one per thousand. In a society competing freely to offer a good product at a reasonable price, producers will compete to improve their production. The interest rate is one of the elements of cost. The producer can absorb and overcome any interest-rate increase by enhancing his productivity. In economic reform, this is a challenge.

Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Aziz further believes that the statement that higher interest rates discourage investment is

another exaggeration. In a free climate, the investor has the freedom to compete in marketing his product. He can ensure a profit margin beyond the cost or increased cost of the inputs, including the interest rate. It is evident in light of this structure that the interest rate constitutes a small part in production costs. Thus, an increased interest rate does not lead to a disturbing effect on investment. Moreover, the investor enjoys the current revenue, profits, and appreciation of the value of the capital invested. This appreciation in the investment value is one of the inducements that make investment preferable to saving.

Absorbing Cash Liquidity

Muhammad Abu-al-'Aynayn, chairman of the Textiles and Ready-Made Clothing Producers Association, believes that raising the interest rate is one of the means intended to absorb the market's cash liquidity with the objective of reducing consumption. In a developing society like Egypt, this policy leads to recession and affects investment. It must also be noted that releasing the interest rate, whether upward or downward, is not the only means to solve any of the accumulated economic problems. This release must come within the framework of a complete reform policy in order that the desired results may be produced.

The symptoms in the Egyptian economy are well known. Egypt's inflation rates are high and it is certain that the interest rates paid for savings are below the inflation rate. Consequently, this will reduce the actual value of savings.

It is also certain that raising the cost of investment in Egypt by raising interest rates will increase production costs under the umbrella of a market recession, thus leading to a recessionary policy.

Moreover, it is not possible to determine the short-term effects of releasing the interest rate and the exchange rate—a release that leads to a market-established price policy—on the Egyptian economy while wages and incomes continue to be relatively fixed.

Assessment of the effects of raised interest rates must be done within the framework of a clear and complete policy so that one can make a judgment on such effects.

Offering Permits for Circulation

Muhammad Abu-al-'Aynayn added: If the economic administration plans to control inflation rates by financing the budget deficit, issuing treasury permits, and submitting such permits for circulation and if this deficit is consequently financed by real and noninflationary savings, then the plan will have positive effects. For this policy to succeed, treasury permits must be offered to both financial institutions and to individuals for subscription and must not be monopolized by the public sector banks. Permits must be made available to all.

There are opinions that advocate indexical intervention by the government. This weakens the government's power to manage economic policy. Therefore, the government, in conjunction with the existing constitutional institutions, must have a clear role in charting public policies and monetary and fiscal policies. The government must have a clear role in charting these policies. To safeguard the national process, these policies must not be left up to the market.

Muhammad Abu-al-'Aynayn noted that the new interest rate system is applied in most countries of the world. If we wish to set the loan interest rate, then this rate should be determined by the discount rate which the Central Bank charges other banks. This discount rate should be used as a base. Bank expenses and the bank's interest rate should then be added, depending on the degree of risk which is determined by the client's financial position and by the sureties he offers to acquire the loan.

Concluding, Muhammad 'Abu-al-'Aynayn said that releasing the interest rate is an element and an instrument through which fiscal and economic conditions are corrected. When using this instrument, the use must be made within the context of a study on the position and conditions of the Egyptian economy in order that this policy may produce the desired fruits.

Position of Profits from Shares

Engineer Husayn Sabur, chairman of the Egyptian-American Businesses Council and member of the Development Partners Committee, supports the decision to raise the interest rate. But he has reservations on another aspect. Sabur believes that raising the interest rate will encourage people to save and will absorb the cash liquidity from the market. However, there are certain perils. Interest earned is exempted from taxes whereas profit from shares is subject to taxation. Therefore, both must be treated equally so that one aspect is not favored over another. All saving vessels must be treated similarly.

The second point noted by Husayn Sabur is that raising interest rates must be approached very cautiously because we are experiencing a recession. Therefore, extreme caution is required and the step must be implemented by specialists who have the ability to recognize the various intricate issues in the Egyptian economy so that the outcome is not the opposite of what is intended. This dictates a scientific study in which both banks and investors participate. It also dictates a cohesive and coordinated study on the connection between interest rate and the other instruments. If the objective is to check inflation, then consideration must be given to coordinating the various technical and economic instruments that curtail inflation.

Husayn Sabur added: We need numerous and varied instruments to work effectively in order to check and control inflation. If we have raised the slogan of liberating the Egyptian economy, then we hope that a complete, cohesive, and coordinated program will be brought

out into the light promptly in order that it may show us set timetables that spell out how the slogan will be implemented over a certain period of time. This slogan has been in existence for some time now, and we hope to see a specific program to accelerate its implementation.

Egyptian Economy's Particularity

Ex-Planning Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahmud al-Imam believes that using higher interest rates as a technical instrument within the framework of the monetary policies to fight inflation is incompatible with the Egyptian economy's circumstances. He sees that the Egyptian economy's problem is a structural problem and that, therefore, monetary methods are not fit to deal with it and produce the opposite of what we hope for. This is in contrast with the economically advanced countries, such as the United States and the industrial countries. What they have is a monetary problem which they solve with a monetary method. When the United States raises its interest rates, investments flow into it. Could such a thing happen in Egypt?

If we consider the nature of the Egyptian economy's circumstances, we would find that we have both inflation and recession. Despite increased spending, the recession persists as a result of a flaw in the economic structure and in the distribution of income.

Dr. al-Imam sees that the interest rate is a component of production-process inputs. Interest rates and exchange rates are part of production costs. If we examine the private sector's circumstances and conditions, we would find that this sector is still in the growth phase. Consequently, raising the interest rate in this manner will impede the private sector's surge at a time when countries raise the slogan of promoting the private sector, especially the productive private sector.

Dr. al-Imam has said that raising the interest rate will lead to further inflation and recession because a release does not mean that the government give up all the keys in its hands. This is not liberation. A release means liberation of thought and firm governmental management with the instruments that the government has in its hand.

Dr. al-Imam offers the reasons which dissuade people from saving, and saving is the reason why interest rates are raised. He believes that this alone does not encourage those who have savings abroad to transfer these savings to Egypt. Such a transfer is tied to three major things: The interest rate, the exchange rate, and degree of risk. This is in addition to the movement of capital in the world markets.

Moreover, only ignorance of investment makes people refrain from investing at home or abroad. What is meant is that in the absence of an active securities market that offers investment opportunities other than monetary investment, banks operate their savings in return for a certain percentage. Monetary investment is made in

stable places where the instruments of monetary investment are guaranteed (under the canopy of the linkage and international character of capital).

Studying Worthiness of Agents

Completing his view of why the policy of raising interest rates is incompatible with the Egyptian economy's circumstances, Dr. al-Imam has said that the banks are not prepared for this policy. When we deal in the monetary markets, we consider the Central Bank rate, i.e., the discount rate, not the free interest rates. To have the banks compete against each other to attract clients means killing the banking agencies. Moreover, a high interest rate for savings will encourage banks to deal softly with the business sector and, consequently, will create speculation. This explains the emergence of the investment firms which have been offering high yield and thus killing the value of work among people.

Lending is not done on the basis of the loan interest rate but by studying the clients' worthiness, his position, and his ability to meet his obligations. This dictates that the government play a clear role in establishing investment priorities and that it exercise its role and its practical and technical powers in the banking process.

Opportunity for Serious Investor

Dr. Ahmad Rashad Musa, chairman of the Consultative Assembly's Economic Committee, believes that the interest rate must be raised because the inflation rate is high and that raising the interest rate promotes an increase in savings deposited with banks and, consequently, leads to a gradual decrease in the money in circulation in the market. This money is one of the main reasons for inflation.

Dr. Rashad Musa added: If some people fear that increased interest rates will impede investment, then the serious investor relies on his own capital. As for the investor who seeks to set up his projects solely with loans, then this investor is not serious and he is the one who fears increased interest rates and wants to gamble with the monies of others.

Commercial banks rely on providing credit on the basis of their deposits. Therefore, they have to take the depositor's interest into consideration. If the interest rate is lower than the inflation rate, the saver is discouraged from depositing his money in the bank.

It is noticed that the Egyptian pound's exchange rate is falling and that its purchasing power is diminishing as a result of inflation. When an individual finds that a bank's interest rate has risen to 20 percent, this encourages him to refrain from spending and to curtail demand. Consequently, cash liquidity is absorbed from the market by way of savings.

Enhancing Tax Collection Efficiency

Dr. Rashad Musa further added: Moreover, the new policy of financing the budget deficit by issuing treasury

permits to cover expenditures will streamline government spending and will increase revenues from taxes by enhancing the efficiency of tax collection because a large percentage of bonded taxes owed by taxpayers are not collected due to the Tax Agency's low efficiency level. The Ministry of Finance is in the process of drafting a plan to enhance the Tax Agency's efficiency and, at the same time, to combat tax evasion, especially among free and nonfree professionals and craftsmen.

Dr. Rashad Musa noted that this policy must be implemented within the framework of a policy of economic reform and of liberating the national economy through a comprehensive liberation program while keeping in mind the question of protecting people with limited income by way of a monetary subsidy, provided that it is delivered to those who deserve it.

This means that the government must have a role. Economic liberation does not mean nonintervention by the government. The government redistributes wealth by way of a capable tax agency and it protects people with limited income through a monetary subsidy that is delivered to those who actually deserve it. This is in addition to the government's role in drafting fiscal, economic, and monetary policies.

Najib Mahfuz Interviewed on Democracy, Gulf Crisis

91AA0208B Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
26 Jan 91 p 9

[Interview with Egyptian writer Najib Mahfuz: "No Fear About the Future of Democracy, Since the Entire World Has Moved Toward It;" date and place not given]

[Text] The distinguished Egyptian author, Najib Mahfuz, in an interview with AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI, said that he had no anxiety whatever about the future of freedom or democracy in Egypt.

In explanation of this, he said that democracy was the mark of the age, as well as the spirit of the future. Previously, there were two blocs, one democratic in the West, and the other communist in the East. However, it has become clear that the democratic option has won and has become dominant. It is the mark of the future, to which the world is turning. Its time has come.

Najib Mahfuz talked about Egyptian political parties, saying that they are the same as the old Arab Socialist Union party and, with the exception of the Wafd Party, there are no political parties in the scientific sense of the development of parties, or in the sense of the masses. Even the Wafd Party was absent for nearly 30 years, which has cut it off from the many changes that have occurred during those years.

He said that he would not hesitate to say that the sole solution for this problem is to unleash freedoms, especially the freedom to form political parties.

Najib Mahfuz also spoke about the future of Egyptian parties. He said that the future would see two kinds of parties: the first would be those that believe in socialist democracy, and a grouping between democracy and obligatory socialist accomplishments; the second kind would be religious parties, with supporters and believers in the Egyptian and Arab street.

The distinguished writer then discussed the Gulf crisis, which has now turned into the Gulf war, and the Egyptian political parties' positions vis-a-vis that crisis. Najib Mahfuz said that he supports President Husni Mubarak's political positions in dealing with this problem. He said that he does not visualize talk outside the sphere of legitimacy, except behind the scenes.

He attacked Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, charging him with responsibility for all events occurring in the Gulf, and for the futile squandering of Arab wealth and resources. He said that the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait was the cause of this crisis, and that withdrawal from Kuwait was the key to its solution.

He termed the use of occupation as being uncivilized and outside Arab and international law. He expressed his astonishment at those who support, or who shut their eyes to, the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, and said that these were outlaw positions.

Najib Mahfuz also discussed his concept of the new world order, saying that he thinks the spirit of cooperation has replaced the spirit of competition in this new world order, and that this new order is based on a belief in peace. He said that the Iraqi President was the first problem opposing cooperation and peace in the new world order.

IRAQ

Kurdish Opposition Leader Interviewed

91AE0266A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
3 Feb 91 p 11

[Interview with Mas'ud al-Barzani, Kurdish opposition leader, by 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Barifkani: "Kurdish Leader Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: 'Saving Iraq From Dictatorship Is the Goal of the Opposition; 'General Execution' Is the Aim of General Amnesty Decrees Issued by Saddam';" at a Kurdish revolutionary post on the Iran-Iraq-Turkish border; date of interview not specified]

[Text] Mas'ud al-Barzani is the man who represents 5 million Kurds in Iraq, not to mention the fact that he has been the leader of the armed Iraqi-Kurdish opposition for decades. His standing and influence among Kurds in Iran, Turkey, Syria, and the Soviet Union is considerable.

Mr. al-Barzani, who grew up under the watchful eye of the armed Kurdish revolution in its theater of operations in the Kurdish mountains, is now the president of the

Democratic Party of Kurdistan and the president of the Kurdistan-Iraqi Front. Although Mas'ud al-Barzani rarely captures the limelight, he plays a key role as one of the Kurdish Movement's leaders in setting the course of developments which the region has been experiencing.

This interview with al-Barzani was conducted intermittently, 6,600 kilometers from London, at one of the Kurdish revolutionaries' posts on the borders between Iraq, Iran, and Turkey where al-Barzani commands platoons of the Revolutionary Army of Kurdistan (al-Bishmarkah) in an armed Kurdish-Iraqi front against Saddam's aggressive regime.

The text of the second part of the interview follows:

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Some people affirm that Iraqi military commanders have different points of view regarding the invasion of Kuwait and the consequences of that aggression. Is that true?

[Al-Barzani] The changes which took place during the past weeks reveal quite clearly that there is concern and dissatisfaction among Iraq's military commanders who have different points of view on the invasion of Kuwait and its consequences. Some of these commanders think that the Iraqi army cannot withstand the losses which will be inflicted on it by the modern weapons which will be used against it. At the same time, some commanders think that the fact that this conflict was caused by the Iraqi regime is a very serious matter. They think that Saddam Husayn seems to be unable to appreciate the reasons for the international consensus to stand up to his aggression against Kuwait.

This is the view which cost General Nizar 'Abd-al-Hakim al-Khazarji his job as army chief of staff and eventually led to his execution. Gen. al-Khazarji had presented that view at an expanded meeting for Iraq's political and military leaders, a meeting which was attended by Saddam Husayn.

Information we received recently confirms that a number of senior military leaders have been removed from their positions because they oppose Saddam's policy which will cause the Iraqi military machine to sustain tremendous losses. The information also confirms that Lieutenant General Thabit Sultan, commander of the Second Corps, has been executed and that Lt. Gen. Natiq Shakir, commander of the Fifth Corps, was replaced by another officer loyal to Saddam Husayn. Other news confirms that the destiny of Lt. Gen. Natiq Shakir, the destiny of Gen. Rashash al-Imarah, and the destiny of 12 senior army officers remain unknown. At the same time, the prevailing news in Baghdad is that a number of them were executed recently.

The Kurds' Position

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Saddam Husayn's invasion of Kuwait has been condemned by the countries of the world. Where do the Kurds stand on this matter about which there is international agreement?

[Al-Barzani] After the invasion of Kuwait the command of the Iraqi Kurdish Front held an expanded meeting to evaluate the situation. The front then issued a statement declaring the invasion of Kuwait an act of aggression against a sovereign Arab state and a member of the United Nations. The front affirmed that the military occupation of Kuwait was incompatible with the interests of the Iraqi people: Iraqi Arabs, Iraqi Kurds, and Iraqi minorities. Based on this evaluation the Kurdish Front joined world public opinion in its demand for a peaceful solution. The Kurdish Front demanded the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and the restoration of normal conditions in that country so that our country and the region may be spared the disasters of war.

The military invasion of Kuwait is incompatible with international agreements and conventions and with a worldwide tendency to seek peaceful solutions to problems. It also places the entire region on the brink of a new, destructive war which would inflict heavy damage upon the peoples of Iraq, Kuwait, and the remaining countries of the region. Not only does this invasion threaten security and peace in the Gulf region and in the Middle East, but it also threatens security and peace in the whole world.

The Roots of Aggression

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] You have been involved with the opposition to Saddam Husayn's regime for years. Did the invasion of Kuwait come to you as a surprise?

[Al-Barzani] Saddam's invasion of Kuwait and his aggression against that country did not surprise us at all. It is our opinion in the Kurdish Front that the roots of the regime's aggression lie in its dictatorial and chauvinistic policy, a policy which it has been pursuing for over 20 years. The nations of the region and the international community as well have been aware of the Iraqi regime's crimes and continuous attacks. They know that this regime has been attacking the Kurdish people for many years and has been using chemical and conventional weapons in its campaigns against them. They know that this regime wants to exterminate the Kurds and to destroy villages and cities. In recent decades Kurds have been subjected to more than mere attacks and violations of some of their political rights by the Iraqi regime. What the Kurds have been subjected to is rather a total human tragedy which befell a large nation shackled by tyranny, persecution, and occupation.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait militarily, statements condemning the Iraqi regime and its invasion of Kuwait filled newspaper columns from different countries, particularly Europe and the United States. Similar statements of condemnation were seen in the rest of the media and were made by senior officials in those countries. Considerable tension in the Gulf and in the world followed the invasion. When those instruments of world public opinion tried to paint a picture of the horror of the Iraqi regime, what they had to do repeatedly was cite

the crimes committed by that regime against the Kurdish people. Even the U.S. president referred to these events and facts when he exclaimed, "What can one expect from a regime that uses chemical weapons against its own people?"

The Baghdad regime would not have dared to do what it is doing now if it had been condemned at that time and if attempts had been made then to put an end to its crimes. The Baghdad regime would not have dared attack its neighbors in the same way it had attacked its people.

The Damascus Agreement

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What comes next, now that the Iraqi opposition has recently concluded the Damascus Agreement?

[Al-Barzani] The front's pact, which was proclaimed recently by the Iraqi opposition in Damascus, is a step toward the main goal of our just Iraqi cause. This main goal, which we are looking forward to, involves saving Iraq from dictatorship and providing it with a democratic climate which would enable the Iraqi people to express their opinions and elect the government they want to have. We want a democratic climate in Iraq so that the Kurdish people can exercise all their rights. I hope that the front's recent pact will be a step toward carrying out the historic task for which everyone is responsible.

The Goals

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Why are the Kurds trying to maintain their autonomy?

[Al-Barzani] The Kurdish movement has two goals: an interim goal and a strategic one. At the present time the Kurdish people are struggling to gain their rights. The interim goal is to gain those rights by relying on the legal principle of national autonomy within the Iraqi state. The strategic goal is this: The Kurdish people have been and still are an ethnic group of people indigenous to the Middle East region. Their roots are deep and go far back.

Recognizing the right of self-determination is only a preliminary step leading to the legal establishment of the right to national self-determination. The magnitude of these rights, which the Kurds are trying to gain, and actually achieving those rights are not less important than legal recognition of autonomy.

We Reject Negotiations

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Mr. al-Barzani, you have been leading the Kurdish armed movement in Iraqi Kurdistan since May 1976. Why didn't you negotiate with the Iraqi regime during all those years?

[Al-Barzani] We have never been opposed to negotiations and to a peaceful solution to our political cause. Whenever the ruling regime in Iraq tried to open the door to dialogue to prepare for negotiations, we would

always set forth a clear and an unequivocal position before the start of any talks. Ever since 1980 we have been affirming the principles and steps which we might agree on to conduct negotiations. We have also been wondering: "What are the principles and steps we might agree on to conduct negotiations when Kurdistan lies in ruins, surrounded by a security zone? What are the principles and steps we might agree on when more than half the Kurdish people—women, children, and old men—are being held against their will as prisoners of war in more than 100 camps?"

This is what we have been saying: "Let the Kurdish people go back to their areas and their villages. Put an end to these camps where people are being held against their will. We can then hold serious and sincere talks. Negotiations about the question would be meaningless when half the Kurdish people are being held in camps against their will."

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] And yet, other Kurdish elements which do not have the military capability that you have did negotiate with Saddam Husayn. What about that?

[Al-Barzani] Every party or organization has its own circumstances, and every party or organization bears the responsibility for its actions. And yet, don't you think that a regime which is always rejecting the terms I mentioned in my answer to your previous question is a regime that is not serious about giving Kurds their rights? The failure of the negotiations which you referred to is a concrete example we have that the regime is not serious about giving Kurds their rights. It affirms unequivocally that the regime is not talking in good faith about affirming the rights of Kurds.

The General Amnesty Decree Means "Execution"

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] On 12 December 1990 Iraqi President Saddam Husayn pardoned all Iraqis who were wanted by the authorities, and he commuted the sentences of all those who had defected. What is your analysis of that?

[Al-Barzani] The recent general amnesty issued by the regime for Iraqis in Iraq and abroad was not the first such amnesty to be issued. In fact, similar amnesty decrees were issued during the previous years. But most Iraqis who had sought refuge outside Iraq were executed upon their return. These Iraqis and others who are affiliated with the opposition were executed or arrested or they disappeared. As Kurds, we cannot allow the regime to achieve the goals it wants to achieve by issuing this amnesty. When a general amnesty decree was issued in 1988 after the end of the Iraq-Iran war, we asked that the amnesty decree be linked with the regime's pledge that public liberties would be granted, human rights guaranteed, detainees released, and emergency conditions in Kurdistan repealed.

Personally, I do not actually take these amnesty decrees which are issued by Saddam Husayn seriously.

It is Saddam who used chemical weapons which are banned by the international community. It is Saddam who killed the Kurdish people. It is Saddam who had more than 30,000 Kurdish citizens arrested during the past few years. It is in his prisons that more than 20,000 (Fili) Kurdish citizens are being held: young people were detained by the authorities, and their families were deported. It is Saddam who built the hanging scaffolds for the Iraqi people's fighters. I don't understand how a person like Saddam could issue decrees pardoning fighters, members of the opposition, and Iraqis who had sought political asylum in other countries to flee the purgatory of his dictatorship. I don't understand how he, after committing all those crimes, could pardon those who had committed none.

Saddam Husayn ought to have enough courage to ask the Kurds and the Iraqis to forgive him. He ought to have the courage to apologize for the crimes he committed against them. This is our view of the situation. This amnesty is one thing we do not need, and we reject it categorically.

Kurdish Refugees

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Kurdish refugees, whose situation is woefully tragic, are waiting for a solution to their plight. How are they living, those thousands of Kurds who fled from Saddam's aggression and sought refuge in Turkey and Iran?

[Al-Barzani] The tragedy of the Kurds who sought refuge outside Iraq is the tragedy of homelessness. They are suffering from homelessness and from hunger and disease as a result of the inhumane conditions they are in and the crimes committed against them by the Iraqi regime. This is what thousands of Kurdish refugees are suffering: they had to leave their areas in Iraqi Kurdistan en masse. They left their homes and their villages, and they left behind scores of Kurds who were dying and others who were emaciated and wounded.

At the present time 32,000 Iraqi Kurds are living in refugee camps in Turkey. They are living in tents under severe weather conditions, and they suffer from the cold, from hunger, and from the lack of sanitary facilities. In addition, they are suffering from the fact that they do not have enough food. Statistics show, however, that more than 275,000 Kurds are in Iran. Since the early seventies more than 112,000 Fili Kurds who had lived in Iraq since the early part of this century were deported to Iran. The 62,000 Fili Kurds who had been residing in Iraq's urban centers were deported to Iran in 1980 after the Iraqi president unilaterally abrogated the 1975 Algiers Agreement. They joined 50,000 other Kurds who had been deported to Iran in 1971 and 1972. During the past five years more than 120,000 persons sought refuge in Iran after almost 4,000 Kurdish villages in Kurdistan were destroyed. The town of Halabjah, which was struck with chemical weapons in 1988, was one of those towns which were destroyed.

International Assistance

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Can you describe to us the suffering of those Kurds who fled from Iraq based on your daily dealings with them? Have they been offered international assistance to save them from their ordeal?

[Al-Barzani] Nothing in the world can make up for the sense of loss a person feels when he has to leave his land, his country, and the place where he grew up. I cannot imagine any refugee feeling comfortable living far away from his country. Immigration and expatriation put pressures on one's emotional condition. They make a person experience feelings of pain and sorrow continuously.

Despite our very limited resources we are trying to pay attention to all the problems of these refugees, and we are trying to make them feel as comfortable as possible. After all, these people are the elite of the Kurdish people. They are the ones who made tremendous and unforgettable sacrifices. No price tag can be placed on the sacrifices they made. These people gave up all their worldly possessions for their cause. They gave up everything so they would not have to succumb to the unjust enemy who wanted them to succumb.

We don't have accurate information about how much assistance has been offered to these people, nor do we know how it is distributed among them. We do know, however, that assistance was sent to the countries where the refugees live.

Kurdish refugees in Turkey and Iran look forward to the assistance which is offered by some UN agencies and by some charitable European organizations which do not offer clothing or food. At the same time, no charitable Arab organization has offered these refugees any assistance, and the Red Crescent Organization in the Arab world has not offered them any assistance either. In fact, we have not heard that any official from these organizations visited the Kurdish camps to alleviate the suffering of the people in those camps.

The Liberated Land

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How are Kurdish troops in the liberated land dealing with the Iraqi regime?

[Al-Barzani] Until a short time ago, before chemical weapons were used, the Kurds relied heavily on direct military confrontation. They forced Iraqi troops to stay in their barracks and to avoid confronting the Kurds whenever and wherever that was possible. This military method enabled the Kurds to control vast areas of Iraq, from the country's northeastern borders with Iran to several miles from the town of Zakhu, which is located near the area where Iraq has borders with Syria and Turkey. In some areas the Kurds controlled an area that extended 50 kilometers south.

The use of chemical weapons, however, induced leaders of the movement to make new plans to confront these inhumane measures and to prepare for a partisan war.

Chemical weapons have been used in Qarah Dagħ since mid-1987, and in March 1988 they were used in Halabjah, in the villages surrounding it, and in the area of Bahdinan all along the Iraqi-Turkish border. The Kurds added to their arsenal of weapons by acquiring numbers of SAM-7 missiles and shoulder-carried missile launchers to fight against airplanes which use chemical weapons. The Kurds increased the size of their weapons arsenal so they could hold on to the strategic positions they held inside Iraqi territory. Despite its repeated attempts, all attempts made by the Iraqi army to impose its control over these positions failed.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Have the Kurds fought new battles recently against the Iraqi army?

[Al-Barzani] A few weeks ago, on 2 December 1990, a commando brigade subordinate to the 47th Division of the First Army Corps mounted a major offensive against rebel bases in Iraqi West Kurdistan. Violent battles were fought for three days after which the brigade was resoundingly defeated. Members of the brigade retreated from the battle, leaving behind more than 70 bodies on the battlefield. One of these bodies was that of Major Muhammad Salih, the leader of a regiment. The Kurds seized weapons, communications equipment, and other military equipment in these battles.

Mas'ud al-Barzani's Message to the Media

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you wish to make one last comment?

[Al-Barzani] As an Iraqi, it hurts me to see the people of Iraq paying the price for the mistakes made by their leaders. The Iraqi people are paying the price for adventures undertaken by rulers who do not represent the wishes of the Iraqi people.

Second, I think I am entitled to ask the media the following question:

[Where were they] when our people were being slaughtered and wiped out by chemical weapons? Memoranda after memoranda were submitted to officials and important persons who were asked to do their part. We pleaded with them to step in and to stop the massacres that were being carried out against the Kurdish people. But no one in the media published a single word or announced anything that would convey to public opinion the tragic facts which the Kurdish people were experiencing. We are now entitled to ask the media and institutions to join the Kurdish people in solidarity because what Saddam did against us was a dress rehearsal for something he wanted to apply to others.

ISRAEL

Poll on Territorial Compromise Option Published

TA1131501A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 8 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] Following are the results of a telephone poll of a representative sample of 506 Jews which was taken last Thursday and Sunday by the Dahaf institute (answers are in percentages).

[Question] Do you accept the principle of "territories for peace"?

[Answer] Yes:49; No: 49

[Question] If we stand by the need to decide the future of the territories on the basis of the above-mentioned principle, should it be decided by a public referendum or by a decision of the government?

[Question] Should be decided by referendum: 75 percent

[Answer] Should be decided by government: 24 percent

Habad Promises To Return Soviet Children

TA2122157A Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Hebrew 1900 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Text] The heads of the Habad movement in Israel made it clear today that if it transpires that the parents of 24 children from Chernobyl, indeed, want their children returned home, this will be carried out at once. Meanwhile, the Habad movement hopes to keep the children in Israel and give them medical treatment and religious education. A group of children from Chernobyl were circumcised today at the Qiryat Wolfson Medical Center in Jerusalem.

Agricultural Changes Due to Water Shortage

91AE0252A Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 25 Jan 91
p 2B

[Article by Aharon Pri'el]

[Text] Rain arrived this week, and in nice quantities, but even the war did not make those responsible for the water system forget the emergency situation in which we find ourselves in this area.

A cut of 150 million cubic meters of good water from the quotas for the agricultural sector will leave agriculture this year with the smallest quantity of water since the establishment of the state.

The calculation is simple, says Ilan Shapira, director of the Economics Department of the Agricultural Center: Agriculture had at its disposal one billion cubic meters of good water and another 400 million cubic meters of "other" types of water—such as run-off water and grey water.

After the cut, agriculture will have to make do with an overall quantity of 750 million cubic meters annually: 450 million cubic meters of good water and another 300 million cubic meters of other water for irrigating the fields and the orchards.

Another 100 million cubic meters of good water are used for household consumption and farmyard uses.

With this quantity of water, agriculturalists will have to irrigate 2.2 million dunams—one million dunams of field crops, 385,000 dunams of vegetables and potatoes, 21,000 dunams of hothouses, and 774,000 dunams of orchards—and fill 25,000 dunams of fish ponds.

In Shapira's estimation, the injury to most of the production branches due to the lack of water will be "very painful," and it will cause irreversible damage in some cases.

What will the cut in water quotas do to each branch?

- **Cotton:** Until four or five years ago, the cotton branch was one of the most central and profitable areas in agriculture. As of this year, it will be possible to grow cotton only by irrigating with low-quality water. In the glory days of cotton, exports came to \$200 million a year, from an area of 640,000 dunams. This year, excluding the losses from idle land and equipment, cotton exports will total "no more than \$50 million."
- **Field crops:** This production branch, covering an area of 620,000 dunams, on which fodder, corn, sunflowers, industrial tomatoes, and other field crops were grown last year, "will take a very hard blow," except for fodder. Cultivated areas will contract to 436,000 dunams, which will be irrigated with 150 million cubic meters of water. Some of the field crops that are grown for industry can be irrigated with run off water. Any quantity of water that remains from the quota will be shifted to the irrigation of fodder in order to feed livestock.
- **Vegetables, potatoes, and flowers:** Almost no damage will be done this year to these production branches, and the quantity of approximately 200 million cubic meters of good-quality water will not be cut for these crops. The cultivated area was 406,000 dunams last year and will remain the same this year. The reason this branch will not be damaged, explains Ilan Shapira, is the economic feasibility of producing fresh food for the domestic market, and the great profitability of vegetable and flower exports. "The price of water does not constitute the most important component in the costs of production," says Shapira.
- **Orchards:** This production branch will be "the hardest nut to crack." The subject is multiyear crops. Without the quantities of water required for worthwhile output, citrus and deciduous orchards will dry up. According to economists from the Economic Department of the Agricultural Center, the cut in quantities of water is liable to reduce the area planted with orchards from 330,000 dunams to 70,000 dunams, which would supply domestic consumption

and quantities for the export of special kinds of citrus, such as easily peelable fruit, for which there is a great demand in the European markets and which fetch a high price, resulting in export feasibility. The citrus orchards consume 260 million cubic meters of water annually, and after the cut, according to figures from the Agricultural Center, "the citrus branch will be left with only 91 million cubic meters of water."

- **Avocado:** It, too, is liable to suffer a very heavy blow. The planted area today comes to 85,000 dunams, and the cut in water quotas beginning this year is liable to reduce the planted area to a total of 25,000 dunams. The annual water consumption of the avocado orchards is 62 million cubic meters. The cut will leave this production branch with no more than 22 million meters of water a year. Avocado is one of the most important components of the agricultural export basket. A great recovery began in the branch in the last two years, after "almost zero harvests" caused by natural disasters in previous years.
- **Apple trees:** The planted areas will not change, and will remain at 43,000 dunams, but the quantity of water will be reduced from 35 million cubic meters to 25 million cubic meters. In these orchards, which produce surpluses every year, it will be possible to reduce the quantities of water without impairing the level of supply required for the domestic market. The pear orchards that spread over an area of 8,000 dunams will not be harmed, and the quantity of water for these orchards apparently will not be reduced, remaining as last year, at 4.5 million cubic meters.
- **Bananas:** As large consumers of water in the amount of 60 million cubic meters, they will shrink to approximately 16,000 dunams from a planted area that today comes to 21,000 dunams. The allocation of water to the banana orchards will be reduced to approximately 49 million cubic meters.
- **Table grapes:** Crops on an area of 32,000 dunams, and which consume today 17 million cubic meters, will have to make do with 14 million cubic meters of water, and table grape vineyards will shrink to 26,000 dunams. Wine vineyards occupy 20,000 dunams. According to economists from the Agricultural Center, these areas will not be reduced, but they will have to make do with a water allocation of 3.5 million cubic meters, instead of the ordinary consumption of 4 million meters.

Shapira estimates that the new water policy will lead to unemployment of 10,000 producing agriculturalists who are not wage earners, and to the unemployment of an additional 25,000 persons who are engaged in transportation, storage, marketing of produce, and other work connected with the various producing branches in agriculture. "The cuts in the water quotas, which will cause a reduction in the cultivated areas, will be reflected in a considerable decline in purchases of agricultural inputs, such as insecticides, fertilizers, seeds, fuel, electricity, seedlings, packing materials, irrigation systems, and other fixed equipment."

Shapira says that in 1990 the turnover in the various producing branches in the agricultural sector came to approximately NIS [New Israeli Shekels] 6 billion. For production in all of the branches, the agriculturalists purchased inputs in the amount of NIS 3 billion in 1990. But the cuts in the cultivated areas will reduce the purchases of inputs by an estimated NIS 1 billion.

According to him, a conservative estimate of the direct financial damage that will be inflicted on agriculturalists as a result of the cut in water quotas will amount this year to approximately NIS 500 million, "including the depreciation of idle equipment."

JORDAN

Confrontation Between Islam, West Viewed

91AE0222A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
24, 26, 27 Dec 90

[Article in three installments by Hasan al-Tall, editor in chief of Muslim Brother publication AL-LIWA': "The Cultural Confrontation Between Islam and the West"]

[24 Dec p 4]

[Text] In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

"All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies God; He is the All-mighty, the All-wise. It is He who expelled from their habitations the unbelievers among the People of the Book at the first mustering. You did not think that they would go forth, and they thought that their fortresses would defend them against God; then God came upon them from whence they had not reckoned, and He cast terror into their hearts as they destroyed their houses with their own hands, and the hands of the believers; therefore take heed, you who have eyes!" [Koran 59:1-2].

1. The cultural struggle between Islam and the West assumed its historic dimension as long ago as the beginnings of the Islamic call. Islam's attention to the Arabian peninsula's neighboring geographical areas, which constitute a geographical and ethnic extension for the Arabs, has been clear since the youth of the Prophet Muhammad—even before he was sent on his prophetic mission. The historical narratives indicate this. They tell of the Prophet's two business journeys with his uncle, Abu-Talib. They tell of the conversation between the Prophet's uncle and the monks Nestor and Bahira concerning the need to protect his kinsmen from the treachery of the Jews, who knew from their books both that a prophet's time was imminent and what his characteristics would be.

The episode of the Night Journey and Ascension from Mecca to Jerusalem, and thence to the neighborhood of the Heavenly Throne, with the resultant imposition upon Muslims of the duty of prayer and of turning toward Jerusalem—these things strategically linked the

two places. Add to this the cooperation between pagan Arabs and Jews in relentlessly fighting the call to Islam and putting obstacles in its way. This began when the pre-Islamic Arabs called on the Jews for help before the Prophet's emigration to Medina. They did this by raising questions, such as the problem of the People of the Cave, and the subject of the Spirit. Then there was strategic cooperation between the Jews of the peninsula and the pagan Arabs after the Prophet's emigration to Medina, despite the constitution of Medina, which the Prophet drafted to strengthen relations between the inhabitants of Medina, whatever their creed. The result was that this agreement was broken, other agreements were violated, and the Jews sided with the pagan Arabs and plotted against the Muslims. This could be clearly and plainly seen in the Battle of the Allied Clans and the subsequent armed conflict between the Muslims and the Jews, which ended with the total banishment of the latter from the peninsula. The Koranic verse quoted at the beginning of this study alludes to this.

That is how the conflict between Islam and the Jewish side began. The conflict with the Western side also began early in Islamic history. It goes back to when the Prophet sent his ambassadors to the rulers of the neighboring regions, calling on them to lift oppression from their peoples by accepting the summons to Islam. These rulers took various positions toward the Prophet's letters. Subsequent moves revealed that a huge Byzantine army was heading to attack Islam on its own ground. The Prophet called on Muslims to confront this challenge, as exemplified in the raids on Tabuk and Mu'tah. The Byzantine governor tried to entice one of the three men who held back from the holy war at the Battle of Mu'tah, tempting him to escape into his country. But Ka'b Ibn-Malik rejected the offer and endured the burdens of punishment for his having held back, until God's forgiveness of him and his two companions descended in a Koranic verse for Muslims to read throughout time: "And to the three who were left behind, until, when the earth became strait for them, for all its breadth, and their souls became strait for them, and they thought that there was no shelter from God except in Him, then He turned towards them, that they might also turn; surely God turns, and is All-compassionate" [Koran 9:118].

Then came the operational response to the positions that the region's rulers had taken toward the Prophet's letters to them. Their tyranny was overthrown, and the peoples of the region were liberated by military force. Thus, all the promises of Islam to Muslims and others in the region were realized. In less than 40 years from the day of the Prophet's emigration, Muslims were able by means of Islam to liberate the countries of Persia, Mesopotamia, the four provinces of Syria, Egypt, and all North Africa up to the Atlantic Ocean. They did this despite the tremendous disparity between victors and vanquished in numbers, equipment, and varieties of material advancement; for the Muslims held to God's commandments and prohibitions, and God therefore kept His promise to them: "If God helps you, none can

overcome you; but if He forsakes you, who then can help you after Him? Therefore in God let the believers put all their trust." [Koran 3:160].

2. The conflict between Islam and Western culture continued in various forms. After the Islamic tide swept over Spain and Portugal toward France, finally halting on the plains of Narbonne at the Battle of Poitiers, the ebbing of Islam began to take various forms and to appear in many ways. First there were the defeats that began with the violent disturbances that befell Muslim Spain. In the end, the unified Islamic state was torn apart and transformed into petty kingdoms. The result was the complete extirpation of the Islamic presence in Spain as a result of the character disruption shown by Abu-'Abdallah the Younger, whom his mother aptly described when she said to him:

"Weep like a woman for a lost kingdom that you could not defend like a man!"

The result was fragmentation and political and intellectual decline, ending with the Crusader invasion, which exposed the West's secret hatred of Islam. The West did not hesitate to use every means, including odious religious bigotry violating the most basic religious principles. The West exploited the religious situation among Western peoples. It filled them with hatred against Muslims. Events took their course; but in the course of two centuries, Islam was able to bind up Muslims' wounds, unite them, and dislodge the Crusaders from its domain. The Battle of Hittin, with its preceding and succeeding battles, was the end of the political and military presence of Western culture.

God Almighty willed that a new age of blessed Islamic expansion should begin. After the Islamic lands united under the banner of the Muslim Ottomans, Islam was able to destroy the fortifications of Constantinople, overrun the armies of the Byzantines, and turn the capital of the Eastern Church into an Islamic capital. It was given the name "Islambul," and became the center for an Islamic expansion that overran Eastern Europe and reached the walls of Vienna.

One should carefully ponder the fact that the second expansion of Islam took place on the ruins of political decline, backwardness, and fragmentation, as well as intellectual backwardness. The emergence of dedicated, earnest leaders, the utilization of available material resources, and the sincere turning of the masses toward a willingness to fight and die in holy war brought about the second expansion of Islam. But the movement of history, with its fixed canons and incontrovertible laws, did not forgive Muslims for their relaxation, their abandonment of their God-assigned duty, and their again becoming subject to weakness, fragmentation, and defeat. Western hatred was the strongest tool. It exploited the bad conditions of the Ottoman Empire. This time it based its strategy on scientific study. It utilized all the ways and means made available to it by its circumstances and by the progress it had made in various fields of knowledge

and science—especially technology and the progress in various kinds of invention and industry. It also utilized the various humanities, enlisting thousands of trained specialists for the task it entrusted to them—orientalists and scholars in the various human sciences. It gathered all the results they had reached in their various studies and used these results in its battle against Muslims. The state that Islam had reached among Muslims—a state of weakness, disunity, and disagreeing ideas—helped the West penetrate many of the decisionmakers in the Islamic world. Conditions were ready for Western intellectual schemes aimed at making real Islam disappear from the picture and establishing anti-Islamic intellectual trends. The West was able to find agents and hirelings for these ideas from inside the Islamic body. It provided these imported trends with the means of strength, so that they were able to create for themselves cultural enclaves espousing Western ideas and working to carry out the West's schemes. Nationalisms in the Western sense emerged in the course of the Turkification movement, led by the Union and Progress Party. The reaction emerged in the form of Arab nationalism, which the West fed with the means to achieve the West's goals and schemes. Conditions in the entire Islamic world arrived at a state of susceptibility to colonization. Then the invasion began. It did not stop until after it had taken over the entire Islamic world from Tangier to Jakarta, including the entire Arab homeland, the lands of Persia and India, and all other Islamic lands throughout the world.

The engineers of the Western struggle did not stop with a military invasion. Rather, this invasion was preceded and accompanied by an intellectual and economic invasion affecting all the institutions of life.

[26 Dec p 4]

[Text] 3. Western colonialism came on the ruins of a self-created decline in which the nation was suffering from backwardness, dissolution, and corruption to a degree that rendered it unable to comprehend what was happening to it. The nation was totally incapable of foreseeing the future on the basis of its own realities. Colonialism led many sectors of the nation to a deep-seated hostility between children of a single homeland. It succeeded in creating two conflicting schools between which there was a gulf of suspicion and contempt. The two schools took as points of departure virtually immovable convictions, since there was no atmosphere of serious dialogue present that might bridge the relation between them. The common enemy kept twisting his knife in these wounds, so that the bleeding and fragmentation might continue until he had given the victim the coup de grace.

The enemy exploited the conditions of backwardness and decline. He made an exhaustive study based on methodical planning that defined his goals, and he worked for these goals with diligent earnestness. He laid down methods to accomplish his goal by a clear strategy. He precipitated internal social change in a form and

manner that deviated from the requirements of the Arab homeland; this in order to realize the goals of the colonial project. To advance his project, he created a cultural dualism: the society's traditional bodies were preserved in their worn-out condition, but beside them (as Dr. Sa'd-al-Din Ibrahim has said) a virtually new structure was created among intellectuals and decision-makers, without its becoming complete or being allowed to become complete. This began with the political structures: their form and waning influence were preserved, but next to them the enemy established structures that he shaped after himself and to which he gave the modern names, appearances, and forms that had shaped his own society and achieved for it the progress and wealth it enjoyed. However, he stripped these structures of the spirit and power to achieve progress; indeed, he even gave them a downward direction, so that movement was downward. Injustice increased, poverty spread, and disunity was entrenched. This was the result that shaped the condition that the Palestinian cause has reached, as exemplified by official Arab impotence and the negative international position—a condition of extreme weakness, failure, and frustration.

Matters did not end with the political state. The colonial project was more defined in the economic and educational structures. The existing economy was demolished—an economy that had produced basic necessities for the population, relying on agriculture, livestock raising, and traditional crafts. Most national economies were converted into dependent economies absorbed into the [enemy's] international economic system. The intention was to turn the society from a state of production into one of consumption—a society whose role would be limited to exporting raw materials to factories in the West and importing Western manufactured goods on unfair terms of trade. Thus developed our present condition: our economy is incapable of independent growth and is satisfied with economic enclaves exemplified by trade and banking centers. These perform a role that can best be described as that of a client who realizes certain gains at the expense of the welfare of his homeland and nation.

To complete its goals, colonialism paid particular attention to education. It based its educational strategy on weakening the existing native educational institutions. Next to them it built a secular educational system. As Dr. Sa'd-al-Din Ibrahim says, this was not done with the intention of graduating modern technicians, professionals, and intellectuals, but rather with the intention of graduating the kinds of educated people fit only to fill jobs in the civil service and the apparatus that colonialism created as a tool to tighten its control and exploitation.

4. By this destruction in the social structures, colonialism aimed at distorting the components of society and creating handicapped social classes unable to emerge from the sphere delimited for them at all levels. These classes corrupted the current reality, and they were

unable to generate new realities capable of developing the society and moving it forward.

On the industrial level, the coup de grace was given to the artisan class that used to assure the society of its basic needs. On its ruins was created a class somewhat like a proletariat, although it did not work in manufacturing, but rather in services, trade, and transportation, and suffered from open or veiled unemployment. Although these new economic classes never carried the social and economic roles that the Western bourgeoisie carried on its shoulders, they tried and are still trying to imitate the Western bourgeoisie in aspirations and consumption patterns, though having none of the latter's achievements.

On the agricultural level, colonialism was based on supporting native large landowners, who became virtual feudal lords. Small farmers continued to comprise the great majority of the rural population. Agricultural decisions came and were implemented by the elites or cultural enclaves that colonialism created and entrusted with political decisionmaking. As a result, the majority were turned into laborers who migrated from the country into the city and were incorporated into a shapeless proletariat.

Colonialism was able to pervert our course throughout the period when there was contact with it. It distorted the Arab economy. It created a state of anarchy that ruined the economy's structures and prevented them from becoming integrated with each other. This led to the growth of distorted social formations that entrenched this anarchy and rendered all the attempts that emerged with independence incapable of achieving any success on any level. Then, as Sa'd-al-Din Ibrahim says, the age of oil came dramatically, compounding the distortion of production modes and social formations. Among the manifestations of this deepened distortion were increased economic, cultural, and political dependence on the outside world. This became visible in the disparity of wealth between Arab countries. Within each country it was visible in the disparity between different classes and the imbalance between the standards of work and performance, on the one hand, and those of distribution and reward on the other.

The educational dualism deepened this conflict, creating distorted and unbalanced sociocultural formations. The new curricula stood on a secular foundation and were provided with the best and largest number of personnel. The share of religious education was the worst and smallest number of personnel, at a time when the schemes of colonialism continued to be active. Thus, those who entered secular education were not educated or trained in the manner necessary to carry out an effective modernization role; while those who entered religious education were not educated or trained to protect what was authentic with an open horizon and understanding.

This period—we are still living in it—was one of the worst the Islamic world has ever experienced. Many penetrations took place during it, and the means of resistance were destroyed or almost destroyed. Many sicknesses came to the surface. The nation suffered deeply from fragmentation, weakness, and defeats. It was divided against itself, and wasted its efforts and strength on things of no avail. The people of the nation began to strike at each other. The distance between rulers and ruled widened. Defeats proliferated. The common people were transformed into an insignificant tool for consumption, so that the enemy finally tightened his grip on us, threatening to cut off our daily bread, and playing with our capacities however he wished. All of this has affected the struggle, particularly the Palestinian cause. What has come to pass regarding this issue can be traced to the fumbling confusion shown and still being shown by its leaders. The issue has not taken its legitimate course in the circle of the conflict. Many of those who come forward to the task have and still are interposing between the Palestinian cause and many of the sources of its strength. Here I need mention only one of these sources of strength, for there is constant effort to remove the Palestinian cause from its natural and legitimate Islamic context. Many influential people insisted on this thesis, while moving toward the communists and considering them to be friends. The result was this tragic crime that has resulted in Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union to Palestine—a pledge of this friendship.

By not starting from Islam, the Palestinian revolution missed the correct historical conclusions. This was because its leaders were influenced by the general atmosphere and by the political conditions that had created the existing Arab entity, with all its contradictions, and all the sicknesses from which its regimes suffer. The most prominent of these sicknesses is subservience to the forces of international arrogance—the very forces that produced the Palestine tragedy, protected Zionism, supplied it with the means of strength, and protected it with a wall of regimes subservient to the forces of arrogance and implementing the policy of these forces. The Palestinian cause was defeated because it was separated from what Islam prescribed—namely, to create a popular current standing on an intellectual and emotional basis that would constitute a pressure force on the regimes, so that they would respond to the popular Islamic spirit. The Palestinian cause should not have turned to the regimes or organizations that were the main reason for the frustration it suffered and is suffering. Rather, the Islamic movement should hasten to espouse a strategy that would enable it to bear arms and force a battle with the Jews and those who try to protect them.

The Arab Islamic movement was very inadequate. It failed in its strategy toward the Palestinian and other issues, because it did not hasten to action based on its own study. Nor did it build a strategy appropriate for the period.

[27 Dec p 4]

[Text]

Cultural Enclaves and the Colonial Project

At a time when the Arab Islamic movement has failed to achieve its goals, the Afghan Muslims who confronted the Soviet Union at the summit of its military power and were able to force it to withdraw after a lengthy struggle lasting 10 consecutive years constitute a paragon of revolutionary Islamic action. Those working in the Palestinian field should study and admire it; they should not raise doubts against it.

As for the Islamic view of the peace issue, I think that peace, especially in regard to this issue, or even thinking about peace strategically and seriously, constitutes ignorance of the reality of this issue and failure to understand it. Palestinian land—all of it—is Islamic land, none of which may be given up. The Jewish political presence is an extraneous presence that must be removed. The role that Muslims must assume in this issue is to convince the forces that have supported and are supporting Israeli tyranny and injustice that their moves to support the Jews will produce the opposite results from what they expect and will be a disaster for them; for the Jews are driving them toward the inevitable end of every tyrant and wrongdoer, as proved by the movement of history and the divinely guided laws of life. If the entire Jewish presence in the region and the earlier colonial presence can be traced to the state of degeneracy, anarchy, laxity, and disregard of God's commandments—a state of affairs that paved the way for colonialism and the Jews to overrun the region and humiliate its peoples—liberation depends upon an Islamic awakening capable of repairing the ruptured relationship between the nation and its creed. The Islamic peoples must realize their religious responsibilities in the liberation process. They must turn away from those who by their concessions brought the issue to this period of weakness, surrender, and despair. They began with the proposition, "Land in return for peace," and ended by accepting any kind of presence on Palestinian territory. Liberation depends on planning for a conscious strategic operation of holy war based on study of the region and its international relations. It depends on working to free the region from all the delusions that prevent it from carrying out its real role in the battle for unity, growth, and liberation. Voices must be raised immediately, addressing elected officials and making their will emphatically known. As long as we do not confront reality, events remind us that the negligent and the impotent will never be able to stand up in the face of the movement of history, for it is too strong for them, and can replace them with those who understand it better and can deal with it. "Beware! You are called upon to expend in God's way, yet some of you are niggardly. Whoever is niggardly is niggardly unto his own soul. God is the All-sufficient; you are the needy ones. If you turn away, He will substitute another people instead of you, and they will not be like you" [Koran 47:38].

As for whether strategic balance with the West is a necessary condition for a solution to the Palestine issue, this question must be understood in terms of capability, potentiality, and the exertion of efforts and energy, not in terms of a need to realize a material level equal to the West's capabilities. According to a man-made scientific standard and materialistic concepts, neither the scientific level and economic resources nor the human capabilities and the kind of institutions here or there will be able to realize this equivalence within the envisaged time due to many reasons and circumstances. The truth that Islamists must understand and whose implications they must comprehend is that strategy from the Islamic perspective differs in its basis and orientation from man-made Western strategy.

The first stage on which Islamic strategy should be based is a real conception of Islam and the ability to understand this concept correctly. Then this conception must be elevated by dedication, devotion, sincerity, and right action. Workers for Islam must be at the level of this conception in understanding and behavior. When Muslims rise to the level of their Islam and understand their age well and how to deal with it from an Islamic perspective, then they will have truly laid the foundations of an Islamic strategy.

For action on behalf of Islam to stop with proposing a slogan, without real understanding of this slogan and its obligations or being able to sustain the costs—this has caused the frustration and failure from which the Islamic movement has suffered. This has exposed the movement to serious mistakes—mistakes which have caused the movement all these difficulties lasting many years and transcending in bitterness the disunity of many of the movements that history has known. Although the contemporary Islamic movement has realized many achievements in many fields, it has committed errors that have hindered it from taking its natural place in the march of events and have even made it lag behind the Islamic awakening. Many Islamic thinkers have described this awakening as a body without a head, referring to the inability of the Islamic movements and leaders to comprehend the period or even deal with it and make use of it in the context of the large goals of Islam.

The leaders of Islamic action must set about rethinking the movement's strategy and reviewing its moves. These should be weighed on the basis of the Koran and the Prophet's thought. Only if these leaders succeed in comprehending the dimensions of the strategy of the Islamic call and are able to direct their masses in the right direction and make them models like those that the first call [to Islam] produced, will the serious, effective work of the Islamic movement begin. Then the movement will be able to realize its identity through its Islamic commitments.

To no avail, Palestine was subjected to attack and occupation many a time. Its capital, Jerusalem, fell for about 80 years into the hands of the attackers. More than

one treaty was concluded, and more than one peace. But just as Palestine suffered attack and occupation, so was it an effective incentive to revival, liberation, and unity. It was to liberate Palestine that 'Imad-al-Din Zangi and Salah-al-Din al-Ayyubi carried on the movement of unification. They were able to establish a large and dreaded state that included Egypt, the Levant, Iraq, and the Arabian peninsula. The Muslims were able to expel the invaders.

The present state of the Palestinian cause is the result of many successive setbacks. Responsibility for them cannot be limited to one group; it is general and shared.

If these circumstances impose new positions on political decisionmakers, the positions are the result of the period, which must reach its utmost point so that history's witness against this period can become complete.

As for ensuing events and what the near or distant future will bring, these things will be totally different from the things already witnessed and seen.

Who, I ask you, would have believed if someone had stood on the banks of the blood- and ink-stained Tigris the day the Mongols entered Baghdad and did their deeds and had said to the survivors of the Mongols, "The traces of this crime will disappear, unity will be restored, and conquering armies will return to level the walls of Constantinople"?

Would anyone have understood similar words, had someone come to those waiting to be slaughtered in the courtyard of al-Aqsa Mosque, when the horses of Europe's barbarians waded in blood up to the stirrups, and said even more than what was said on the banks of the Tigris: that the descendants of Salah-al-Din would not stop at the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, but would cross into Europe, and that Muslim armies would sweep across vast distances and stand at the gates of Vienna, carrying Islam there?

While we are in our present state, is there among us anyone who can believe that the Messenger of God said (according to the tradition reported by Muslim, Abu-Dawud, Ibn-Majah, and al-Tirmidhi): "God drew the earth together for me, and I saw its eastern parts and its western parts, and that my nation's dominion would reach unto the part of it that was gathered together for me"? Or is there anyone among us who can believe what he said according to the tradition related by Ahmad and al-Tabarani: "This thing [viz. Islam] will reach as far as night and day. God will leave no townsman's brick house or nomad's tent of goat's hair but that He will cause it to enter into this religion, either with the strength of the strong, or the humiliation of the humiliated—as strength whereby God will strengthen Islam, or as humiliation whereby He will humiliate unbelief"?

Who still has enough faith in himself and his creed to read what Ahmad [and] al-Darimi have related in a true noble tradition? "Abu-Qabil used to say: We were at the home of 'Abdallah Ibn-'Umar Ibn-al-'As, and he was

asked which of the two cities would be conquered first—Constantinople or Rome. 'Abdallah called for a box with a ring and took a letter out of it. 'Abdallah then said: 'While we were gathered around the Messenger of God, acting as his secretaries, he was asked which of the two cities, Constantinople or Rome, would be conquered first. "Heraclius' city [Constantinople]," he answered, "will be conquered first."'"

Indeed, who would have believed that the streets of Tel Aviv would be crowded with demonstrators protesting the policy of Zionist colonization in the occupied territories?

The coming days are pregnant with events. Will our ulema and our decisionmakers perceive their responsibilities and prepare for the future with the methods of the age and their means? Will they prepare with the edifice of a sincere patriotism that lives for the goals of its nation and that seeks to please God in its national movement?

KUWAIT

Process of Rebuilding Discussed

91AE0264A London SAWT AL-KUWAYT
AL-DUWALI in Arabic 24 Jan 91 p 1

[Article by Samir al-Rumayhi]

[Text] "We are working on the assumption that all vital sectors have been completely destroyed, and that we will start to rebuild from scratch." I heard this expression, ["start from scratch"] in Washington more than a month ago. It was said by a friend who is an official working on the emergencies and reconstruction plan for the aftermath of Kuwait's liberation. Fourteen teams are working to implement this plan. Their immediate task is to rebuild Kuwait after it is liberated from the talons of the criminal invasion.

I thought of this expression the day before yesterday on two occasions, the first when the news agencies announced that the evil invasion forces had set fire to oil installations in al-Wafrah, and the second when I was monitoring the discussions of the second session of the Supreme Consultative Body, which is headed by his Excellency, the Crown prince, Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah. The Supreme Consultative Body is an organization stemming from the expanded Kuwaiti Popular Conference. It was meeting in Jeddah under the auspices of his Excellency, the Emir of the Country, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad, and at the invitation of the crown prince. "Starting from scratch" is the resounding Kuwaiti response to any act of burning, destruction, and sabotage of Kuwait that the tyrant of Baghdad can perpetrate or threaten to perpetrate before he and his forces are forced to withdraw from Kuwait, defeated, routed, and unsuccessful, and our people enter under the leadership of our legitimacy, triumphant, successful, and victorious. In addition, our people is now participating

in the liberation process through its air forces, its armed forces, and the activity of its masses domestically and abroad on all fronts. After liberation, the Kuwaiti people will continue its war to rebuild the destruction caused by the invaders and to replace what was plundered, sabotaged, or stolen. Just as our legitimacy, under the leadership of the emir and crown prince, has proven its ability to lead the liberation battle with brothers and friends, this legitimacy, through the initiative of the Supreme Consultative Body, headed by the crown prince, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah, has proven that it can lead construction and rebuilding plans starting from scratch.

Today's war is temporary, and Saddam Husayn is a short-lived pathological symptom. Inasmuch as the Iraqi regime is capable of sacrificing Iraq's people, army, and everything that the Iraqi people has built over the years through toil, effort, sweat, and strain, to satisfy individual caprice and personal madness cloaked in nationalism, patriotism, and Islam, all of which are free of this regime and an enemy of it, this regime will certainly not hesitate to require the "fraternal" Kuwaiti people and the homeland of Kuwait to pay a similar price. Hence, starting from scratch is no longer a slogan, but a response in the field, not just to the results of the tyrannical occupation, but its causes as well.

The reconstruction war will not be like today's short war. Rather, it will last for five years, as indicated in studies undertaken by the Emergencies and Reconstruction Committee. It will require the help of every Kuwaiti regardless of his or her station. It will also require the help of all sincere, honorable, Muslim brothers, who, in a time of trial, have proven to be perfect brothers and friends. In other words, matters cannot return to the status quo that preceded 2 August, especially regarding production. We have proven that we are capable of holding fast to, and reclaiming the homeland's territory from the occupation's talons in a fierce war in which all of us, each from his station, have participated. The homeland requires us to mobilize energies and open the storehouses of innovation and giving so that it can rise from the rubble, proud of its people and leadership, resplendent in its thought, innovation, and proud history, and waging the battle to survive, starting from scratch.

LEBANON

Leaders on Spread of Greater Beirut Concept

91AE0215A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
21 Dec 90 pp 21-24

[Article by Muna Khuways: "Will Greater Beirut Pave the Way for Greater Lebanon?"]

[Text] Greater Beirut is not a new term set forth as a final solution or a doorway to the settlement of the Lebanese crisis. Indeed, every time the train of international or regional resolution tried to pull out by solving the

Lebanese question, the Greater Beirut plan was at the core of a solution. The fact is that if some plans had been destined to see the light, the geographic area called Greater Beirut would have been the Lebanese republic and the areas outside its boundaries would have been given away as the price for solving the Middle East question.

In this sense, the term "Greater Beirut" has always been pulled in two different directions. The first wants to ratify the partition or the sharing of Lebanon. The second wants it to be a model for Lebanese domestic peace that would later draw to it all other Lebanese regions to attain the establishment of a second republic. The question now is which of the two directions stands behind the establishment of Greater Beirut?

There is no doubt that the Beirut of the al-Ta'if [Agreement] is different from Greater Beirut as designed by the 1975 American plan. It is a plan associated with Kissinger, who, according to the NEW YORK TIMES, recommended keeping a Syrian presence in the Bika' and the north, and direct or indirect Israeli occupation of the south, and establishing Lebanese government authority over Greater Beirut plus, at most, some neighboring areas such as the Upper Matn and its suburbs. In 1982, and against the backdrop of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, there emerged an Israeli plan that tried to use the establishment of a greater Beirut as part of a plan to create independent sectarian mini-states in Lebanon, turning the Lebanese republic, under the power of a Lebanese government, into a Greater Beirut with no links whatsoever to the aforementioned independent mini-states. This plan recommends that Syria and Israel conclude the independent mini-states and entities friendship and cooperation treaties in all fields, military and economic fields in particular, under the pretext of securing the survival of such states and preventing their dissolution in an environment that may be militarily stronger.

The Europeans in 1976 presented a settlement plan that followed a different course involving recognition of sectarian differences, but with the idea of melting them into the framework of a federal state.

There is no doubt that Greater Beirut, as perceived in the al-Ta'if Agreement, is backed by unionist backdrops sustained by an efficacious Syrian role which plays a part in its realization, a role that habitually views the partition of Lebanon as a danger whose divisive consequences extend beyond the region's geopolitics to include Syria.

There are those, however, who believe that a continued Israeli occupation of the south creates pressure for a certain timetable by which Greater Beirut would become the entire area of the Lebanese republic.

Whereas international changes have played a part in blocking past plans aimed at using the Greater Beirut concept to fragment Lebanon, the transformation of the present-day Greater Beirut from a model for establishing

the second republic into the republic in its entirety is contingent on international changes and the terms such changes impose on the process of reaching a final settlement in the region. Since Beirut includes in its backdrops all these notions, which sometimes take on the quality of a conspiracy against Lebanon, AL-HAWADITH polled some Lebanese personalities who took part in the al-Ta'if talks and who are familiar with the background of the al-Ta'if Agreement and with the reason why Greater Beirut was made part of it. The query I directed to them sought to elicit an answer to the following question:

What is the concept of Greater Beirut? Is it a prelude to a Minor Lebanon, as alleged, based on the many plans that have been debated, or is it a unionist step on the way to resurrecting the second republic?

Former minister Marwan Hamadah said:

In the past, Greater Beirut may have been a revised copy of Minor Lebanon plus the old Wilayat of Beirut. In the minds of many people, especially those who worked with the French to set up what was called Greater Lebanon but who were only concerned with Minor Lebanon, the capital and its coastal and mountainous vicinities epitomized the homeland, the state, and the wealth. Of course, a resurrected Greater Beirut, shaded by an Arab plan and backed by Syrian will and determination, has to be a prelude for a true greater Lebanon and not a Lebanon condensed into a small plot of land. Those who still theorize about a greater Beirut that would disregard all the political, security, economic, and societal problems of the north, the south, and the Bika'—those theoreticians advocating neo-isolationism—have overlooked the fact that Lebanese nationalism and pan-Arabism view Beirut as the capital of all of Lebanon, not just part of it. Using Israeli occupation as an argument that the borders of Lebanon will ultimately stop at the Awwali River lacks sound logical basis. For as the Lebanese state regains the unity of its establishments, the military ones in particular, Greater Beirut will serve as the springboard for the implementation of Resolution 425 and for pushing Israel back to international borders. It will also be the backbone of national resistance should the peaceful implementation of an international resolution prove to be impossible.

Also, the contention that Greater Beirut's boundaries will stop in the east or north at the Syrian-controlled areas is heresy. Syrian presence, in the framework of the special relations between the two brotherly countries, is consistent with [the concept of] Greater Beirut, Greater Lebanon, Greater Syria, and the greater Arab nation unless this matter is viewed from the angle of isolationism, seclusion, and populism. Therefore, the post-al-Ta'if concept of Greater Beirut, which is set forth amid conciliation under the aegis of Syria, is a dynamic plan limited in the south only by Lebanon's internationally recognized borders and in the east by our national aspirations for Lebanese-Syrian integration. This, in

practical terms, translates into Greater Beirut opening up to all Lebanon rather than condensing Lebanon into Minor Beirut.

Parliament member Dr. Zaki Mazbudi said:

I would like to point out that I was in the forefront of those who wondered what the term "Greater Beirut" could possibly mean, where it came from, who came up with it, and why we adopted it as a first step toward the establishment of law and order on Lebanese soil. I was afraid that behind this term was a plan to make Lebanon smaller, but when it was included in plans for a conciliation government, I, and everyone else interested in the Greater Beirut plan, dropped the notion that there was more to it than meets the eye. A Beirut that included the capital and the surrounding areas is not an end but is instead the beginning of a much greater plan that includes all Lebanese territories without exception because, from a political and security point of view, it is unthinkable to be satisfied with this plot of land that is nothing but a first step on a long road. Everyone maintains and insists that the next steps will proceed from this piece of land to include all Lebanon by which all other steps will follow one after the other without interruption when the preambles for a Greater Beirut are completed, thereby removing any cause for fear or concern.

It seems that the present meaning of "Greater Beirut," as viewed by those in power today, is totally different from what its inventors had in mind when they coined the term so long ago. The new leadership views "Greater Beirut" as a means for providing a climate for calm and meaningful work. This leadership has taken upon itself the task of launching the second republic in accordance with the spirit of al-Ta'if and through a national unity government that includes all parties in order to pave the way for the construction of a new Lebanon founded on a specific and carefully-considered timetable to be implemented gradually. The militias would first be disbanded and reintegrated into their active Lebanese society to engage their services in the reconstruction of Lebanon. Then democratic action would help steer society away from illegal violence; steer all political activities onto the path of Lebanese unity and Lebanese conciliation; and put society on the track of restoring Lebanon to its former vitality, vigor, and prosperity. Then it can, in the 21st century, take on the leading position it had occupied for 25 years toward the end of this century. This would allow us to steer clear of and keep Lebanon away from the path on which the conspirators are still trying to push us. The more important step that should be taken following the return of a secure and internally united Lebanon is the eventual implementation of Resolution 425, forcing Israel to pull out of every bit of Lebanese territory without waiting for the long-talked-about international conference.

Dr. George Dib, advisor to the prime minister for foreign affairs and professor of international law, said:

It is very intellectually tempting to imagine that Greater Beirut, extending from the Damur River to the Dog River and up to Mt. Sannin, is actually the Lebanon of the future as planned at the beginning of the war by then American Secretary of State Kissinger, based upon the breakup of Lebanon into sectarian mini-states, followed necessarily by the establishment of similar states in neighboring Arab countries. The fact is that this plan is essentially an Israeli plan aimed at forging a holy alliance between Israel and these [newly created] sectarian mini-states. I say it is tempting to think this way, on the occasion of the establishment of Greater Beirut today, because what Israel has failed to accomplish in 15 years it may accomplish nowadays by confining Lebanon to Greater Beirut and preventing the extension of the government to all parts of Lebanon. This, in my opinion, is a wrong reading of events. For the following reasons I believe that Greater Beirut is in fact a first step which must definitely be followed by the expansion of government authority over Greater Lebanon, with its internationally recognized boundaries stipulated in the constitution:

We are on the threshold of a new world of international relations where detente, peace, and rapprochement reign. This new world was the number-one motivator in drawing up a solution to the Lebanese problem based on the unity of Lebanon: land, people, and establishments. The foundations of this solution were laid in a joint communique in May 1989, the first and only American-Soviet communique issued in Moscow. It contained three points only: calling on the warring parties to stop the fighting; calling on them again to engage in a dialogue toward national conciliation; and, finally, offering their good offices to help the Lebanese parties to attain harmony and national conciliation. We notice that this American-Soviet communique was void of any kind of reference to withdrawals, keeping in mind that the American version of dealing with the Lebanese question is based on the withdrawal of all foreign armies from Lebanon. The Soviet version calls for the implementation of Resolution 425 and Israeli nonintervention in Lebanese internal affairs. It is very important to realize that the communique, in its American and Soviet versions, was void of any reference to withdrawals, which means that the two superpowers had decided to settle the Lebanese question in two stages. The first stage is to restore order in Lebanon by reviving the constitutional establishment. The second stage is the final one when an international conference would be held to settle the Middle East problem, including the part that links the Lebanese question directly to it. This part comprises withdrawals on the one hand and putting Palestinian affairs in Lebanon in order, on the other hand. All this happened in early May 1989. Toward the end of May of the same year, an Arab summit was held in Casablanca, actually at the international invitation of the superpowers. The Casablanca Summit decided on a Lebanese settlement based on the creation of a higher committee made up of King Fahd, Chadli Bendjedid, and King Hasan II, to call the Lebanese members of parliament to

a meeting in Lebanon or abroad to deliberate a document acceptable to all Lebanese, followed by a meeting of the parliament on Lebanese soil to ratify the agreement and elect a president followed by the formation of a national unity government, namely the al-Ta'if Agreement known as the national conciliation document. We have to point out that, before each step, we used to say that it would not be implemented, and the fact is that it was being implemented in all the stages of the plan the summit drew up in Casablanca. Greater Beirut, which has been sanctioned by President Elias Harawi, is but a first step toward the unification of Lebanon and the expansion of government authority. The fact is that this can be done because the last 15 years of war have made it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that the overwhelming majority, if not all, of the Lebanese people want unity, not partition. We noticed that every time the crossings were opened, throngs of people began going in and out of the various areas. The Lebanese conscience and the Lebanese will are for unification and not partition. Above all, the issue of Lebanon's unity or partition is one that has a direct bearing on Syria. There is no doubt that, for national security considerations, Syria did not and will not accept anything but a Lebanon united in its land, people, and establishments because the partition of Lebanon would inevitably lead to the later partition of other states. Therefore, if the fragmentation plan is destined to be launched from Greater Beirut, it means that Lebanon would enter a war of 100 years at the very least.

As for Raymond Iddih, he said:

Greater Beirut is a faulty and discriminatory step, because we cannot have one faction of the Lebanese people living in peace, stability (this is if law and order is restored to Greater Beirut), and a measure of independence while another faction, those living in the south or south of the Litani River, is kept under the yoke of Israeli occupation.

I believe that the Greater Beirut that grew out of the al-Ta'if Agreement is the first step toward partition. I am not optimistic about the Lebanese state of affairs. My fears about the future of Lebanon have not changed and, in 1976, I stated as much in the MONDAY MORNING magazine and talked about the partition plan that was being prepared for Lebanon. The following is the text of that statement:

First, Israel is seeking to secure safe northern borders through the creation of a series of sectarian mini-states as a justification for the factional and sectarian nature of the Israeli state, which means partitioning Lebanon first and other countries second.

Second, the partition of Lebanon has been devised to realize Israel's goal of solving the problem of the 4,000 Palestinians living in Lebanon (by settling them in Lebanon once and for all) and occupying the Lebanese south all the way to the Litani River.

Third, it is the dream of the Christians, the Maronites in particular, to set up a Christian mini-state in Lebanon with Zgharta, Bisharri, the Cedars in the north, Mount Lebanon in the East, the Beirut-Shitawrah road in the south, and the Mediterranean in the west as its boundaries.

To counter a Christian Lebanon, a Muslim Lebanon would be set up as a mini-state bordered by the Beirut-Shitawrah road in the north, Mount Lebanon in the east, the Litani River in the south, and the Mediterranean in the west. As for Beirut, it would be the capital and, if a federation between Christian Lebanon and Muslim Lebanon were to be established, it could be a federal capital or a free city.

Raymond Iddih added: I made this statement in 1976, and naturally this plan has undergone some changes, including [new plans for] the final annexation by Israel of southern Lebanon up to the Litani and western Bika' up to al-Qarun Lake, just as it annexed Jerusalem in 1980, by virtue of an organic law passed by the Knesset and the Golan Heights, by virtue of a law passed by the Knesset in 1981, thereby annexing it to southern and western Bika'. President Bush must have given President Asad the green light to act during their recent meeting in Geneva.

Therefore, and so long as the occupation remains in place, the Lebanese republic will be confined within the geographic area known as Greater Beirut until withdrawals are effected. But a Greater Beirut that comprises the Lebanese republic will not be a free city.

Dr. Muhammad Baydun, member of the Amal politburo, said:

We must not forget that the Greater Beirut plan is a security plan, not a political plan. Therefore, it will be but a step or a link in the law-and-order chain that the national conciliation government is drawing up with a view to extending legitimate authority to all parts of Lebanon. We must be well aware of the fact that the Greater Beirut plan comes in the context of the implementation of the al-Ta'if Agreement, which forms the true political backdrop of the plan. The al-Ta'if Agreement, as it is widely known, has come to represent a national conciliation plan. It has become a symbol of the constitutional, political process through which the land and the people would be united and state establishments and pillars would be rebuilt. Therefore, the present-day Greater Beirut plan does not in any shape or form resemble the one put forth during the post-Israeli invasion era. At that time, Lebanon was about to embark upon a political plan which Israeli occupation was trying to impose, a partition plan based on demographic classification and the realization of de facto cantons. Of course, that period witnessed the most violent stage of the conflict at the national level, for a certain faction tried to exploit the outcome of the Israeli invasion in the interest of factional hegemony and the subjugation of the other sects. We can conclude that present circumstances

are totally different from those in the past under which the Greater Beirut plans were submitted. Right now, national conciliation exists on the basis of the new constitution ratified last 21 September. Besides, the 13 October operation, which ended the 'Awn rebellion, also removed all the barriers artificially created during the civil war between the regions and the sects, thereby quashing the demographic-grouping plan or plans and causing the bases and stanchions of Israeli intervention to crumble amid the Lebanese factions and sects. Today, Lebanon is beginning to recover from effects of the civil war and emerge on a clear, specific, and internationally signed political horizon. Therefore, there is no fear that the security plan for Greater Lebanon will turn into a temporary plan aimed at freezing the Lebanese crisis in anticipation of new complications. Rather, we look at the 13 October operation as an impetus and a form of momentum for the restoration of Lebanon's unity and the elimination of effects of the Israeli invasion on its political and societal structure. Consequently, we emphasize that the plan is a security plan for all of Lebanon which begins with Greater Beirut, but does not stop at any stage. The greatest proof is the agreement to deploy the Lebanese army in the al-Tuffah region and part of the Zahrani area. This is a first step concomitant with the Greater Beirut plan, which allows the Lebanese army to assume its security and defensive responsibilities in southern Lebanon. Of course, we can affirm that the army's return to the south is an important, if not the most important, indication that the Lebanese crisis is on the road to settlement and is not at a standstill.

Member of parliament Zahir al-Khatib said:

Greater Beirut is a national plan built on three existing elements which make it irreversible:

The first element is the Lebanese people's desire for peace after their war ordeal.

The second element, which only strengthens the desire for peace, is a determination to [inject] legitimacy into the peace plan. When we say legitimacy, we are talking about the type of legitimacy that goes beyond the boundaries of a government that is formed or a president that is elected. It is a legitimacy that draws its magnitude from regional and international dimensions. In the world of politics, this is a serious and very important matter. In other words, legitimacy, even if it has not risen locally, must have the whole world on its side, albeit through an official position, because such a pro-legitimacy position can bolster it.

The third and most important of these three elements is represented by the dimensions of the support provided by Syria and the presence that it and it alone maintains in the Lebanese arena. We stress "it alone" because the arrival or presence of regional and international forces other than Syrian is something of the past. Current regional and international circumstances, coupled with the experiences of NATO forces, the Marines, and Israel during the 1982 invasion, have been exhausted. And, in

light of the hot and explosive Gulf crisis in the area, there is no possibility that circumstances worse than those Lebanon experienced under the Israeli invasion and with the presence of NATO forces will occur. Indeed, the opposite is true. If these forces failed in their heyday to formulate Lebanon's plan in the image of the Zionist or imperialist dream—that is, of a Lebanon in the form of an Israeli protectorate broken up into mini-states or little Israels acting as American, French, or Zionist satellites founded, like Israel, on the sect-nation dictum—how can they succeed today when Israel is preoccupied with the uprising and America with the Gulf crisis. In their heyday America, France, and Israel were defeated by the resistance. For the first time in the history of the Arab-Zionist conflict, Israel was forced to withdraw from the Lebanese territory it occupied, gaining nothing in return. Rather, the "something in return" was dropped when the 17 May Agreement was abrogated. America, along with France and the other imperialist countries, is now engrossed in the Gulf crisis and is preoccupied with realizing its strategic interests in the Gulf. These interests that are not found in Lebanon. I am certain that the balance of power now firmly established in the Lebanese arena no longer allows the realization of a plan along the lines of the Greater Beirut concept as America, Europe, or Israel once perceived it. Therefore, and based on the above, there is no going back on the peace process.

At the national and pan-Arab levels, the corrective movement 20 years ago constituted a qualitative turning point in the course of Arab history. This movement amassed victories for Syria and the Arab nation that would not have occurred had it not been for this judicious, fundamental, and brave policy that charted the landmarks of pan-Arab progress that transformed Syria into such a force in the international equation. The 13 October operation was but an incarnation of the military side of the triumphant October spirit. Day after day, past and future steps underscore the fact that were it not for Syria, Lebanon would not have had a political, security, and military ceiling capable of restoring Lebanon's true status in history and in geography.

From a political point of view, I do not believe that the al-Ta'if Agreement is an American plan. America does not support a Lebanon with an Arab identity and affiliation nor does it support hostility toward, or the use of any means of liberation, or armed struggle, against Israel. America is Israel's ally. It was compelled to accept the Arab plan in which Syria alone played the weighty role that [was responsible for] shifting the balance of power in such a way as to favor Lebanon's Arabism [to ensure] the application of Resolution 425. Therefore, America does not support a system that renders the balance of power in the decision-making process in favor of a collective leadership body represented in the council of ministers. Rather, America is a million times more inclined to keep the decision-making power in the hands of tradition by keeping absolute power in the hands of a Lebanese president whose power it could ultimately grab simply by obtaining his signature. This is just what

happened when the balance of powers compelled the former president to drop his attempts to sign the 17 May Agreement and thus enchain the president's legitimacy. No one can deny the impact Syria's weight had on the abrogation of the 17 May Agreement, in backing the resistance, and in championing the cause of reform and democracy. Were it not for Syria, there would be no law and order in Lebanon today or any hope for peace.

Dr. Tawfik Hindi, political advisor to the Lebanese Forces commander, said:

Greater Beirut was not mentioned in the al-Ta'if Agreement. The sovereignty clause stipulated that the national unity government shall draw up a one-year comprehensive security plan to spread the authority of the Lebanese government gradually with its own instruments. It also stipulated three basic elements for this security plan: the disbandment of militias, the rehabilitation of security instruments, and the rehabilitation of military forces.

In announcing the Greater Beirut plan, the government did not abide by the letter and spirit of the al-Ta'if Agreement. The current government is not a national unity government in charge of finalizing the implementation of the provisions of the al-Ta'if Agreement, the drawing up of a comprehensive security plan as stipulated by the agreement in particular.

So far, Greater Beirut can be considered a secure location where legitimate rule can establish an active political presence and where there would be a minimum opportunity for subsequent stages [of political developments].

Will legitimate rule end at the doorway of Greater Beirut? We hope this is unlikely, but no price is too high to pay. In order to complete the march, there has to be favorable objective and subjective circumstances, and the situation may lend itself to several possibilities that might prompt legitimacy rule to come to a halt or that might allow it to pursue its course, spreading its authority throughout Lebanon. For legitimacy to go all the way, all Lebanese parties must put themselves in a climate that is different from any other climate in the past and must make objective and rational efforts to recognize their adversaries and the need to represent them, each according to the weight they carry in the power-sharing equation. These are the subjective conditions that allow it to complete its course.

As for the objective conditions, they have to do with regional and international circumstances whose course is hard to predict at this point. The al-Ta'if Agreement is the product of specific regional and international givens, and circumstances at this level have since changed. Today, the Middle East arena is witnessing momentous developments that might turn dramatic. What will this enormous conflict engender? No one can make an accurate determination. And what repercussions will it have on the countries concerned with the crisis in Lebanon and how will these parties act? This is something no one can know for sure at this time. Finally, the Lebanese

Forces are committed to the al-Ta'if Agreement in letter and spirit, and they look at it as a first step toward a comprehensive solution that can preserve Lebanon's unity and restore its sovereignty and peace. They will take part in its implementation with the rest of the Lebanese factions.

Dr. Marwan Faris, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Syrian Social National Party, said:

The implementation of Greater Beirut will not be confined to boundaries some parties may draw. For Greater Beirut's borders are more political than geographic. They are an expression of a unified Lebanese-Syrian-Arab decision to get Lebanon out of the state of war and on the road toward peace. The al-Ta'if Agreement, in its profound intent, leads Lebanon out of the state of war and fragmentation by means of a unifying instrument of peace, namely legitimate authority. If all the warring parties in Lebanon were to provide all the facilities needed to end the war, that would not be limited to Greater Beirut but would go beyond that to include the entire borders of Lebanon. Therefore, the Lebanese peace plan grew out important developments in the Gulf, whose consequences have apparently begun to manifest themselves in stability in the Lebanese arena. In the next stage, all the remaining bumps on the road to Lebanon's unity and the restoration of the legitimate authority to all its territories will be removed. There is no doubt that the dialogues held between Lebanon and Syria are aimed at restoring Lebanon's Arab identity in a sea of Arab peace. The major problem, however, will be in southern Lebanon. The enemy has stated that it will not withdraw from Jizzin and the occupied towns. This problem and this occupation will always be a pit of war that will force the international bodies to wrestle with the credibility of their resolutions. For the implementation of Resolution 425 is the responsibility of the UN Security Council, and the five superpowers are particularly required to implement the international resolutions pertaining to Lebanon, exactly as they are now trying to implement them in the Gulf. The Lebanese people expect the UN and the superpowers to take a stern position on Lebanon with the Zionist enemy in order to force it to implement the international resolutions. Nevertheless, we are required to escalate our action in the framework of the national resistance to liberate our land, especially since the Zionist enemy objects to the implementation of all international resolutions. All the Lebanese people are required to fulfill their duties in the framework of resistance in order to lend support to authorities attempting to implement the international resolutions pertaining to Lebanon. The Israeli presence is the biggest bump on the road to peace. The only way to establish peace, law, and order in Lebanon is by kicking out the Zionist enemy.

Report on Hizballah Institutions in Greater Beirut
91AE0285A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
14 Feb 91 p 8

[Article: "Armed Militias After Implementation of Greater Beirut Plan; Hizballah Suburb and Greater Beirut: From Domination of Weapons to Institutional Control"]

[Text] Beirut—AL-HAYAH—According to an observer, Hizballah has taken no more than three troop carriers and two jeeps out of the southern suburb. These vehicles do not, of course, constitute all of Hizballah's military equipment. In a brief statement, Hizballah Party sources have declared that heavy weapons were moved out at night without clamor and without making noise on the route these weapons were supposed to take to al-Biqā', according to the party announcement. But such a departure could not take place without arrangements being made with the other forces and parties existing along the route, and this is something that has not happened.

Moreover, residents of Beirut and of the suburb realized that the weapons have been kept in place by watching on the small screen how the Lebanese Forces have been moving their equipment and weapons from Beirut with such a display, thus seeking to make the people understand that what is taking place here, in East Beirut, is not taking place there, in West Beirut.

So Hizballah has not moved its military equipment and forces out of the suburb. Inversely, a hundred elements arriving from Iqlim al-Tuffah have been added to these forces. Moreover, reports of deployment of the Lebanese Army in the suburb are circulated when this army has not been seen there. It is said that 500 elements of the army are deployed there and that some of them at times carry out foot patrols in the suburb. But a firm and definite position in which the army has been deployed is located in the Mu'awwad quarter, which was previously a part of the contact lines. We have not heard that a Hizballah position or an Amal position has been handed over [to the army]. Besides, the security arrangements in the suburb are the same arrangements on which agreement had been concluded between the Syrian Forces and Hizballah prior to the Greater Beirut plan.

This security condition in the suburb or in other areas seems to be separated from the political positions declared by the parties. Hizballah has repeatedly announced its approval of the Greater Beirut plan. According to informed sources, this position is due to the dispute within the party which is being pulled apart by two tendencies which directly reflect two tendencies existing within the Islamic Republic of Iran. One tendency sees no harm in moving along with the peaceful condition in Lebanon whereas the other tendency, led in Iran by Mohtashemi, has already declared that Hizballah's masses in Lebanon reject the al-Ta'if accord even though some of the party's leaders have been driven to approve it. In Lebanon, the Iranian dispute has been clearly reflected in Hizballah's inability to convene its second open congress. Initially, Hizballah called for holding this congress in October. It later postponed the congress till November and then indefinitely.

The weapons are still in their places, excluding the few vehicles mentioned above. Of the main military positions, only one barracks, namely the barracks located in the Madi quarter, has been evacuated because of the need to open the road from the Madi quarter to Camille

Sham'un Boulevard. As for the buildings surrounding Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah's residence, they continue to be as they were previously.

The suburb's general appearance continues to be unchanged. Enormous colored wall posters continue to cover walls and banners and flags continue to fly in front of mosques. As for the party's armed elements, nobody has demanded their concealment—not even prior to proclamation of the Greater Beirut—considering that the party did not seek to display these elements outside its military parades. Moreover, the image of the Hizballah fighter is not the same as the image of the Palestinian fighter which prevailed in the first act of the war, i.e. the image of the young fighter holding his Klashnikoff high above his head. Rather, the image of the Hizballah fighter is the image of a less public and demonstrative fighter who is equipped with a handgun and a small radio. This image is still seen, though somewhat stealthily.

Besides, there are arts for pretending to depart or for making the departure temporary. These arts have been invented by the Lebanese armed factions that have not seen in any settlement throughout many recent years anything more than a temporary truce. At a Hizballah center on the airport road—the Vietnam Center facing the Amal central security premises—the fighters were not evacuated until they had been replaced by evicted families, some of whose members are probably Hizballah members. One must not forget that the first clash to occur between Hizballah and the Lebanese Army in 1983 erupted between the army and the inhabitants when the army tried to evict people from structures built on the property of others, also on the airport road.

Nonmilitary Security

What has not been noted or mentioned in the particulars of evacuating the militias from Beirut is the nonmilitary institutions of these militias. This includes all the militias whose nonsecurity agencies complement the militias' actual presence and control. Insofar as Hizballah is concerned, all its institutions continue to perform their roles as they performed them in the past. Student Mobilization continues to impose compulsory religious education on the suburb's schools and continues to prohibit these schools from using certain books. (Two books are definitely banned. One is a school history textbook published by the Badran Foundation. The second is a reading textbook published by al-Mashriq Publishing House).

The Construction Crusade Foundation continues to pave roads, build sewers, and collect trash. The Martyr's Foundation continues to advance aid to the families of martyrs—(this aid will not be suspended in the foreseeable future because it is not conditional upon the government gaining control of the suburb or of other parts). The Interest-Free Loan Foundation continues to offer its assistance and its loans, and so does the list of various medical foundations and technical institutes.

In addition to these foundations which have been distinguished by their serious and persistent efforts that enabled the party to manage the suburb throughout the period of its control, the party set up a number of foundations during preparation for the Greater Beirut and during the talk about the likelihood of establishment of the Greater Beirut. These are legitimate foundations that cannot be accused of encroaching upon the government's tasks. They include the Strategic Studies and Research Center whose premises is adjacent to the Iranian Embassy building and which, in addition to studies and research, aspires to offer a daily news-and-information publication.

The legitimacy of the new foundations and the endeavor to adapt relatively to the old foundations mean that the party is laying the foundations for the phase that follows the Greater Beirut plan or any step resembling this plan. The adapted foundations are making greater and greater efforts to be flexible and capable of merging with any new organization, whether a political or security organization, for the suburb. Hizballah leaders believe that a change in the suburb's political position will in no way be able to destroy these foundations as long as the government is incapable of setting up alternative foundations in the foreseeable future.

While waiting for that which is unlikely to occur at present, Hizballah seeks—and this is something it has never stopped striving for—to link the people's immediate daily interests with its agencies and centers. In addition to the above foundations and offerings, the suburb's inhabitants continue to get their water from water tanks provided freely by the party which has installed such tanks on roadsides. The party paves the roads, controls the schools, and so forth.

Hizballah finds that the adaptation dictated by the new circumstances in Beirut does not necessarily have to happen in al-Biqā' where its control is more blunt. Sometime since Independence Day, i.e., the date set for deploying the army in Greater Beirut, a foreign news agency published a report in which it said that Hizballah had distributed in al-Biqā' an announcement containing the customary prohibitions and that it had arrested 26 male coiffures and made clear to them the proscription they violate by engaging in this profession. The report also cited the quantities of fuel oil provided to the inhabitants free of charge. It was said that Hizballah tried to harass some members of the "secular political organizations" but that officials of the communist party and of the Ba'th Party Organization in al-Biqā' immediately contacted the Syrian leadership which reassured them anew that it still controls the area's security.

On Path to "Legitimization"

The weekly that Hizballah published under the name of AL-WAHDAAH AL-ISLAMIYAH is now being published under the name of AL-BILAD. It is published as a magazine under concession. Amidst the endeavors of the

various factions to entrench their information foundations, Hizballah is now trying to purchase a concession to publish a daily newspaper.

The two radio stations owned by the party, namely al-Nur and al-Iman, continue to be present even though they have altered the tone with which they deal with domestic political news. For example, the president of the republic is no longer president of the Maronite regime, as he was in the past. He has become the president of the republic, with nothing else added. The same applies to the prime minister, the Chamber of Deputies speaker, the ministers, and so forth. Moreover, these two radio stations have become less struggle-oriented in general. An indication of this is their sponsorship of radio contests similar to those organized by radio stations that are not totally devoted to mobilization and instigation.

The attention devoted to the civilian aspect, which is in contrast with the formation of party frameworks with which parties content themselves in cases of confrontation and mobilization, has motivated the party to turn toward creating mass-rallying frameworks that are different from the old framework which relied on mosques and Husayniyat [places where passion plays are performed]. Of course, Friday sermons are still delivered at mosques and people are still invited to the Husayniyat. But in addition to this, Hizballah is trying to operate within the existing youth clubs. It is also trying to establish other clubs that concern themselves with athletics and other affairs.

As long as the battlefronts are cold, then partisan competition will assume shapes and forms that are ordinarily tied to the concept of development and modernization. Within this context, Lebanon's militias and parties must inevitably beat the government which is still incapable of securing minimal equipment for its army personnel. Hizballah is trying to upgrade and modernize by training capable skilled cadres and by purchasing sophisticated equipment, in addition to [building] extremely expensive installations. The Strategic Studies Foundation, for example, has been soliciting for sometime bids to supply the best information equipment. This is in addition to the satellite-linked radio-communication network which the party has set up for the foundation.

Fighters and Security Agencies

This effort for legitimization and modernization dictates that fighters be preoccupied and that their passions be postponed until the features of the next phase are discerned.

Hizballah's full-time elements—the party has two types of fighters: full-time fighters who serve six hours daily under ordinary circumstances and part-time elements that serve two to three times weekly—are sent successively for training in al-Biqā', in Janta in particular.

This training, or rehabilitation, seems to be more of a diversion for the armed elements in order to maintain

their combat readiness now that they have been removed from the (frontline) positions they had occupied on the contact lines in the capital and its suburb—contact lines which extended from Mar Mikhail Church in the south to the peripheries of the al-Silm quarter. An indication that the training being given is more of an act of removal and diversion is the fact that the fighters are trained anew on light weapons. This is, of course, what they did at the outset of their introduction to weapons.

It remains that the security plan which has focused on moving heavy weapons out—weapons whose departure continues to be the subject of a big question mark—did not underline the parties' and militias' security agencies. No mention whatsoever has been made of these agencies, which are not public, of course. The question that dictates itself is: How will the Lebanese Army coexist with these agencies? Insofar as Hizballah is concerned, these agencies seem to be extremely important by virtue of the fact that the foreign hostages continue to be detained. These agencies' responsibility must inevitably grow if the military forces lose their hold on the suburb.

These agencies' members, who are not supplied with arms, continue to be seen in the suburb.

As for their likely role, it is to maintain the prohibitions previously prescribed and established by the party in the hope that in the wake of the Greater Beirut, these prohibitions will influence clergymen who will uphold them by promoting virtue and preventing vice. To date, these agencies continue to exist.

Finally, with the Greater Beirut plan and with the return of the government, the suburb's inhabitants find that they are faced with questions concerning all that was done during Hizballah's control. For example, will the religious legal opinions which permitted evictions from certain homes and the occupation of certain homes be reconsidered? Will those against whom religious legal opinions were issued file lawsuits with the judiciary? Will the state courts inherit the cases, which must inevitably number in the thousands, that had been decided by the clergy?

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Developments in Southern Land Dispute Described

91AE0237A Paris AL-YAWM AL-SABI' in Arabic
7 Jan 91 pp 26-28

[Text] Since the early days of the declaration of unity, the Republic of Yemen has been facing a complex problem concerning the fate of lands in the southern part of the country that were nationalized in accordance with the socialist system that was in effect. Land owners are now demanding that lands be given back to them, while beneficiaries insist on keeping them.

The united Yemeni state has inherited many complex problems that are the result of the country being divided

into northern and southern states. One of the most important inherited problems is the question of lands and estates that were nationalized in the southern Yemeni state according to the former regime's policy. Officials in the united state are concentrating their efforts on finding a solution to this problem and avoiding the outbreak of disputes between the original owners of these properties and those benefiting from them.

Understanding this problem calls for going back to its origin and the conditions in which it grew. In early 1972 the then ruling Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] in Aden began preparing the country for the "peasants' uprising" by mobilizing the "workers and peasants sectors" under the leadership of the party cadres against what used to be called "feudalism," that is shaykhs, prominent personalities in various areas, and religious leaders, as well as against big landlords, sometimes against middle landlords, and, in a few cases, against small landlords, especially those opposed to the Yemeni revolution.

The "peasants' uprising" has led to the issuing of laws expropriating the property of those concerned and throwing some of them in jail, and to other similar acts. All of this is now subject to a general review.

The "peasants' uprising" proceeded toward achieving the objectives that were set for it on 4 September 1972. It expropriated the properties that were marked for expropriation in a dramatic way, just like what happened in some other socialist countries.

As a part of this campaign, old property documents and files of inherited properties were set on fire or destroyed. Some of those who suffered from this campaign, went to live in the Gulf states and others moved to the northern part of the country.

In no way did the transfer of properties lead to a radical change in the situation of the peasants, because testimonies by both those who suffered damages and those who benefited from this measure, indicate that, under the old property ownership system, peasants used to pay [the state] one tenth of the crop. After the expropriation of properties and the establishment of farming cooperatives he was obliged to pay 25 percent of the crop to cooperative officials. Moreover, the line dividing the state on the one hand and cooperative officials on the other was not quite clear, something that has led to many violations being committed.

Since the "peasants' uprising" experiment was part of the previous regime's experiment in the southern part of the country, it ended with the proclamation of the united Yemeni state. Consequently, it has become necessary to implement a new law that recognizes private-property ownership. It is also necessary that expropriated estates should be returned to their owners as the constitution stipulates.

And since the constitution of the united state guarantees the restoration of their properties, those who suffered

from the "peasants' uprising" got together immediately after the state of unity was proclaimed on 22 May 1990. In June of the same year they staged a sit-down strike in the Sanaa suburbs which lasted about one week. They demanded the return of their expropriated estates "without promises or conditions," as they put it.

Those people base their demands not only on their historical and inherited right and on the fact of their ownership, but also on the previous laws themselves. They point to the agricultural reform laws that were issued during the era of Qahtan al-Sha'bi, the 1970 law, the amended reform, and the holdings law issued in March 1989.

Owners of expropriated properties assert that their lands were not legally nationalized but were confiscated. The evidence to this in their opinion is that there is no nationalization law or a decision to this effect.

As for the reaction of the united state, it was swift. A ministerial committee was set up in July 1990 to deal with the issue in accordance with a decision issued by the Yemeni presidential council on 24 June 1990. The committee began its work by setting up a subcommittee consisting of governors and officials from the agricultural department and the secretariat. This committee paid field visits and distributed questionnaire forms. It is still doing this work.

It is noted that 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the presidential council, defined the motto for dealing with this problem by saying that the solution must proceed from the principle of "justice and a desire to avoid harming any party so that landlords and workers will no longer complain of harm."

Despite the fact that the committee was set up more than five months ago, so far it has not reached any solution for the problem. The question concerns more than 35,000 beneficiaries. Its solution is becoming increasingly difficult, according to committee chairman and Minister of Agriculture and fisheries Sadiq Amin Abu-Ras, in view of the lack of documents recording which lands were distributed to what beneficiaries.

The Yemeni government had earlier announced that it is willing to pay material compensations to landlords in light of recommendations to be prepared by the higher committee charged with solving the problem. However, talk about this kind of compensation stopped from the first moment the Gulf crisis broke out—a crisis which has caused major material losses for Yemen. Yet this did not prevent people from searching for timely solutions to the problem, which has been exacerbated by occurrence of some confrontations between present beneficiaries and former landlords, particularly since, in more than one area, a former landlord has sought to expel the beneficiary and recover the land that was taken from him 20 years ago.

The committee that was formed to deal with the problem has worked to submit urgent proposals in light of directives from the Yemeni leadership. These proposals have included encouraging a solution of the problem on the basis of "mutual consent" between the landlord and the beneficiary. Those concerned point out that this principle has achieved solutions to more than one problem in the agricultural provinces of Hadramawt and Shabwah in which the relationship between the two parties was defined as one between "landlord" and "tenant."

The head of the Yemeni government, Haydar al-'Attas, in mid-November sent a report to the Yemeni Presidential Council on the efforts the committee concerned has made to solve the problem. In the coming period he is expected to submit another report to the Presidential Council concerning the executive steps taken.

The problem of returning nationalized lands to their owners seems to be foremost among the concerns being discussed by the Presidential Council at its recent periodic meetings. This is probably due to two reasons:

1. Brokers (from among highly-placed people) have begun renting nationalized lands in a crooked manner, sometimes under the pretext of distributing residential land to workers in ministries and institutes, and other times for the sake of people with limited income. Thus they are exploiting the rule of law, such as the agricultural law, property law, and the law of nationalized-land holdings issued in mid-May 1990 which some economists describe as "the practical embodiment of the dictatorship of beneficiaries." The matter has also been raised in the press. Writing in the newspaper AL-MINBAR, one loudly protested: Stop the distribution of nationalized lands...they are not an achievement.

2. Landlords have complained of failures to grant them their rights during the six months following the establishment of the united state, which has caused widespread problems and, in certain areas, acts of killing. What further increases difficulties of solving the problem is the human conflict between the landlords and the beneficiaries. The landlords demand the return of their properties on the basis of their natural right to ownership, while the beneficiaries cling to a right they acquired some 20 years ago. In an article in the weekly AL-SABAH, a beneficiary, addressing the landlords, said: Brothers, property owners: Give us back those days of our life that we have wasted "in bowing our heads and standing in long lines for an onion and a tomato, and take back your property if you can. Do not deprive us of a right that we acquired from the ruling authority. Your opponent who was in power has died. Some of those in power are still waiting. You must go to him..."

What is astonishing indeed is that there are Yemeni papers that up to this moment address the beneficiaries in the same manner the Adeni papers did in 1969 and 1970, instigating the peasants to wrest lands by themselves so that the principle of socialist land reform will not lose its revolutionary importance.

The Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], which is directly concerned with the problem, has retained its attitude. Here we find that the party is divided into two wings: a hardline wing headed by Minister of Local Administration Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah and Jabirallah 'Umar, and another which is looking for peaceful solutions to the problem and has no objection to solving it by mutual consent or by granting the beneficiaries compensations by the state.

Meanwhile, the hardliners refuse to return lands to their owners and instead advocate giving them compensation. They have organized a campaign to advocate this view through the YSP newspapers SAWT AL-'UMMAL and AL-MUSTAQBAL.

The third view, which is the "spectator" in this conflict, espouses the need to solve the problem by not denying the return of land to landlords but also not throwing the beneficiaries out.

In summary, despite the intentions to find solutions to this problem and the measures taken by the state, the problem of nationalized lands in the southern provinces will remain in the coming years.

Generally, there are a number of proposals under discussion to solve this problem, the most salient of which are found in the following points:

- Material compensation for landlords and the issuing of title deeds to beneficiaries.
- State compensation in kind for landlords through the distribution of lands in accordance with ideas proposed for the reform of fallow land.
- Giving lands back to their owners on the condition that the area [per plot] does not exceed 40 feddans in accordance with the provision of the new Agricultural Reform Law of 19 May 1990.
- The complete return of lands to landlords on the grounds that the Agricultural Reform Law is conditional and inconsistent with the provisions of the Yemeni constitution on the protection of private property.

BANGLADESH

Government Reacts to Gulf War Outbreak

Comment to Press

91AS0574A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 18 Jan 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Presidential Adviser for Foreign Affairs Mr Fakhruddin Ahmed, said on Thursday that Bangladesh deeply regretted the outbreak of war in the Gulf and he hoped that all sides involved in the conflict would avoid civilian targets.

In a written comment circulated to newsmen on the day following the outbreak of the Gulf War, the presidential adviser reiterated Bangladesh's call for immediate convening of the international peace conference on Middle East and Gulf for the realisation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. He said that Bangladesh appealed to all concerned parties to move rapidly towards restoration of normalcy, reconciliation and harmony based on the principles of sovereign equality, respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of others as enshrined in the UN charter.

Mr Fakhruddin Ahmed said that Bangladesh consistently favoured peaceful solution to the problem in the Gulf on the basis of the UN resolutions and restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait. He added that Bangladesh supported all efforts to resolve the crisis peacefully and even at the 11th hour the Acting President made an earnest appeal to Iraqi President Saddam Hossein for withdrawal of his troops from Kuwait.

The presidential adviser urged all the parties concerned to bring the war to an immediate end following the achievement of the objectives set forth by the UN Council resolutions on Kuwait.

Foreign Secretary's Comment

91AS0574B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 18 Jan 91 p 10

[Text] Foreign Secretary Abul Ahsan on Thursday said that Bangladesh supported and endorsed the war in the Gulf as there was no option open to ensure the withdrawal of the Iraqi occupation army from Kuwait under the UN Security Council resolutions.

He, however, clarified that Bangladesh would not take part in the 'Operation Desert Storm,' the military action launched by the U.S.-led multinational force in the Gulf to implement the UN council resolutions to force Iraq to withdraw its troops from Kuwait which Baghdad annexed in early August last.

Addressing a press conference at the Foreign Office following the outbreak of the war in the Gulf, the foreign secretary said that though Bangladesh endorsed the use

of force to implement the hostilities in the area. He added that Bangladesh considered the outbreak of war in the Gulf as "regrettable." He observed that Dhaka had friendly relations with Baghdad and "we do not want that Iraq as a country should be destroyed and the Iraqis are harmed by the war." He asserted that the Bangladesh troops, numbering 2300, were now in defensive deployment well inside Saudi Arabia and far away from the Iraqi-occupied Kuwait. According to information from Bangladesh Embassy in Saudi Arabia and the officials of the Bangladesh military contingent on Thursday morning, our soldiers were safe, the foreign secretary added.

Peace Moves Monitored

91AS0574C Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 21 Jan 91 p 1

[Text] Bangladesh is closely monitoring the peace moves being made by different countries for a cessation to the war in the Gulf.

All peace initiatives are welcome but success of such moves are contingent upon Iraq's readiness to vacate illegally annexed Kuwait, Additional Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman told newsmen in Dhaka on Sunday, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

Replying to questions on Dhaka's reactions to the peace initiatives being made by the Soviet Union, he said many other ideas to end hostilities were being floated by different nations and Bangladesh was keeping a constant watch on the world reactions centering the Gulf War.

Mr Rahman made it clear that the use of force in the Gulf had the cover of the UN Security Council since all efforts for a peaceful withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait had exhausted without any positive results.

"We do not approve any war and here is a case which has to be seen in the light of the resolutions of the UN Security Council," he said, adding Bangladesh's position on the rights of Palestinian people and restoration of occupied Arab land is well-known.

About an estimated 4 lakh Bangladesh nationals in the Gulf countries, the additional foreign secretary said reports received here from those countries spoke on unusual concern or panic in them for returning home. They were having normal life in most of the Gulf countries, he said.

Only 3000 Bangladeshis were left in Kuwait and another about 350 in Iraq and there were a few Bangladesh nationals among the several thousand foreigners who reached Amman after the outbreak of the war, said Mr Rahman.

He said all Bangladesh nationals in the region including the troops in the Saudi Arabia were safe.

Truce Move Supported

91AS0574D Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 23 Jan 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Bangladesh fully supports the initiatives being taken by the Nonaligned Movement under the current chairmanship of Yugoslavia urging Iraq's compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions for withdrawal from Kuwait, a Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka on Tuesday, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

He said Dhaka affirmed the belief that this would create conditions to bring hostilities to a conclusion, prevent further losses and peacefully address the crisis.

The initiatives would help resolve the problems of the entire region including the rights of the Palestinians in accordance with the principles of Nonalignment and the UN charter, the spokesman said.

He said Bangladesh was actively consulting with Yugoslavia, the Nonaligned members states and the permanent members of the Security Council towards this ends.

The spokesman said that Bangladesh remained deeply committed to prevent the escalation of the war and bring about its quick end despite the outbreak of the war in the Gulf.

"We have welcomed and are closely monitoring moves underway for an early and peaceful political resolution of the conflict," he said.

Explaining the position of the country further, the spokesman said key to the solution of the problem was the withdrawal of Iraq from sovereign Kuwait.

He referred to the peace moves by Soviet Union, the Non-Aligned Movement and even to the call by China for restraint, and said all were keen to see the war prevented from being escalated since the situation had terribly jeopardised the world peace and stability.

The spokesman pointed out that there was a great convergence of views that there should be a cessation of hostilities and that the central issue—the occupation of Kuwait—be resolved to achieve this objective.

The flurry of diplomatic initiatives could bear fruit if the core of the crisis was resolved since war began only after all the peace moves by the UN Security Council asking vacation of Kuwait by Iraq fell on deaf ears, he pointed out.

Meanwhile, the spokesman said that 75 Bangladesh nationals who reached Amman after the outbreak of the war would soon be taken to Cairo by road for their eventual repatriation to Bangladesh with assistance from International Organisation of Migration (IOM).

'Surprise' and 'Shock' Over Gulf War

91AS0575A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 18 Jan 91 p 5

[Editorial: "War Breaks Out!"]

[Text] Much to our unpleasant surprise and shock, war has really broken out in the gulf area! In vain did we appeal to all the parties concerned for giving diplomacy a chance and to avoid resorting to arms for the settlement of all disputes. The arms that each of the parties involved has at its disposal can never do any good to anybody. They are not meant for anything but destruction. Human welfare can be ensured not by destruction but by building up things. Both destruction and building up are expensive operations. What was built up in the course of a long time can be destroyed in a short while by way of war. And that is what is going on right now in the Gulf area.

The arsenals on both sides are full to the brim with deadly materials including high-powered explosives, nuclear warheads, lethal chemicals, germs and what not. The war machinery in modern times means extremely high speed manoeuvrable fighter planes which are capable of hitting targets at a level of efficiency unimaginable to lay men.

Hitting the capital cities, petroleum refineries and other industrial installations and (of course) military installations in Iraq and Saudi Arabia is, of course, just the beginning of a war the duration of which we do not yet know. Colossal devastations are sure to result from a war with the help of modern arms and armaments buttressed by the highly advanced military tactics and technology of today.

In all countries, of course, the impact of war is sure to be felt. But in underdeveloped and impoverished countries like ours the impact is sure to be manifold and too severe causing untold human sufferings.

With the start of the Gulf crisis in the beginning of August last year our economy was badly shaken on account of our manpower exported to the Gulf area countries being displaced. We had to bring the large majority of them back. This was a very expensive operation for us. With all the assistance we received from many countries, we succeeded in bringing back the Bangladeshis stranded in the area. The next measure needed was the absorption of the returned manpower in our economy either directly at home or indirectly by finding them jobs abroad or both ways.

While we are still at it, the uneven tug of war between the market forces has already pushed the price level up. With the news of the actual breaking out of the war today there is a widespread apprehension of the price level rising further.

This challenge, of course, has to be accepted. We have to make sure that the ultra-selfish components of the market do not succeed in causing further sufferings for

the people. The austerity measures adopted last year in the wake of the Gulf crisis have to be strictly enforced. Further measures may also have to be adopted for protecting ourselves from the possible damages that may be caused by ultra self-seekers not caring at all for the national interest.

Adequate production in both agriculture and industries has to be ensured too, so that we do not have to suffer on account of the shortage of commodities in the market. Further, dislocations in the transport and communication systems must not be allowed to take place.

Again, we have to make sure that none of our citizens loses head in such a way that some sort of mini-riots take place here and there among people taking this side and that.

A war is certainly a mishap. Some individuals are initially responsible for it. But as time passes, the military personnel are the ones who run things. War thus takes its own course. And it may well go out of hand as far as civilians are concerned. It is best, therefore, not to let war start. But once it starts sensible people everywhere have the responsibility to see that it does not linger. Although war has started this time too, let everybody everywhere be serious about stopping it. Because, as we have already stated, a war these days does not cause any gain to anybody. It just destroys and destroys.

Iraqi Embassy Allegedly Involved in Protests

91AS0624A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 25 Jan 91 p 1

[Text] Bangladesh on Thursday protested to Iraq over alleged involvement of the Iraqi Embassy in the attacks of different foreign missions in Dhaka in the wake of the outbreak of the Gulf war, a Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka Thursday, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

He said the government also drew the attention of Iraq to the allegations that the Iraqi Embassy in Dhaka was behind demonstrations and rallies to drum up support for the Iraqi cause in the Gulf conflict.

The Iraqi Ambassador Mr Zuhair Mohammad Al-omar, was called to the Foreign Office but another diplomat, Mr Namir Saleh, showed up as the ambassador was indisposed.

Director general in the Foreign Ministry, Mr Fazlur Rahman, conveyed to the Iraqi diplomat Bangladesh government's concern at the allegations including the harassment of many foreigners here as a sequel to the war in the Gulf.

"There are reports that the Iraqi Embassy in Dhaka might be instigating such undesirable activities and we have requested them to desist from these acts, which are in contravention with the diplomatic norms and practice," the spokesman said.

He said the Iraqi diplomat denied the charges but admitted that the embassy distributed 1,000 photographs of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn to different groups in Dhaka.

The spokesman said there were reports that Iraq was financing certain activities here after the Gulf war broke out.

He said Bangladesh maintained good relations with all nations and it would be most unfortunate if any foreigner is harassed or any foreign mission attacked here with motivated purpose for events taking place somewhere else.

Such activities would make Bangladesh appear belittle abroad and not speak of any decent behaviour on part of the Bangladeshis towards the foreigners. [sentence as published]

Press Agencies Report Shahabuddin 15 Jan Speech

UNB Summary

91AS0573A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 16 Jan 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed said Tuesday the 27 February parliamentary elections will be held on schedule and deploy troops to maintain law and order, reports UNB [United News of Bangladesh].

"There will be units from the patriotic armed forces in each upazila and even deep into the interior, to respond to any trouble within short notice and restore law and order," Justice Shahabuddin said in a speech over radio and television.

He said the troops will assist armed police and ansars VDP [Village Defense Party] members and BDR [Bangladesh Rifles—border police] personnel who will be at the polling centres during the voting.

Referring to his promise to restore law and order and hold elections within 3 months the acting president said "I am undaunted, firm and determined. The elections will be held without fail on 27 February."

He said laws have been enacted providing punishment for ballot stuffing, seizure of polling centres and other troubles during elections.

The acting president sounded worried about the recent incidents of clashes among supporters of rival political parties.

"There is a trend of conflicts and clashes among the political parties, especially the big ones, mainly because of ideological disputes." He said adding "the intensity of such disputes is growing with the elections day nearing."

He said he did not get any cooperation from the political parties in solving the difficult jail problem because of such disputes.

Responding to the demand to put Ershad on trial immediately Justice Shahabuddin said. Laws will take care of the trial. Laws are equally applicable to all. I am a judge and so it was not possible for me to accept a demand which is incompatible with law."

The acting president said the Election Commission will soon hold a meeting with the political parties and government representative to formulate a Code of Conduct for the elections.

He asked the political parties to follow proposed code of conduct and also raise All Party Volunteer Corps to assist the law enforcing agencies for free and fair elections.

He said if all concerned follow these measures the elections will certainly be free fair and neutral.

The acting president defended the neutrality of his caretaker government that replaced deposed President Hussain Muhammad Ershad on 6 December.

"There are some who have raised question about the neutrality of my caretaker government. But it is not clear from their statements what they mean by neutrality," he said.

However, he said he cannot satisfy everyone by his decision.

"There are more than 100 political parties and it's beyond any imagination that all of them will be happy with the decisions I make in running the state affairs, Justice Shahabuddin said.

Neutral Govt

He said my government is the only neutral government in its real sense that this region has witnessed since 1947.

Justice Shahabuddin said his government has taken every possible measure so people can cast their votes in a free and fearless atmosphere, polls official can work freely and all candidates get equal opportunity.

Besides foreign observers will be invited to oversee the elections, he said.

He detailed the measures his government has taken for free and fair elections—ranging from drive to recover illegal arms and reorganisation of the Election Commission.

The acting president urged all to maintain law and order and exercise tolerance and accommodation of opposition's views. He also sought cooperation for holding the polls.

"When I was made the president on the basis of a consensus it was given the impression that my only

responsibility will be to hold general elections within 3 months he said. But I found piles of problems. I expected help and cooperation from all irrespective of opinion and part affiliation. But not all political parties came forward expected. [sentence as published]

BSS [Bangladesh News Agency] adds: The acting president said all wanted to know what the neutrality meant.

Justice Shahabuddin said no question was ever raised regarding his impartiality during his long 37 and ½ years of service life but he regretted that some had raised such questions as soon as he assumed the responsibility of the caretaker government He, however, said that it was not clear in their statement as to what they meant by neutrality.

The acting president said in view of the longstanding demand of the people Election Commission had been reconstituted with three sitting judges for free, fair and impartial polls.

He said the Election Commission had been working independently and it had been given powers to take any punitive measure, including on-the-spot "suspension" of all, including Returning and Presiding Officers, for election offences. All government and semi-government officers and employees deployed for election work have been put under the jurisdiction of the Election Commission, he pointed out.

Justice Shahabuddin said laws had been promulgated to take measures against stuffing of ballot boxes by force and occupying the polling centres.

He said Union Parishad would be superseded or dissolved where peace would be disrupted in the polling centres. If violence was created in any centre there would be repolling.

The acting president also referred to the Representation of People's Order and said amendment had been made to this law to restrict election expenses of candidate to a limit.

Justice Shahabuddin said a drive was on to recover illegal arms and Arms Act had been amended to provide maximum punishment of life imprisonment and minimum 10 years if a person was found guilty of possession of unauthorised arms.

The acting president said an ordinance had been promulgated to keep the elected representatives of the local government institutions inactive from 22 January to 28 February to prevent them from exerting any influence in the parliamentary elections.

BSS: Remarks on Ershad

91AS0573B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 16 Jan 91 p 1

[Text] Acting President Mr Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on Tuesday said the trial of the former president would

be held in accordance with the laws of the land, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

In his address to the nation over radio and television, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, who explained the measures taken by his interim government in regard to the former president, said on the basis of the report of the eight-member committee headed by Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, two cases have been filed against the deposed President Ershad—one for possessing a huge amount of money which is disproportionate to his income.

A total of Taka 1 crore 91 lakh in cash and 8 unlicensed fire arms have been recovered from the Dhaka Cantonment residence of the former president. Her pointed out adding that the recovery was made under the leadership of a committee headed by Dhaka chief metropolitan magistrate and which included a close relative of the former president.

The acting president also said that soon after he had taken over he tried to restore law and order. But, he said, the wrath of the people grew once again when the former president, in a statement, said that he would soon come back to power. He said the former president was then interned at a Gulshan House under police custody in the interest of national security.

Referring to the continued demands of people, students and political parties to send the former president to jail and ensure his punishment after holding trial within a few days. Justice Shahabuddin said, "I am oath-bound to discharge my duty in accordance with the constitution and laws. Therefore, it was not possible on my part to accept such demands which are inconsistent with laws."

But he said that the trial will be held in accordance with the laws. Law should be equally applied to everyone. Law goes its own way," he added.

Party Leaders File Nomination Paper

91AS0572A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 13 Jan 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Two top leaders of main contending parties—Begum Khaleda Zia of BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] and Sheikh Hasina of Awami League—on Saturday filed their nomination papers for the coming Jatiya Sangsad election, reports UNB [United News of Bangladesh].

Today, (13 Jan) is the last day for filing nomination papers for 27 February election to Jatiya Sangsad.

Party sources said Sheikh Hasina filed nomination paper for three constituencies. She will be contesting from Dhaka-7 (Sutrapur-Kotwali), Dhaka-10 (Tejgaon-Ramna) and Gopalganj-1 (Tungipara).

Begum Khaleda Zia submitted nomination paper for Dhaka-9 (Cantonment-Gulshan) constituency, Party leader Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar said.

She is expected to submit nomination papers for Feni-1 and Bogra-7 constituencies today (Sunday).

Acting Ameer of Jamaat-Islami Abbas Ali Khan filed his nomination papers on 10 January for Dhaka 6 and Joypurhat-1 constituencies, party sources said.

According to the Election Commission, nomination papers should be filed with the Returning Officers or Assistant Returning Officers.

A candidate cannot seek election to the Jatiya Sangsad from more than five constituencies.

Each candidate will require to deposit Tk [takas] 5,000 as security deposit for submission of the nomination paper.

Only one security deposit will be required if a candidate submits more than one nomination paper for the same constituency. On the other hand, separate deposits for each constituency will be required if a person submits nomination in more than one constituency.

Scrutiny of nomination papers will be held on 14 January while the last date for withdrawal of candidature is 21 January.

Awami League President and 8-party Alliance leader Sheikh Hasina on Saturday filed nomination papers for contesting the ensuing parliamentary polls, party sources said.

Hasina is contesting from Dhaka-7 (Sutrapur-Kotwali), Dhaka-10 (Tejgaon-Ramna) and Gopalganj-1 (Tungipara) constituencies.

Party General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury and city leader Mohammad Hanif submitted nomination papers on behalf of Hasina for Dhaka-10 and Dhaka-7 seats while Sheikh Selim for Tungipara.

A large number of leaders, workers and supporters of Awami League and its front organisations went in colourful procession to the Returning Officer's office during submission of the party chief's nomination papers.

Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, contesting from Dhaka-9 and Faridpur-2 constituencies, also submitted her nomination papers on Saturday.

UNB adds:—BNP leader Begum Khaleda Zia on Saturday filed nomination paper for contesting the forthcoming parliamentary election from Dhaka-9 constituency (Cantonment-Gulshan), party sources said.

Party leaders Justice Maksumul Hakim, Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar and Afazuddin Fakir submitted the nomination of the Returning Officer on behalf of the party chairperson.

A large number of leaders, workers and supporters of BNP and its front organisations were present during the filing of the nomination paper.

Begum Zia is expected to file nomination papers for Feni-1 and Bogra-7 constituencies today (Sunday) the last day for filing nominations.

Eight-Party Alliance Ends, New Group Formed

91AS0580 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 20 Jan 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] In a dramatic development, the 8-party Alliance today shed Awami League and entered a greater election coalition with the 5-party and other left groups, reports UNB [United News of Bangladesh].

The new alliance is styled "The Democratic Coalition of 8-party and 5-party alliances."

The coalition was floated after a hectic parley among the strategists at a joint meeting Saturday after the split in the Awami League-led 8-Party Alliance.

Meeting sources said the new alignment was based on the modality jointly declared by three major alliances on 19 November last, which mainly envisaged restoration of the parliamentary form of government.

The components of the new morcha are: BAKSAL [Bangladesh Awami Krishak Sramik League], CPB [Communist Party of Bangladesh], NAP [National Awami Party], Ganatantri Party and Gana Azadi League of the 8-party, all the components of the 5-party, United Communist League, Oikya Prokriya, Janata Mukti Party and Shamyabadi Dal.

With the emergence of the new coalition, the one-time 15-Party Alliance suffered a second split. The alliance floated in early 1983 got first shock of split on the question of participation in the 1986 parliamentary elections under the Ershad government, giving birth to the 5-Party Alliance.

The meeting chose "Sickle" (Kaste) as the coalition's election symbol. The makers of the new alliance are in session to finalise its candidature for the 27 February polls.

Formation of the new coalition was prompted by the failure in preparing a joint panel of candidates by the Awami League-led 8-Party Alliance.

The Awami League earlier agreed with its allies to field joint candidates in ensuing election to the 300-seat parliament. Despite frantic efforts for the last two weeks, the components of the Awami League-dominated alliance failed to come out with a joint panel.

Last-ditch efforts failed Friday night when Awami League reportedly deviated from its promise, offering only 32 seats to its six other partners instead of 62 to 72 seats earlier agreed upon.

The new electoral alliance was forged at the CPB office where leaders of the 8-party, 5-party and their like-minded political groups met its BAKSAL leader Abdur Razzak in the chair.

'Text' of Bangladesh Nationalist Party Manifesto

91AS0618A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 30 Jan 91 p 3

[Following is the text of the election manifesto of the BNP announced in a press conference by party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia on Monday]

[Text] Begum Khaleda Zia on Monday said the country saw the golden era during the period of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) rule under the leadership of President Ziaur Rahman who had inspired the people of all strata to come forward to build the homeland on the basis of Bangladeshi nationalism, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

Launching the party election manifesto at the Banani election office Monday evening Begum Khaleda Zia recalled that President Ziaur Rahman had restored the multi-party democracy and introduced a series of development process both in the urban and rural areas.

She said from Teknaf to Tetulia this process of development had been going on in full swing. He met the people in person from one corner of the country to the other to establish contact both personally and mentally thorough which he could organise a well-know political party, namely, BNP.

The people, Begum Zia said, found a leader of their own in President Ziaur Rahman and they reposed their confidence in his leadership.

She said with the restoration of a democratic government President Zia immediately released over ten (10 thousand) political prisoners who were detained by the erstwhile one-party government, lifted the emergency, excavated 1,400 canals to increase production in agriculture, enabled 40 lakh people to write their names.

President Zia also created 80 lakh members of the Village Defence Party (VDP) to stop theft, dacoity, murder and hijacking for ensuring peace for the rural people, built thousands of miles of roads for revolutionising the communication network, imparted training to 27,500 village doctors to ensure medical facilities to the rural people, set up new industries for increasing production and organised green revolution to end a famine condition that had been prevailing in the country.

Achievements during his rule of five years and cited the creation of Youth and Women Affairs Ministries to involve them in the development activities, the ministry of religious affairs to facilitate opportunities to the Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians to enable them [to] to pursue their rites and respective religions. She said President Zia arranged opportunities for technical training to open employment avenues abroad with a view to reducing rate of unemployment, and took steps to organise a silent revolution in the country by successes in the fields of food, clothing, education, medicare and shelter.

Begum Zia said during President Zia's rule Bangladesh also earned honour through his dynamic and meaningful foreign policy. President Zia himself had earned a name of the world, she said.

She said President Zia had also earned a rare honour when he was made one of the three members of the Al-Quds Committee of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). He was the proponent of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). This was recognised in the first SAARC summit by heads of state of other member countries, she said.

Begum Zia said at the same time President Ziaur Rahman had restored a healthy political revailing bankrupt politics. [sentence as published] He had offered the nation Bangladeshi nationalism. Unalloyed cultural activities were initiated in the cultural arena by President Zia, she said adding the patriotic song "Pratham Bangladesh Amar Shesh Bangladesh" reverberated the arena of Bangladeshi language and culture against the alien cultural aggression.

Ziaur Rahman had set up a very bright example in the field of personal character integrity and honesty, she said.

Recalling the pioneering and valiant role of Ziaur Rahman in the War of Liberation Begum Zia said in the crucial time of March 1971 it was an indomitable son of this country, Bangladesh Ziaur Rahman had given the call for the independence of the country through the radio centre at Kalurghat in Chittagong. The countrymen themselves listened [to] the voice of thunder's declaration.

"I am Major Zia speaking. I am declaring the independence of the country. You take up arms against the intruder army."

This declaration, Begum Zia said, gave the confused nation a sense of direction. Students, youth and old, farmers, workers, blacksmiths and potters, women and men alike, nay the whole nation, had embarked upon a memorable, bitter and sanguinary battle, the fight for the liberation. Referring to the post-liberation misrule of the country she said soon after the independence those who became the rulers refused to form a national government and instead established a one-party government. They miserably failed to reach the benefit of the people. An extreme sense of frustration pervaded the country due to their corruption and bad rule. Voice of protests were stifled through the use of extensive force. Thirty (30) thousand patriotic political workers and freedom fighters including Seraj Sikder had lost their lives. A big famine struck the nation at this times. Over one lakh people had lost their lives due to the famine, according to daily ITTEFAQ of 2 November 1974 Begum Zia said.

Quoting BBC the daily ITTEFAQ had reported in Rangpur alone 25 thousand people had lost their lives. Thousands of starved people without clothing were seen lying in the Dhaka city streets. Killing, confinement,

hijacking and robbery were the daily occurrences. When the voices of protest were being raised against the unbearable and anarchic condition the Special Powers Act, 1974 was promulgated. This law provided arrest of people and their detention without having to show any reason and without trial. This was the worst attempt by the then government in violating human rights. The same law had seized the press freedom and publication newspaper. Following this came the fourth amendment to the constitution and one-party rule which buried multi-party democracy. In fact, it provided one-man rule by killing democratic rule. Only four newspapers were kept and all others were banned government servants and members of the armed forces were compelled to join the one party through which they were involved into politics. At the same time an armed force was raised parallel to the defence forces by neglecting the latter. It was raised in the interest of the then ruling party.

Begum Zia said in this way the confidence of the people were violated, democracy was killed, economy destroyed.

Individual liberty and press freedom were snatched away, famine and corruption were so rampant that people's anger rose to a peak. [sentence as published]

In her party manifesto, Begum Zia pointed out that after a brief golden rule of BNP with President Ziaur Rahman in the leadership. The country was cast with another patch of dark cloud when the Ershad group with the active support of the Anti-Democracy elements conspired and killed President Ziaur Rahman. [paragraph as published]

After the assassination of President Zia, the BNP government elected afresh, was dislodged from power at gunpoint by the same Ershad group to seize power for themselves. As chief of the army staff, Ershad violated his oath to preserve the constitution. During the nine years of his (Ershad) autocratic rule, Begum Zia said, Ershad introduced unabated corruption and plundering of the national wealth with the active connivance of known quarters. [sentence as published] Both of these two groups had launched and undeclared war against the BNP. The same known quarters participated in the so-called 1986 parliamentary elections in accordance with the blue print. Both of these groups were obliged to follow. The same known quarters suddenly deviated from the united movement against the autocratic rule of Ershad and the leader of the group became so-called leader of opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad in 1986.

The illegal autocratic government in this way got the legal coverage. But BNP never deviated from the struggle against the autocratic rule and defied the evil designs dropped up from time to time by the same known group.

She praised the role of students played last year (1990) under DUCSU [Dhaka University Central Students Union] leadership supported by BNP and patriotic parties in culminating the downfall of the autocratic Ershad regime.

Islamic Party Leader Announces Manifesto

91AS0621A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 30 Jan 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Mr Abbas Ali Khan, Acting Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh on Tuesday pledged to turn the country into an Islamic state through introduction of a suitable system as desired by the people. If voted to power, Jamaat-e-Islami would insure five basic needs of the people which are—food, clothing, shelter, education and medicare, Mr Khan added.

Announcing the party manifesto at a Press conference at the central office of Jamaat-e-Islami, Mr Abbas Ali Khan favoured a change in the system of government in a peaceful and democratic way. Mr Abbas Ali Khan in the 32-point manifesto explained the aims and objectives of his party and the ways and means through which those would be achieved.

While reading out the 16-page printed manifesto Mr Khan said, "our ultimate aim is to turn Bangladesh into an Islamic state which would follow the tenets of the quran and sunnah." Jamaat-e-Islami would establish such a system of government which would guarantee rights of women and full civil and human rights of all citizens irrespective of caste and creed, Mr Khan said. It is not easy to achieve social justice without changing the system of government, he maintained.

Jamaat-e-Islami has been working towards the direction of bringing an end to all sorts of injustices, oppression and anarchy, he said. "We will strive to establish quranic values and ensure justice in the society," he asserted. Jamaat-e-Islami is an ideological party pledged to work towards preservation of the country's independence and sovereignty, Mr Khan said. The protection of territorial sovereignty is a religious and national obligation of all citizens, he said.

If voted to power his party would abolish all unislamic laws and repeal all restrictions standing on the way to fundamental rights including black laws, Mr Abbas Ali Khan said. It would ensure independence of judiciary and work for integration of Islamic philosophy in education from primary level to the highest level, he said. The non-Muslims would enjoy equal freedom to pursue their own religious learning under the changed system.

Turning to the country's foreign policy, Mr Khan favoured an independent foreign policy free from the influence of any power blocs as well as from hegemonism and imperialism. The foreign policy should reflect the Islamic ideals aiming at good relationship with Muslim countries and neighbour in particular, he said.

If voted to power, his party would introduce labour laws aiming at giving maximum benefit [to] the workers and low-paid employees. Jamaat-e-Islami would promote Halal (honest) business and introduce interest-free banking and insurance system. His party would favour fixation of minimum salary reducing the gap among different categories of employees, he said. There will be

provisions for shelter, medicare and education facilities from the exchequer for the low paid employees, he maintained. Mr Abdul Kader Mollah, a central leader of the party assisted Mr Khan in replying to newsmen.

Regarding the issue of armed forces, Mr Khan argued in favour of inspiring the people and armed forces with the spirit of Islamic jehad so that they could remain prepared to sacrifice their lives to uphold the country's sovereignty and independence. His party is also in favour of a strong defence force equipped with modern equipment to improve defense capability, he said. His party favours civil training to men and women between the age of 18 and 40.

If voted to power Jamaat-e-Islami would gradually strive towards eradication of poverty and unemployment and turn the population into useful manpower, he said.

If elected, his party would try to achieve world Islamic solidarity and development and solve bilateral and regional problems on the basis of justice, Mr Khan felt.

Replying to questions the Acting Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami expressed the optimism to form government provided the voters could cast their vote in a peaceful way. Although his party is not in favour of a woman to head the government, but it would abide by people's verdict electing a woman to lead the nation, he told a questioner.

On the Gulf situation, Mr Khan said his party is in favour of immediate withdrawal of hostilities and withdrawal of troops simultaneously from Kuwait and multinational troops from Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries. Mr Khan also demanded quick trial of former President Ershad and his corrupt associates. Law should be equally applicable to all as none was above it, Mr Khan told another questioner.

Five-Party Alliance Announces Manifesto

91AS0620A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 1 Feb 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Mr Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan Convener of left-leaning Five-Party Alliance on Thursday announced the election manifesto of his Alliance with a pledge to repeal all constitutional amendments excepting the first and third. If voted to power, the Five-Party Alliance would ensure freedom of the Press, free trade union rights and also freedom of religion, Mr Bhuiyan added.

Announcing the manifesto of his alliance at a Press conference at the JSD [Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal] office on the day, the convener of the Alliance said that the organisational structure of the Armed Forces would be democratised and brought under the control of the Jatiya Sangsad. All able-bodied youth would be given compulsory military training so that the independence and sovereignty could be protected, Mr Bhuiyan said.

The Alliance would introduce new police code so that the hopes and aspiration of the people were not, he said. The

people do not want to see the police torturing the poor people under custody, he said. If voted to power, the Five-Party Alliance would repeal all black laws including Special Powers Act and Printing Press and Publications Ordinance, he said. He also pledged that freedom of the judiciary would be ensured. If necessary the alliance would amend laws so that election could no longer be influenced by arms and money, the Five-Party Alliance leader asserted.

Turning to the economic aspect he said that the Alliance was in favour of less dependence on foreign aid and discarding the process of free economy. The alliance would retain heavy and basic industries under the public sector and repeal the denationalisation policy if voted to power, he said. The local industries would be encouraged in the private sector and multi-national companies would be brought under necessary control, the Alliance would encourage setting up of new industries to create increased employment opportunity, he said.

The Alliance would bring about basic land reform in the agricultural sector protecting the rights of the sharecroppers through cooperative system, the Alliance leader said.

Regarding the education sector, the Alliance would introduce major changes through introduction of free education up to Class X. The University Ordinance, 1973 would be implemented and autonomy of educational institutions would be ensured, the manifesto said. The Alliance would promote science-based and secular education, the manifesto further said.

The Alliance would also ensure health care facilities for the both urban and rural people through introduction of some effective measures, the manifesto announced. It would also create equal rights of women and would introduce stern punishment to those responsible for torture of women. The alliance would also ban the prevailing child labour system in the country, it is pledged.

Regarding the foreign policy of the alliance, Mr Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan said, "we would follow non-aligned foreign policy and stand against war and in favour of peace."

On the Gulf war, the Alliance made its stand clear that if voted to power, it would bring back Bangladeshi troops from Saudi Arabia and oppose the role of the Americans. The Alliance would plead for peace in the Middle East through international forum and forums of Islamic and Arab countries, the manifesto said. It would also extend support to the cause of the Palestinians. The manifesto further said that the Alliance would establish good relationships with the socialist countries and take effective efforts for solution of outstanding problems with neighbours.

Replying to questions, the Alliance leader, Mr Rashed Khan Menon, said that money and illegal weapons were spoiling the fair atmosphere of election.

Mr Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan termed the offer of 36 seats to the components of the Eight-Party Alliance by Awami League as "political bribery." Mr Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan was also critical of the role of big two parties without naming BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] and Awami League for their indifference to the request of Five-Party Alliance for fielding joint candidates in the polls aiming at forming national government. He said that the mess created over the years, could not be cleared by any party alone.

In all 258 persons were given nomination by the Alliance. Of them some have withdrawn their candidature while a few of them accepted the Awami League offer and are fighting the polls with the election symbol, boat, Mr Bhuiyan said. [sentence as published]

The Alliance leaders Kazi Arif, Hasanul Huq Inu, Siddiqur Rahman, Mainuddin Khan Badal, Haider Akbar Khan Rono, A.F.M. Mahbulul Huq were among others, present at the Press conference.

Detention of Abdul Kader Siddiqui Challenged

91AS0622A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 28 Jan 91 p 10

[Text] A Division Bench comprising Mr Justice Md Abdul Jalil and Qauzi Shafiuddin of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court issued a Rule Nisi on Sunday upon Bangladesh represented by the Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs and others calling upon them to show cause on or before 6 February why the detenu Mr Abdul Kader Siddiqui now detained in Jossore Central Jail, should not be brought before this Court so that it may satisfy itself that he is not being held in custody without any lawful authority or in an unlawful manner.

His detention is challenged by his wife, Mr Nasreen Kader Siddiqui as petitioner.

Dr Kamal Hussain, senior counsel, appeared with Kazi Shahabuddin Ahmed, Mr A.F.M. Mesbahuddin, Mr. M.K. Rahman and Mr Shamim Husnain.

The petitioner has stated that the detenu left the country and stayed in India after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and overthrow of his government on 15 August 1975. The detenu came back to Dhaka on 12 December after the fall of autocratic government of Hussain Mohammad Ershad, and was given warm ovation in Dhaka and elsewhere by the people. He was also given nomination by Awami League to contest the ensuing general election from Tangail constituency. His nomination paper has been accepted.

The petitioner further stated that Mr Kader Siddiqui was arrested on 17 January from WAPDA Rest House, Jhenidah. A large contingent of armed police encircled the Rest House before his arrest. When the detenu wanted to know the reason of his arrest, the police officer vaguely hinted to him of some conviction, which the

detenu claimed to have no knowledge. When he wanted to see the warrant of arrest, the police officer failed to show any. He, therefore, refused to accompany the police officers. The police officers then produced an order of detention dated 13.1.91 under Section 3(1)(a) of the Special Powers Act, 1974 stating that it was necessary to arrest him for public safety and public order for a period of 120 days.

The detention has been challenged on various grounds including the impugned order being violative of the fundamental right of the detenu guaranteed by Art 33 of the Constitution as no grounds for making of the representation had yet been communicated. The very Act is also challenged on the ground of being violative of the fundamental rights under the Constitution.

Details of Case Against Ershad Reported

91AS0623A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 27 Jan 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Former President Hussain Mohammed Ershad, two of his ministers and two former high officials have been charged with misappropriation of over Taka 22 crore in the purchase of three ATP aircraft for Bangladesh Biman, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

According to official sources in Dhaka on Saturday, a case has been filed with Motijheel Thana under anti-corruption against them for buying three ATP aircraft at a higher price and selling three F-27 aircraft at a lower price causing a financial loss of Taka 22,43,72,559 to Bangladesh Biman and thereby Bangladesh government.

Besides President Ershad, his two ministers are former Aviation Minister H.M.A. Gaffar, former Minister of State for Aviation Ziauddin Ahmed. The two high officials are former Managing Director of Bangladesh Biman Group Captain (Retd) Shaikat-ul-Islam and former Industries Secretary A.K.M. Mosharraf Hossain.

According to the case filed, President Ershad, the two former ministers and the two high officials, in mutual understanding with one another, misused power with the ill-motive of attaining financial gains themselves or helped others gain financially.

Any member of the Board of Directors of Bangladesh Biman or any officials, if involved, would be examined during the enquiry.

It was stated in the case that the Board of Directors of Bangladesh Biman, in a meeting on 19 October 1988 decided to purchase three ATP aircraft for modernising Biman after selling its three operational F-27 planes on condition of causing no loss to the airlines. Thereafter, Biman signed agreed minutes with the British Aerospace, the manufacturers of ATP.

Two committees of Bangladesh Biman under instruction from the former managing director visited the factory of the British aerospace and submitted a report for making

a comparative financial and technical study between the models of ATP, F-50 and Dash-8/300.

Biman's financial evaluation committee and fleet planning committee vehemently opposed the purchase of ATP and said that Bangladesh Biman would incur a loss of 50 million U.S. dollars if ATPs are purchased.

The visit of the former President to the factory of the ATP manufacturers in Britain before taking the final decision influenced the purchase of the ATPs. Within one week of his return to Bangladesh an amount of 1.5 lakh U.S. dollars was sent to British aerospace in spite of Biman's financial hardship.

The Biman's board of directors finalised the decision of purchasing ATP aircraft at a meeting held on 16 March 1989 with the former Minister of State for Aviation Ziauddin Ahmed in the chair. In another such meeting held on 6 July 1989 the draft agreement of purchasing ATP aircraft at 10.82 million U.S. dollars each was approved.

A meeting held under the chairmanship of the former Aviation Minister Lt Col. (Retd) H.M.A. Gaffar on 9 September 1989 decided to send five lakh U.S. dollars as part of the total value of ATP without having approval of the Cabinet Division on the purchase. Later the approval of the Cabinet Division was taken with ante-date.

The agreement for the purchase of ATP was signed on 13 December 1989. The Former Industries Secretary spoke firmly in favour of purchasing the ATPs at the meeting of the standing committee on hard-term loan held a week earlier. His partisan statement was against the comments made by the Fleet Planning and Financial Evaluation Committee.

As a former Managing Director and a member of the Biman's Board of Directors, Group Captain (ret'd) Shaikat-ul-Islam should have opposed the purchase of the ATPs in the board's meeting in view of the Biman's sick financial condition. The Biman managing director made his involvement very clear by not presenting the true financial condition of Biman and by directing the financial and technical committees to visit British Aerospace factory with ulterior motive.

Biman had a total of eight offers at the time of purchasing ATP aircraft. Among them, the value of each F-50 aircraft was 13,450,000 U.S. dollars, and that of Dash-8/300 at 11,112,400 U.S. dollars. The international price of each ATP was 12 million U.S. dollars. That is paying 2.82 million U.S. dollars more for each aircraft, the Bangladesh Biman incurred a total loss of 8.46 million U.S. dollars which is equivalent to Taka 22,43,72,559.

Khaleda Zia Promises Ershad To Be Tried

91AS0619A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 3 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Barisal, 2 February—The chief of Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP] Begum Khaleda Zia today said,

if voted to power, her party would put all accomplices of autocracy on trial, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

She said Ershad and his associates must be put on the dock for their misdeeds and must undergo punishment.

Begum Zia was addressing a big public meeting at Bell's Park here. Local BNP leader and a candidate from Bakerganj-5 constituency Abdur Rahim Biswas also spoke on the occasion.

She said "We are now coming across a party which now looks lenient towards Ershad's trial. What is that weakness for? [quote marks as published]"

The BNP chief said her party never compromised with injustice and would not do so in further too.

She said BNP never practised politics of sharing power with autocracy to give it a legal base. She said those who helped autocracy to remain in power had to be answerable to the people.

Without mentioning the name, Begum Khaleda said it was well-known to the people which party wanted to give legality to an illegal government taking part in the 1986 election.

She said it was also clear to the common man which party had worked as part of the autocracy and cooperated with it taking the role of the opposition in the parliament.

She said the autocratic Ershad oppressed the workers, peasants and students most and also ruined the economy of the country. She said Ershad also polluted the atmosphere in the educational institutions by harbouring 'mastans' there.

She said, if voted to power, the BNP would make the educational arena violence-free.

The BNP chief said the deposed President would have to give full account of his every misdeed.

She said her party would also ensure the five basic needs of the people.

She said the BNP has a definite programme aimed at establishing production-oriented politics in the country. She said the BNP would work for the well-being of the farmers who are the key to the development of Bangladesh.

Begum Khaleda Zia called upon those who want to foil the polls through violence to take the right course. Otherwise, she warned the nation would never forgive them.

She said there has been an unprecedented wave in favour of the nationalist forces throughout the country. She said this surge of support would sweep away all anti-people activities.

Today was the last day of the five-day tour of the BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia which took her also to Jessore, Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Mongla, Pirojpur and Bakerganj.

INDIA

Effects of, Reaction to Gulf War

World More Difficult

91AS0568A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 22 Jan 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Pax Americana"]

[Text] The bi-polar world order created by the cold war collapsed along with the Berlin Wall in November 1989. A more and more uni-polar world began to emerge from the rubble. That process has now accelerated with dizzying speed. The immediate purpose of Operation Desert Storm, launched by the United States and its allies, may well be to force the President, Mr Saddam Husayn, to vacate his annexation of Kuwait. This limited purpose would have been hailed worldwide had not the West seized the opportunity provided by the Iraqi invasion to pursue a wider and far more ambitious goal: to destroy Iraq's suspected arsenal of chemical weapons and embryonic nuclear capability and indeed to liquidate the Baathist regime itself. And this with a view to ensuring that the economic and strategic interests of the West in general and of the United States in particular are safeguarded for years to come and perhaps even for all times. If the military might, technological prowess, economic clout, moral self-righteousness and cultural arrogance of the West are in full display in the Gulf today, it is because Operation Desert Storm is indeed intended to assert the unequivocal supremacy of the West in the region and on the international scene as a whole.

The West requires this supremacy since its prosperity is critically dependent on the cheap and plentiful supply of oil from the Gulf. It feared that a powerful Iraq would sooner or later gain control over two-thirds of the oil produced in the region and then be in a position to hold western economies to ransom. The Iraqi President had therefore to be stopped in his tracks. The West also reckoned that if President Saddam emerged as a de facto leader of the Arab world, it would only be a matter of time before he began to destabilise the conservative Arab regimes allied to it. In such an eventuality, Iraq was bound to gain a strategic advantage over Israel. For this reason, he had to be eliminated. The West will simply not be able to trust any Arab leader who exudes strength, a sense of self-respect and pride in his civilisation and who moreover has the temerity to chart an independent course.

Developments would surely not have taken this tragic turn had President Saddam Husayn not committed the provocative [words illegible] Kuwait in the first place. His brinkmanship at the diplomatic level has also proved

to be disastrous. By turning down last-minute efforts for a negotiated settlement, made by the French and the U.N. secretary-general, he succeeded merely in pushing the western nations to close their ranks. His failed attempt to link the issue of Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait to the solution of the Palestinian problem was also evidence of his fatal miscalculation of both the longer-term objectives of the West and of the intensity of western determination to attain them. Should he and his regime perish, as now seems plausible, the West will have made it abundantly plain that it will not tolerate any Arab leader who threatens its vital interests.

However, no matter how bright the immediate impact of Iraq's defeat appears in western eyes, the effect in the longer term could well be ominous for peace in the region and even outside of it. As it is, Arab opinion at large does not appear to have taken kindly to the presence of alien forces on Arab soil. A defeated Iraq and a martyred Saddam Husayn could unleash an unprecedented anti-western fury in the Arab world and indeed in the Muslim world as a whole. Pan-Arab nationalism and Muslim fundamentalism could make common cause and wreak havoc not only in Arab countries ruled by pro-western leaders but in the very heart of western societies where Muslim minorities are already seething with frustration. A sharp rise in terrorist activity cannot be ruled out particularly since, as seems likely, the PLO will be forced to harden its stand and abandon Mr Yasser Arafat's moderation of recent years. Sooner or later, all these factors taken together could in turn lead to a far more sweeping confrontation between a strong and arrogant Judeo-Christian world and a weak Muslim world fired by religious zeal.

Meanwhile, non-western nations will have to learn several searing lessons from Operation Desert Storm. The first is the wholly ineffectual role of the Soviet Union in this conflict. It cannot be explained merely by the fact that convulsions within that country have all but paralysed its leadership. Moscow's ineffectiveness can and must be traced to the fact that the Gorbachev dispensation has failed to project a world-view of its own after it discarded Marxism-Leninism. The new thinking of the Soviets has been exposed for what it is: a smorgasbord of pious hopes, high-minded platitudes and hollow slogans. The east-west conflict at least had the merit of bringing into focus rival ideas about how individuals, communities and nations should develop. No more. The conflicts to come threaten to pit one kind of fanaticism against another: naked self-interest and religious fundamentalism. Much in the same vein, Operation Desert Storm has underscored the western grip over the United Nations and shredded to bits whatever remained of non-alignment, of the north-south dialogue and, not the least, of India's claim that it could and did influence the course of post-colonial history. Indeed, the danger in India now is that if Iraq's defeat is perceived as a humiliation in the Arab and Muslim world, the Hindu bigots might begin to gloat much to the chagrin of India's Muslims and of secular opinion in this country.

The world is changing beyond recognition before our very eyes. As a creed, communism, which altered the world in the second decade of this century, has run out of steam. Unreason in the form of the will to dominate and in the shape of religious frenzy seems all set to overwhelm us. It is as yet too early to understand the forces unleashed during these past three years. All that one can say with a measure of certainty is that, despite whatever surface appearances may suggest, the world is going to be a very much more difficult place to live in once the western offensive in the Gulf is over. Pax Americana can neither afflict the comfortable nor comfort the afflicted.

Bombay Security Measures

91AS0568B Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 18 Jan 91 p 3

[Text] Bombay, Jan. 17—Security has been beefed up at consulates vulnerable to possible attacks by pro-Iraqi guerillas, to some of the projects in the state employing foreigners and to student groups in universities, the police said today.

Security arrangements to the vulnerable groups had been reviewed and augmented, though attacks by guerillas are considered remote despite Bombay being a good base for such groups, the sources added.

Meanwhile, the city today woke up to the news of waves of air attacks on Baghdad by the Allied forces, led by the United States, after yesterday's suspense over the possibility of a war in the Gulf.

The air attack and President Saddam Husayn's poor response during the day was the talk of the town and people wanted the war to end quickly, as a prolonged conflict was more likely to seriously affect their lives. They were mainly concerned about the availability of kerosene, petrol and diesel, besides the increase in the prices of essential commodities. Few were worried of there being a shortage of essential commodities, though.

An optimist among them, Mr Vijay G. Kalantri, the senior vice-president of the All-India manufacturers organisation, felt the expected inflation and the fear of shortage of crude oil and petroleum products might not arise in view of the present situation. The deficit might not increase as expected, he said.

Families offered prayers for the safety of the relatives who remain in the Gulf countries.

The cancellation of flights from the Gulf added to their worries. Some people who received telephone calls from their relatives said they were moving to places considered safer.

The consensus among people to whom this reporter talked was that President Saddam Husayn had no chance against the allied forces, but they did not know how long he would hold out. The campaign for the removal of the

"strong man of Maharashtra," Mr Sharad Pawar by dissidents in his own party went out of public focus today.

War or peace, there was no fall in the number of applications received by the regional passport office here. They still received 1,000 applications—the daily average—an officer said.

As the countries are not mentioned separately in the passport, there is no knowing how many applicants desired to go to the Gulf to take up jobs.

Most of the city newspapers today brought out special "war editions" to satisfy the hunger for news from the war front. People were tuned in to BBC and other radio stations throughout the day.

Bombay University authorities have not issued any guidelines for its foreign students following the commencement of the war.

There are nearly 500 foreign students, including three Iraqi nationals. A spokesperson for the university said that since the Central government had taken a neutral stand on the war and not issued any directives to the universities concerning foreign students, Bombay University had not done so either.

Oil Shipments Affected

91AS0568C Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 22 Jan 91 p 1

[Article by R. Sasankan: "Crude Shippers Set Terms"]

[Text] New Delhi, Jan. 21—Private ships, both Indian and foreign, are reluctant to lift crude for India from the Gulf in the absence of an extended insurance coverage.

Lloyds, the international insurance company, is charging \$50,000 to \$70,000 a day as insurance premium for the ships wanting to enter the Gulf for loading crude. Not many Indian companies can afford to pay such a huge premium. In the absence of such a coverage, it is risky to enter the Gulf.

According to international oil industry circles, about 150 ships from various countries are waiting outside the Strait of Hormuz. The director-general of Indian shipping has asked the Indian ships not to enter the ports in the Gulf.

However, the ban has been lifted for the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) whose ships will now be going to three islands in the eastern Persian Gulf coast to pick up the contracted Iranian crude. The SCI will also try to load crude from other Gulf countries from these islands.

India could not lift the entire contracted crude from the Gulf before the outbreak of war. A substantial portion of the spot purchases made last month and nearly 70 percent of the one million tonnes contracted early this month from Iran are still to be loaded.

India was not in a hurry to lift the crude in view of the comfortable inventory and the limited storage facility. Oil tankers carrying nearly 1.2 million tonnes were on their way to India. The Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and the oil co-ordination committee (OCC), who are in charge of the international trade, were of the view that there would be no problem if India did not lift the contracted crude from the Gulf immediately. But with the war showing no sign of ending in coming weeks, India will have to lift this crude from the Gulf immediately.

Oil industry circles acknowledge that there is no shortage of oil in the international market. Prices are ruling in the range of \$15 a barrel for the Dubai crude. India can buy crude and petroleum products from markets other than Gulf. But the Indian government does not have foreign exchange to buy crude even at the present low prices.

The government could have clinched deals at fixed rates to take advantage of the downturn in prices, but there is no indication of India entering the spot market for such deals. The present downward trend in prices will be reversed if the war will be a prolonged one. This can send prices to any level.

Bombay Muslims React

91AS0568D Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 22 Jan 91 p 3

[Text] Bombay, January 21—Several Muslim religious organisations in the city marched from the Minara Masjid, Pydhonie to Zhulla Maidan, Agripada, and various communist groups staged a dharna in front of the American Centre to protest against the Gulf war today.

The 15,000-strong Muslims voiced their support for Mr Saddam Husayn. The All-India Sunni Jamiyati Ulema, All-India Sunni Jamiat-ul-Awaam, the Sunni Darul Uloom Mohammediya, the Maharashtra Idara-e-Shariah and other religious organisations took part in the march.

They called upon the world leaders to immediately end the Gulf war as the Indian economy would be adversely hit.

A delegation submitted a memorandum to the state government as the morcha was not allowed to proceed to the American consulate for security reasons, according to the police.

The Muslims said the attack on Iraq had endangered the sanctity of Saudi Arabian holy places.

The morcha which began at 10.30 a.m. was largely peaceful till the crowd dispersed at around 12.30 p.m., when there was sporadic incidents of stone-throwing and a shopkeeper and hotelier were allegedly assaulted when they did not down their shutters. Most of the shops in the area remained closed and there was two-hour-long traffic jam.

At the American Centre, various communist organisations condemned the U.S. attack on Iraq.

Party supporters felt there should be a simultaneous withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and of Israel from Palestine.

Volunteers for Iraq

91AS0568E Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 16 Jan 91 p 11

[Text] New Delhi, Jan. 15 (UNI)—About 200,000 Indians have offered to fight along side Iraqi soldiers against the multi-national forces in case of a war in the Gulf, the Iraqi ambassador in India, Mr Abdul Wadood Sheikhly, said here last night.

The embassy has received representation from hundreds of youth, belonging to all sections of the society, seeking permission to go to Iraq. Besides, political parties, students' organisations and other groups had appreciated the Iraqi stand on the Gulf crisis and justified Baghdad's view-point of a comprehensive settlement of the Gulf crisis, the Ambassador said at a reception.

He also lauded India's stand on the Gulf and stated that India and Iraq enjoyed "excellent relations."

Mr Sheikhly said the "intimidation policy" of the United States "will not work" and its threats of war and destruction will not force Baghdad to vacate from Kuwait unless Washington recognised the importance of the Palestine issue.

The ambassador claimed that Iraq had "the potential to fight against the multinational forces."

"Maybe in a few hours from now, the war will be declared against us. But we will defend our land, even if we have to die for it. We will protect the integrity and sovereignty of Iraq," he further stated.

While stating that Kuwait was a part of Iraq, he said "there is a need for a comprehensive solution to the Gulf crisis. We want the Palestine issue should be immediately settled."

It was the duty of the U.N. security council to get its resolutions on the Palestine issue implemented, he said, adding that while the United States had got the UN's approval for economic sanctions against "us," why had such sanctions not been imposed on Israel, which had "usurped half of the Arab land."

President's Rule Imposed in Pondicherry

91AS0615A New Delhi PATRIOT in English
13 Jan 91 p 1

[Text] Pondicherry on Saturday night was brought under President's Rule and the Union Territory's Legislative Assembly suspended for a period of six months, report agencies.

President R. Venkataraman also accepted the resignation of the DMK [Dravidian Progressive Foundation]-Janata Dal coalition Ministry headed by Mr D. Ramachandran.

Mr Ramachandran had submitted the resignation of his Council of Ministers to the Lt Governor Har Swarup Singh on the morning of December 27, the deadline fixed by the Lt Governor for the Chief Minister to prove his majority on the floor of the Assembly.

The coalition Government was reduced to a minority in the Assembly following a split in the Pondicherry unit of the Janata Dal with three of its four legislators switching over to the Janata Dal(S).

Attempts were made to form a Congress-AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam]-Janata Dal(S) Government but it fell through for various reasons, including the Congress reluctance to join a Government along with the Janata Dal(S).

The 11-member Congress Party in the Assembly was also divided over the question of leadership.

AIADMK general secretary Jayalalitha had said that her party was in favour of fresh elections but would not mind supporting a Congress Janata Dal(S) Government from outside.

Today's development brings to an end the fortnight-long political stalemate in the Union Territory.

Sixth time: This is the sixth time President's Rule has been imposed in this Union Territory in the last 27 years with the elected Government not completing its full term of office.

The imposition of President's rule has come in the wake of the inability of the Congress, the main opposition in the 33-member Assembly, to form an alternative Government.

The party-wise position in the 33-member House before the resignation of the DMK Ministry was DMK nine (including Speaker), CPI [Communist Party of India] two, Janata Dal one, nominated three (total 15), Opposition Congress 11, AIADMK three, Janata Dal(S) three, Independent one, total (18).

The fall of the DMK-led Government began with the split in the four-member Janata Dal legislature group, an offshoot of the split in the party at the national level in November last. The dispute over the allocation of ministerial portfolios between the two Janata Dal ministers, V. Pethaperumal and Prajavelu, hastened the crisis.

Report on Shekhar's Chandigarh Press Conference

91AS0609A New Delhi PATRIOT in English
21 Jan 91 p 5

[Text] Chandigarh, Jan 20—"As long as I am the Prime Minister of India, I have the authority to talk and

propose on Punjab. Mann should have no apprehensions about my consolidating position in the Centre," Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar said today while addressing the press here. Answering questions on Punjab tangle he said, "I don't know who constitutes the Panthic committee, but I am willing to talk to anybody, howsoever divergent their views may be."

On Simranjit Singh Mann's proclaimed self-determination the Prime Minister said, "Mann has not referred or explained self determination, nor do I know the parameters of such a thing." He added, "that I will explain to the militants how unreasonable their demand (of Khalistan) is, but nevertheless they should at least come to the negotiating table and talk."

Mr Chandra Shekhar, however, said he had no sympathy for those indulging in killings and other acts of terrorism. He declared that the Government would come down with all the force at its command on such elements.

Describing the continuing killings in Punjab as a 'shame' for the country, Mr Chandra Shekhar said those behind such acts did not serve the cause of any religion or political movement.

Earlier, talking to newsmen here, the Prime Minister said he would be only too happy to meet the militants for talks and convince them that their demand for a separate state of 'Khalistan' was 'unreasonable'.

He pointed out that Akali Dal leader Simranjit Singh Mann had not raised the Khalistan issue during their talks in Delhi last month. He hoped that Mr Mann would bring militants with him for the next round of talks.

When his attention was drawn to the Akali leader's latest pronouncement of 'Sampuran Azadi' for Sikhs, the Prime Minister said he wanted 'Azadi for all' and was absolutely against repression and tyranny.

The Prime Minister denied that the Army had been deployed in border districts of Punjab for maintaining law and order. Asserting that his Government was determined to ensure that the rule of law prevailed in the State, he said bullets were not answer to any problem.

Earlier, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of a medical college in sector 32 here.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said that "I have tried to solve the Punjab problem even though there was strong opposition inviting all for dialogue." We want to speak to all irrespective what they say. We can make our points and they can tell their views." He appealed to the people to work for creating an atmosphere of peace and normalcy. Our policy should not be hatred against hatred and anger against anger," he said. [quotation marks as published]

Mr Shekhar said that "we have invited all to discuss the Punjab problem. There were many hurdles and oppositions, even then we should try to solve this lingering problem."

He said that the Government was prepared to take any steps to curb the killings. Those who indulged in killing of innocent people were enemy of the country and we will fight such elements.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said that the country was passing through a difficult situation and facing number of problems and the need of the hour was to maintain peace and unity.

Referring to the Gulf war, Mr Chandra Shekhar said that the country has friendly relations with the Arab countries and efforts would be made to restore peace in the region.

The Prime Minister said that the impact of the war would definitely hit the country's economy and particularly those countries depending on the supply of oil.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said "we have sufficient oil stocks and there was nothing to be panicky."

Pakistan Bars Invitation to V.P. Singh

91AS0566A Madras THE HINDU in English
13 Jan 91 p 4

[Article by Kesava Menon]

[Text] Islamabad, 12 January: The Pakistan Foreign Office has barred writer politician Maulana Kausar Niazi from inviting the former Prime Minister, Mr V.P. Singh for the marriage of his son, the NATION reports. Citing reliable Foreign Office sources, NATION correspondent, Mr Nusrat Javed reported that Maulana Niazi had been politely told to refrain from inviting Mr Singh for the 24 January ceremony.

Maulana Niazi had visited India in connection with a religious conference in August last year. On that occasion he had met Mr Singh and claimed to have delivered to him a personal communique from the then caretaker Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi. Though the Foreign Office distanced itself from the Niazi mission, opposition leader, Ms Benazir Bhutto had referred to this alleged mission in her election campaign and cited it as proof that Mr Jatoi had sought to appease India.

The report suggests that Maulana Niazi had acted on behalf of a powerful lobby to which he belongs, which holds that Pakistan cannot achieve self-reliance unless it normalises relations with India. They however wanted to initiate this process of normalisation after attaining a position of strength—i.e., achieving the military/nuclear capability which the U.S. believes Pakistan to have achieved in March last year.

It was also suggested that this lobby has some support from the President, Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan. The stand taken by the Foreign Office on the invitation to Mr Singh is said to be indicative of the fact that equally powerful lobbies pursue parallel objectives in the foreign affairs of Pakistan.

The report noted the favourable impression Mr Singh had created for himself in the perception of the Pakistan Public. From the time he visited Pakistan as Finance Minister in 1985 he is said to have left a "profound impact" on bureaucratic circles with his capacity for on-the-spot decision making. More recently he was the object of public admiration for the stand he took on the Mandal and Babri Masjid issues.

Maulana Niazi has himself been reluctant to comment on this episode. Incidentally a relative of Mr Singh, Rana Chunder Singh, s Minister for Narcotics Control in Pakistan's Federal Cabinet.

Congress(I) Said Afraid of Shekhar's Success

91AS0533A Cochlin *THE WEEK in English*
20 Jan 91 pp 28-31

[Article by Rashmi Saksena: "A Candid Can-Do Spirit"]

[Text] Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar's self-imposed brief is apparent to all. The task he has set for himself for the moment is to contain, somehow, the explosive situations he has inherited from the V.P. Singh government. In his 60-odd days at the top, he has diligently been engaged in fire-fighting operations.

Chandra Shekhar obviously believes that this is the most prudent thing to do. Such was the mess the country was in that when he took on the job (more than willingly), there were few other takers for it. Political expediency had made Congress(I) president Rajiv Gandhi shy away from shouldering the responsibility of leading a nation that was in flames over the Mandal and the masjid issues. To make matters worse, prices were spiralling, coffers were empty, an economic crisis was looming large and insurgency in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam was showing no sign of abating.

Dependent on the Congress(I) for his very survival as Prime Minister, Chandra Shekhar had little choice but to devote himself full time to crisis management from the minute he assumed office. In a way, this has been a blessing in disguise. Not only has it kept him from stepping on many toes but it has provided him an opportunity to show that he is capable of getting things done despite the heavy odds. And he has been doing the fire-fighting with some aplomb.

But the stark reality is that little has been achieved on vital areas. In fact Chandra Shekhar has taken an initiative on matters of paramount importance like the economic policy, social policy and foreign policy. It is relevant to recall here that it was on some of these policies that he had launched a critical attack on V.P. Singh by expressing his reservations openly. In fact he did not care to hide his contempt for V.P. Singh and pilloried him for the way in which he dealt with the Mandal Commission report. Chandra Shekhar had no doubt that it was the wrong handling of the Mandal affair that had made emotions run so high. And he spared no opportunity to tear Singh's industrial policy to

bits, saying that it was loaded in favour of multinationals and disastrous for the nation.

Now as Prime Minister, Chandra Shekhar seems to be in no hurry to set these wrongs right. Instead, he has decided that decisions on these matters can wait, as he goes about sorting out other problems. It has already been announced that his industrial policy will come only in the next session of Parliament. The reservation policy, which requires a reappraisal according to him, has virtually been pushed into the back-burner. Instead of reframing the policy, he has decided to await the court verdict on the matter.

In spite of this, he has been successful in conveying the impression that he has taken positive steps to solve the pressing problems of Punjab and Assam and the mandir-masjid issue. This in itself is an achievement. And the credit for it has to go to him alone. He has adopted the strategy of not making claims or promises while taking steps that convey the feeling that something positive is happening. He has raised fresh hopes without promising anything. All that he has projected is that he is making sincere efforts to find a solution that will rid the nation of its agony and put it back on the road to peace and development. And his efforts do not give the impression of being impotent, though they may eventually achieve little.

However, it is no mean achievement that Chandra Shekhar has been able to start a dialogue where communication had completely broken down and confrontation of the worst kind had occurred. He has been able to get Simranjit Singh Mann to the negotiation table, just as he has persuaded the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the All India Babri Masjid Action Committee [AIBMAC] to talk to each other. In both cases, the talks may have run into rough weather, but they have not collapsed. In spite of adamant postures by each side, none has given up the opinion of thrashing out their differences through negotiations.

Pragmatic as ever, Chandra Shekhar sent out messages that he is willing to talk to any discontented person or faction and discuss their grievances. He has obviously been able to convince many that he is serious when he says that the bullet is not the answer to all problems. The important factor worth noting is that his invitation for talks has been accepted by the groups concerned, their hawkish postures notwithstanding. And in Assam, the banning of the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] is viewed as a positive step.

Yet, solutions to all these problems are far, far away. Chandra Shekhar himself does not claim that the steps he has taken are achievements. He realistically describes them as initiatives which may or may not yield the desired results. Talks with Mann have got bogged down because of Mann's demand for the right of self-determination for the people of Punjab. The VHP and AIBMAC have refused to accept each other's point of

view and documents. And in Assam, imposition of President's rule alone cannot wipe out insurgency.

Before he became Prime Minister, Chandra Shekhar had been pushing for elections in Punjab and Kashmir as the answer to the problems there. But now his government is yet to announce the elections. In fact, he is still to make even an initiative in Kashmir, where he has not been able to find someone who can bring the militants to the negotiation table. He had talked of amending the Constitution for a quick resolution of the tangle but this is next to impossible; for the Congress(I) does not fancy an amendment.

But the Prime Minister's initiatives have not gone waste. Even if they have not brought solutions any nearer, they have brought about a positive change in Chandra Shekhar's image. The steps he has taken have projected him as a tough administrator capable of hard decisions; as one who has the will to solve problems in a pragmatic manner. Since he came to power with a negative aura, with people expecting very little from him, whatever he does is looked upon as an achievement. Even his worst critics feel that their opinion of him needs a review.

Surely, Chandra Shekhar has grown in stature. Known earlier only as a carping critic and manipulative politician, he now commands attention as a man who may well turn out to be the sort of Prime Minister the country needs at the moment.

The fact that people did not expect anything of him has of course played in his favour. Even the ability that he has displayed in sustaining his government has surprised many people. When he became Prime Minister they all talked only about the number of days he would be able to survive before the Congress(I) pulled the rug under his feet. To everyone's amazement, he has gone about his work least bothered about that threat.

And all the discussion about the legitimacy of his prime ministership has been pushed to the background within just two months. This reflects a remarkable change in the attitude of the people, to whom what he is doing or showing the promise of doing is of prime concern. His actions have served to swell the circle of people who believe that Chandra Shekhar is not a man to be trifled with or taken for granted.

The gain of Chandra Shekhar has been solely at the cost of the Congress(I). With each day Congress(I) leaders are realising how difficult it is to take advantage of him or paint him as a man incapable of managing the country. Obviously, the initiative is slipping out of the Congress(I) hand. It is today jittery about the way he has been running the show and some sections in the party even accept that they had made a mistake in hoisting him to the top post. They have also cautioned Rajiv Gandhi of Chandra Shekhar's potential to steal a march over him in the political game. Though the Prime Minister himself talks of a sound relationship between himself and Rajiv, there are indications that Rajiv is a worried man today. It is in this context that Chandra

Shekhar's three-decade-long friendship with Maharashtra Chief Minister Sharad Pawar assumes a new significance. Pawar, who has accepted Chandra Shekhar as his political guru, is said to be busy tapping those Congressmen who see a new hope in Chandra Shekhar. That is why the Congress(I) chief realises that he has not much time at his disposal to score over Chandra Shekhar.

Worried about being marginalised and keen to see that its presence is felt, the Congress(I) tried to distance itself from the Chandra Shekhar government. The bid by the Congress(I) parliamentary party to retain its status of being the main opposition party has to be viewed in this light. And during the winter session the Congress(I) once again tried to assert its importance and highlight Chandra Shekhar's dependence on it by giving a notice for an adjournment motion on the communal situation. But it did not press for it. The move was indicative of the mood of the Congress(I). Even at the working committee meeting on January 8 senior leaders like Dinesh Singh and Madhavsingh Solanki advised their chief that it was time for the party to take its activities to the common man.

Chandra Shekhar, on the face of it, wants to carry everyone with him. This helps him buy time. It is for this that he has been responsive to the Congress(I) demands and wishes as far as possible. For instance, while going in for massive changes in the top bureaucratic posts, he has mostly brought in men who have been close to the Congress(I).

The bureaucracy is still to form a clear opinion of the new Prime Minister. According to a senior bureaucrat, they are hesitant to take an initiative or stance for fear that this government may not last long. They also have the grouse that those who got the plum postings have managed them purely on the strength of their connections. However, they are quick to point out that Chandra Shekhar is now being assessed as an administrator, not as a politician, and they feel that he is doing well. They also believe that he would have done better if he was not tied down by political constraints.

While Chandra Shekhar has subtly kept pressure on some state governments like Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, he has not allowed the Congress(I) to bring down Mulayam Singh Yadav in Uttar Pradesh. Not that he has gone out of his way to save the chief minister's neck but he is aware that Mulayam Singh has an important place in his scheme of things.

While achievements for himself have been substantial, Chandra Shekhar has done little for the common man bent by the rising prices. He also does not promise much on this, though there has been tough talk of austerity, no such measure has been announced by his government. But the IMF loan obtained by the government has found general acceptance in the business world and is seen as another feather in Chandra Shekhar's cap, though negotiations for it were almost finalised by the V.P. Singh

government. But there had been fears then that the loan would come with strings attached—devaluation of the rupee and removal of food and fertiliser subsidies. The new government has managed the loan without these conditions.

Even the fresh taxes levied by the new government have not invited harsh criticism. They were in fact justified as the need of the hour in view of the smaller collection of revenue this budget year and the increase in the deficit. Surprisingly among those hurt by the fresh taxes, expected to net Rs [rupees] 1,300 crore, are synthetic fibre manufacturers like the Prime Minister's friend Dhirubhai Ambani of the Reliance.

But, caught up in various diffusing situations, Chandra Shekhar has not found time for matters which seemed uppermost in his mind when he addressed the nation for the first time as Prime Minister. The children of the nation and their basic right for food, shelter, health and education have yet to engage his attention. Issues over which he was agitated during the V.P. Singh regime have also gone down on his priority list. He may not have actually come out with a solution to any problem but he has let the people feel that something positive is happening though this may not fetch him votes. However, he has got what he has sought—time.

Party Split Recognized, MPs Disqualified

91AS0537A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
12 Jan 91 p 1

[Excerpt] New Delhi, 11 Jan—Five members of Mr Chandra Shekhar's Council of Ministers, including two of Cabinet rank—the External Affairs Minister, Mr V.C. Shukla, and the Health Minister, Dr Shakeelur Rehman—are among the eight members of the Janata Dal(S) [JD] who have lost their membership of the Lok Sabha under the Anti-Defection Act.

The Speaker, Mr Rabi Ray, ordered their disqualification with 'immediate effect' tonight, the last day of the sixth session of the ninth Lok Sabha.

It took Mr Ray nearly half an hour to read his decision and the accompanying order in respect of petitions of disqualification of membership against 37 members of the ruling party moved by members of the original Janata Dal after the formation of the breakaway group as a new party.

The remaining 29 have received the 'benefit of doubt.'

The Speaker's order, heard in silence, leaves the strength of the JD(S) reduced to 54 members.

Besides the two Cabinet Ministers, the others to have lost their seat today are Mr Basavraj Patil, Minister of State for Steel and Mines, Mr Sarwar Hussain, Minister of State for Food and Civil Supplies, Mr Bhagey Govardhan, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, and Mr H.S. Banera, Dr Bengali Singh and Mr D. Amat.

Along with the support of the Congress(I) and its allies the Government is now operating with a strength of 266 members. This is less than half of the total strength of the House of 542, but, of course, the effective strength of the Lok Sabha is only 526.

That gives it breathing comfort, otherwise the Government would have been several short of what was required. The situation corresponds roughly with that of the Government of Indira Gandhi in 1969 which survived with the very thin Communist support, but for which it would have fallen.

The Speaker has given the benefit of the doubt to the 30 (effectively 29, as one, Mr Gurdial Singh Saini, subsequently resigned his seat for reasons unconnected with the anti-defection controversy) members against whom the JD had petitioned.

He appears to have followed the broad principle that those who figured in the list submitted to him by the JD(S) leader, Mr Chandra Shekhar, on 6 November last and showed consistency in their voting behaviour, i.e. they voted against Mr V.P. Singh when he sought a vote of confidence on 7 November, and later voted for Mr Chandra Shekhar when he sought his vote of confidence on 16 November, should not lose their membership of the House.

Mr Banera came a cropper under this consideration. His name did figure in Mr Chandra Shekhar's list, but he voted for Mr V.P. Singh on 7 November, and paid for it.

The 25 MPs [Members of Parliament], including Mr Chandra Shekhar, who had been expelled by the JD leader on 5 November and been declared as 'unattached' members on Mr Singh's prayer, have now been regarded by the Speaker as being integral to the 'split' that took place in the original JD within the meaning of the anti-defection legislation.

Split Recognised

Mr Ray today formally recognised the party split and announced that the faction of 54 members of the original JD would henceforth be treated as a new party in the original sense.

He also made it clear today that a 'split' must be a "one-time affair," i.e., all those moving away from a particular party must do so in one lot and on the same day, even if they constituted the required one-third of the parliamentary wing of the party. Movement in dribblets was not tenable.

This would serve as an important ruling in time. When the split in the JD was occurring last November, the leader of the nascent JD(S) had sought to argue that movement of members away from the original party could occur within the space of 30 days.

The Speaker informed the House today that the Delhi High Court had vacated its interim order of two days ago in which it had asked for maintaining of the status quo in

respect of all the MPs against whom disqualification proceedings were on. With this the tension between the judiciary and Parliament naturally ended, making it easier for the Speaker to make his decision.

The Court also ruled against the expulsion of the 25 JD MPs by Mr V.P. Singh. Thus, it became easy to see them as integral to the split along with those whose cases were being considered for disqualification.

K.K. Katyal reports:

PM's Stand

The Prime Minister [PM], Mr Chandra Shekhar, has ruled out the resignation of Ministers, including the two of Cabinet rank, who were disqualified today from Lok Sabha membership.

Reacting to the situation created by the Speaker's decision Mr Chandra Shekhar took the strictly technical line that they could continue as Ministers for six months (without being members of Parliament). The Prime Minister, however, refused to comment on the verdict.

Soon after the Lok Sabha adjourned, he was closetted with his close associates—Cabinet Ministers like Mr Yashwant Sinha, Mr Subramanjam Swamy, Mr Kamal Murarka and Mr S.P. Malaviya.

The ruling Janata Dal(S) will be exploring the possibility of challenging the disqualification in a Court of law. A hint to this effect was contained in Mr Swamy's comment that the party would take "appropriate action" after consulting legal opinion.

A Blow

Technicalities apart, today's verdict was a blow to the Government and the credibility of the ruling party even though the stability of the present dispensation would not be affected. The base of the ruling party, already narrow, has shrunk further. The disqualification is certain to cramp Mr V.C. Shukla's style in the conduct of foreign affairs. [passage omitted]

CPI-M Rebels Reportedly Seek To Unite

91AS0616A Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN
in English 6 Jan 91 p 1

[Text] Emboldened by the "spontaneous gathering of about 10,000 rebel Marxists at the November 30 meeting at Esplanade East, Calcutta, the leaders of different CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] dissident groups are now trying hard to consolidate the gain and unify about 18 Marxist factions under one political umbrella which may be called the "Marxist Forum." A secret document outlining the ideology, strategy and the need for forming the forum has been prepared and is being circulated among different rebel groups for a thorough study and discussion.

According to available indications, as a first step towards the formation of the forum, a coordination committee is likely to be set up within a month or two. If everything goes all right, according to informed sources, the Marxist Forum may come into existence soon.

The purpose of the forum is to unite the Marxists who have already dissociated themselves from the CPI(M) and also to accommodate those disgruntled CPI(M) activists who are yet to leave the party. Together, the dissidents hope that "we will be able to drive out the renegades from the party. We still believe in the official CPI(M) party programmes, but have no faith in the renegades who are deliberately not implementing them."

The dissident leaders are keen on forming a common political platform in view of the ensuing elections and "desires expressed by many CPI(M) members not to renew their membership." The renewal of party membership is now continuing and will go on until March. There were initially 16 dissident Marxist groups who participated in the rally at Esplanade East. But later two more such organisations joined them. These groups are from Calcutta, Howrah, Hooghly, Midnapore, Bankura, Purulia, South 24-Parganas and North 24-Parganas.

They include the Panihati Nagarik Committee, led by Mr Animesh Majumdar and Mr Dulal Chakrabarty, the Marxist Study Club led by Mr Dipankar Bose, the Nagarik Sanhati Committee led by Mr Sachin Sen, the Jagatddal Gramin Marxist Pathachakra led by Mr Saroj Pal, The Habra Bolshevik Forum led by Mr Rosomoy Mondal, the Barrackpore Nagarik Forum led by Mr Nepal Aich, the Khiddirpore-Taratola Hyde Road Trade Union led by Mr Sankar Karmakar and the Naihati Ganatantrik Nagarik Committee led by Mr Santosh Sarkar.

The secret document detailing the objective and nature of the Marxist Forum is now being carefully studied by the dissidents. It was prepared by the octogenarian former CPI(M) leader of the Jadavpur-Dhakuria-Tollygunge area, Mr Sachin Sen, who presided over the November 30 meeting. The 25-page cyclostyled document discussed at length the circumstances leading to the formation of the CPI(M), its programmes, the "deviation from the original revolutionary ideology" and the need for establishing the proposed forum.

The document states that despite having a revolutionary programme, the CPI(M) could not be built as a revolutionary party. In fact, the leadership is making no effort to build the party on revolutionary lines. The document alleged that CPI(M) leaders from top to bottom have deviated from the original party line tarnishing the image of great founders. The CPI(M) is now run by an "unprincipled, power crazy, bureaucratic leadership" which has created "red mafias" for remaining in the saddle, the document added.

The proposed forum, according to the document would ask the Marxist workers to strictly adhere to the Marxist-Leninist principles and its organizational rules. The

forum will have no relation with the Naxalites and SUCI [Socialist Unity Center of India] activists.

The document shows that the forum's structure will be built almost on the same lines as the CPI(M).

BJP Seen Antagonistic Toward Bengalis

91P40172A Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA
in Bengali 2 Feb 91 p 4

[Article by Sunit Ghosh: "BJP Will Never Establish an Outpost in West Bengal by Insulting Bengalis"]

[Excerpts] How a certain class of BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leaders look upon Bengalis can be surmised from the sarcasm used in the Lok Sabha's last session by Yashovanta Singh. In the special session concerning Assam held in the Lok Sabha on 10 January, this BJP legislator from Rajasthan made a most controversial remark, stating that, "Ali-Kuli Bengalis are responsible for all of the state's problems." Ali refers to Muslims. Kuli perhaps refers to the Bihari laborers working on tea estates. By using detestable sarcasm in relation to Assam's three ethnic communities, Yashovanta Singh is merely revealing his utter ignorance of Northeastern India's multifaceted social and political circumstances. By calling Bengalis Alis and Kulis, he is being extremely insulting. After making a careless or insulting remark in parliament, a legislator generally withdraws his remark or asks to be pardoned. In this case, legislators Santosh Mohan Deb and Foward Block's Chitto Basu expressed strong protest over this disgusting remark. A few of Janata Dal's experienced leaders expressed their regret over this communal remark. Yet the BJP parliamentarian did not pay any heed to this advice. As a result, the remark has been recorded in the Lok Sabha records as part of history.

In regard to Assam, discussions centered on the governor's reports regarding the imposition of the President's rule in the state in order to free the state from the forceful seizure by separatists. The president had received a report on 26 November (1990) that the ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam) had chosen the path of armed struggle in order to establish a homeland separate from India. [passage omitted]

BJP leaders have never wanted to understand the actual political situation in Assam's 'drive out the foreigners' campaign. On the contrary, they only consider the welfare and interests of Marwari businessmen by remaining silent on the anti-Bengali character of the ULFA movement. Yashovanta Singh acknowledges that he has been involved with AASU (All Assam Student Union) and AGP (Assam Gana Parishad) since the origin of the movements in the 80's. After this confession, his feigning ignorance of ULFA having grown strong under the AGP government's indulgence is a cop-out. And is it not a wonder how Assam's tea estates have fallen into the hands of Rajasthani owners? [passage omitted]

Aside from all this, Yashovanta Singh would not cease goading Assam's Bengalis in his speeches. He sees Bengalis as primarily responsible for Assam's problems. I do not know whether or not the BJP's party position would support Yashovanta Singh's statements or not. Even then, BJP leaders must come to understand that there are not divisions in the culture and society of the Bengalis in the Northeast region. Because of this outlook in regard to the Bengalis in Assam, it does not seem that it will be very easy for BJP to win over the hearts of the majority of Bengalis.

BJP Said Ready for Elections

Set To Launch Campaign

91AS0535A Madras FRONTLINE in English
2-15 Feb 91 pp 20-21

[Article by Pankaj Vohra: "BJP: On the Ready"; first paragraph is FRONTLINE introduction]

[Text] Even as Murli Manohar Joshi is replacing L.K. Advani as its president, the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] is galvanising itself to face the next round of general elections. And clearly, after a 2-month low-profile patch, the party is all set to launch another shrill and aggressive campaign.

If there is one political party on the national scene which is fully prepared to face mid-term elections today, it is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). It is so confident its leadership has already announced the party would go it alone and contest 500 seats.

Its top leaders recently toured 300 districts to mobilise public opinion in support of its policies and programmes. The remaining districts are also to be covered, after which the machinery will concentrate on the Assembly segment level. The visits by leaders include the trips of the outgoing president, L.K. Advani, to cover the length and breadth of India.

The BJP feels 1990 is an election year and wants to leave nothing to chance. Its political formulations may concretise at a 3-day plenary session in Jaipur from 1 to 3 February. The session is expected to yield new thinking in the form of economic, political and international resolutions. The report of an 11-member committee which has worked out a comprehensive plan for the party as well as a contingency plan for the elections may also be discussed.

Political observers feel the BJP, which rode on the Rama wave of popularity in the latter part of last year, will soon make its campaign shrill and aggressive. If the stand was low key during the last 2 months, it was not because of its love for the Chandra Shekhar Government at the Centre but largely due to its preoccupation with organisational elections and revamping. With the process having been completed and Dr Murli Manohar Joshi poised to take over as the new chief, the stage is set for the BJP to train its guns on its Number One enemy, Mulayam Singh

Yadav, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister. The first salvo was recently fired and the campaign will gain momentum.

According to the party think tank Gobind Acharya, the BJP does not consider the Chandra Shekhar Government to be a legitimate one with the mandate of the people. Therefore, any criticism by the party has to be of the Congress(I) which it feels is pulling the strings from behind the scenes. The BJP considers the Congress(I) its major adversary.

According to Acharya, the metamorphosis of the Indian democratic process has reached a stage where the negative vote era has ended and new political forces not controlled by the personality factor are being unleashed. An alternative political culture distinct from the Congress culture is emerging and the BJP's new found position is due to this factor. The BJP has increased its acceptability to such an extent that more and more persons are coming forward to contribute their talent and experience for its growth. A mechanism is being evolved to assimilate some of the ideas, Acharya said.

The BJP as a political force is also trying to project itself as a party which would look after the needs and aspirations of the people. It has decided to take to the streets to focus attention on rising prices and other issues. However, it is also determined not to give up its emphasis on the Rama card. The card, it is felt, has made the party cross many barriers and get nearer its objective of achieving its motto: "Justice for all, appeasement of none."

Advani has time and again repeated that nobody could question the nationalist credentials of the BJP and the entire leadership and the rank and file were prepared to expose the "pseudo secularists" who have been siding with the minorities not on issues but with a view to getting votes. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) on its part is also helping the BJP keep the Rama card aloft.

As a party, the BJP has made inroads into some of the southern States where its performance has been dismal in the past. It hopes to do well in parts of Karnataka and the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh. In the eastern sector the party feels its chances have considerably improved in Orissa and north Bengal. The leadership no longer feels it is far-fetched to extend its claim to try for an absolute majority in Parliament, where a government has been formed by a party with very few numbers. Its slogan during the next elections will revolve around its capacity to form a stable government and provide effective governance. The party's image in the last few months has been projected as "strong, firm clear-headed and nationalistic," the qualities which Advani exhibited at several stages. Therefore, despite claims to the contrary the outgoing chief's personality has really rubbed on to the organisation.

The BJP of late has also been talking about the presidential form of government at the Centre. Both Advani and Joshi have lent support to this idea. However, a section of the party leadership wants to convey the impression

that the talk about the presidential form was aimed at starting a national debate to focus attention on the need to revise the existing system which has been found wanting in many respects. The party feels the present system is responsible for regional imbalances, the growth of regional parties and the threat of separatism. These have to be rectified and the nation has to apply its mind to problems before they start getting worse.

But to those following the affairs of the party, the demand for a presidential system appears to be the result of a well-thought-out strategy based on the response received by Advani during his rath yatra. The leaders are obviously of the view that in case of a presidential content between Rajiv Gandhi, Advani, V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar, Advani may have a good chance. Secondly, in a presidential form of government, the BJP may find it easier to grab power rather than through the existing form of government.

The change of leadership, it is hoped, will give more time to Advani and other senior leaders such as Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Vijaya Raje Scindea to meet the people as the party's affairs would now be handled by Joshi. In parties such as the BJP, individuals play a marginal role in shaping policies, which are the result of a collective effort. But all the same it is expected that Joshi will play a pivotal role like his predecessor, Advani, who now as leader of the Opposition will continue to have a major say in the party's affairs.

The new BJP chief is a professor of physics at Allahabad University and he is expected to inject some scientific methods into its day-to-day functioning to give a new outlook to the conservatism prevalent within the organisation. He also represents a new class of BJP leaders who are strongly identified with universities and intellectuals, in sharp contrast to the party's traditional hold over the trading class.

The party's optimism to face the elections also seems to be because of the reluctance of other parties, particularly the Congress(I), to face the electorate. But once the election process is initiated, several latent and unanticipated factors will come into play. So the performance of the party may not be exactly as it is being projected now. But one thing is clear: the BJP will play a major role in shaping the destiny of the nation as and when elections are held. Its leaders realise this and have already secured a major advantage for the party by entering the fray before the others. They are therefore in a position to shout "Checkmate."

New Party President Interviewed

91AS0535B Madras FRONTLINE in English
2-15 Feb 91 pp 21-23

[Interview with Murli Manohar Joshi by N. K. Doval; date and place not given; first paragraph is FRONTLINE introduction published in italics]

[Text] Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, who will take over as the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] on 1 February at the party's plenary session in Jaipur, has been a harassed man ever since his unanimous election earlier this month was announced. Certainly he will have a tough time leading the party with a number of stalwarts in its ranks. His immediate task will be creating a mass base for himself, measuring nearer to those of his predecessors—L.K. Advani and Atal Behari Vajpayee. A physics professor of Allahabad University, Joshi was once described as a moderate like Vajpayee, but has of late acquired the label of being a Hindu hawk like Advani whom he assisted as a general secretary. After his election, Joshi has been touring various parts of the country. His arrival in Delhi on Republic Day after a 4-day tour of Kerala was 5 hours behind schedule as his train ran late. During his 8-hour stay in the capital, before leaving for Allahabad, he snatched some time to talk to N.K. Doval. In the ante-room on the sixth floor of Deendayal Upadhyaya Sodh Sansthan in the crowded Jhandewalan locality, neatly furnished and decorated with portraits of Guru Golwalkar and Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, two personalities who had considerable influence on Joshi, he spoke about the tasks that will require his special attention. Excerpts:

FRONTLINE: How do you view your election at this crucial juncture, particularly when L.K. Advani has revived the old Congress(I) proposal of having a presidential form of government? He had stoutly opposed this proposal when it was first mooted. Moreover, A.B. Vajpayee has suggested a national government. How do you react to these views coming from two senior party leaders?

Dr Murli Manohar Joshi: Our party constitution says no person should be the president of the party for more than two consecutive terms. And in fact this tradition started with Mr Vajpayee. He was perhaps at the peak of his popularity when he declined to continue for a third term. And the same tradition was followed by Mr Advani. So it is only in keeping with the party's commitment to its constitution that I have been elected. (Joshi does not want to read more into his elevation). While talking of the presidential form of government and a national government, both Mr Advani and Mr Vajpayee are echoing the fundamental necessity of today's Indian political scene. There has to be some semblance of a government. There are two alternatives. One is within the system and the other says that the system itself needs a change. So, if it is to be within the system, Mr Vajpayee has given an alternative which can provide some sort of a mechanism to talk the country out of the present crisis. Mr Advani's idea is that the system itself is not strong enough; it is perhaps infirm in itself. I personally feel the presidential system should be given a chance.

[Question] By raising the demand for a presidential form of government at this stage, what is the BJP aiming at?

[Answer] We are not viewing it from a narrow political angle of electoral gains. It is being viewed in the larger context of the interest of the country. Today we have a

government in which the prime minister does not command enough strength in Parliament even to muster a quorum of the House. He does not have 55 members... And even for running the House he needs the support of some other party. Can such a government really be effective?

With this type of weakness even a person like Mr Chandra Shekhar has not been able to perform the way the prime minister of this country is expected to. If the presidential system was in vogue, this situation would not have arisen. Now every time he has to make some compromise. He had to support Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav in Uttar Pradesh. The strange situation of the Congress(I) vacillating on the issue would not have arisen. Such ridiculous situations are not good for the country.

[Question] With three senior leaders, Vajpayee, Advani and Vajaya Raje Scindia, in the ranks, will you not find any difficulty in functioning as president and having your way?

[Answer] There is nothing like having one's own way in the BJP. It is the total group that functions. It is cooperative functioning and one has to go by the consensus. Even now Mr Advani is not having his own way. What he has been carrying out were the decisions of the party. I won't find any difficulty. All these senior leaders have supported me in my election as president. I have been elected unanimously and will seek their cooperation.

[Question] It has been noticed that the BJP campaign against the Chandra Shekhar Government is not as shrill as it was against the V.P. Singh Government during its last days. Is there any tacit understanding with Chandra Shekhar or is the low profile being maintained a political manoeuvre?

[Answer] We have been demanding the dissolution of Parliament and fresh elections. What more strident note do you expect from us? Many of our State and district units are organising dharnas and agitations against price rise. Most of the criticisms come up during Parliament sessions. There has been no session, so there has been no policy debate. Let the session start and you will find that the policy debate goes on. And perhaps you would have noticed that except when Mr Chandra Shekhar convened a meeting on the Gulf crisis, we have been very vocal in opposing some of his stances, particularly on the (Simranjit Singh) Mann issue. We have opposed his policy on Punjab, and also Kashmir, strongly. In the last days (of V.P. Singh as prime minister) the trouble arose because of the confrontation he invited.

[Question] You are the first teacher to lead the party. Does it mean that there will be the induction of more academic inputs?

[Answer] We already have a large number of people from the academic side. There is Mr Vishnukant Shastri, who is a professor of Hindi in Calcutta University. Then

there is Dr Vijay Kumar Malhotra as secretary. In the states we have a large number of teachers and lawyers who have been providing academic inputs.

[Question] What is your party's stand on the Gulf war?

[Answer] We have been saying that we want peace in West Asia and stressing a solution of the outstanding problems of the region. But they are interlinked. Mr Saddam Husayn should withdraw from Kuwait immediately and simultaneously the international community should convene a meeting to discuss the Palestinian and other West Asian problems. Both these should be done simultaneously and India must ensure the safety of the eight lakh Indian citizens in the Gulf. And finally we would like to see that our oil interest are also protected.

[Question] Do you find the present government's stand justified and in keeping with the traditional foreign policy?

[Answer] The present government has been saying almost what I have said. However, Mr Rajiv Gandhi and the CPI(M) want all-out support for Mr Saddam Husayn. I think this cannot be done unless Mr Saddam Husayn vacates Kuwait. India should not take sides on this issue. As a non-aligned nation we should try to initiate concrete measures for peace. By openly siding with one we would lose the leverage with the other. We have to be very careful. We cannot be oblivious of the situation.

[Question] Some people have described you as a Hindu hawk. What do you say in this connection?

[Answer] Some time back I was described as a liberal following Mr Vajpayee. Now suddenly I have become a Hindu hawk. My main objection is that a Hindu is never a hawk. He cannot be. A Hindu is always a dove.

[Question] Is the BJP a communal party as is being alleged by its major political adversaries? What would you like to say to clarify your party's position and do as the party president to earn it a secular image?

[Answer] If people call us Hindu, then Hindu and secular are synonymous. Hindu cannot be communal. Hindu has never been communal. I would like to emphasise that Hinduism is not a religion, nor are Hindus a community. Hinduism is a geo-cultural concept, which is an attitude of life. I consider that all citizens of this country are Hindus. Some of them are Christian Hindus, some Muslim Hindus. Others are Shaiva Hindus, Jain Hindus, Bodh Hindus, Sanatani Hindus, Aryasamaji Hindus.... I feel that if this concept is properly explained, much of the confusion and confrontation would end. The basic mistake has been and continues to be that Hinduism is equated with a narrow sect of a religion. Neither is it a way of worship. It is an attitude of life, which is pluralistic. I would say that Hinduism is the world's best experience in spiritual coexistence.

[Question] You had been saying that the secularism practised by other political parties, including the Congress(I) and the Left parties, is pseudo-secularism. What do you mean by it and how would you define your idea of "positive secularism"?

[Answer] My idea of positive secularism is very simple. I describe it in one line—that is, "justice to all and appeasement of none." In positive secularism, the state does not discriminate against or favour this or that community. But the secularism practised in the country for the last 43 years has been a euphemism for "minorityism" or the appeasement of the minorities. For example, in the Shah Bano case the Supreme Court judgment was negated by an amendment to the law. What did Mr Rajiv Gandhi do during the Mizoram Assembly elections? The Congress(I) manifesto explicitly said that if the Congress came to power, textbooks would be written in accordance with the Bible. Is it secularism? The Left Front Government (of Kerala) carved out a district, Mallapuram, because it was a Muslim-majority area. Would you call this secularism? This is the basic question I would like to ask those who describe the BJP as a communal party. Temples are desecrated and destroyed and nobody points out this and objects to this. When 50,000 Pundit families are driven out of Kashmir, not a single drop of tear is shed by Mr V.P. Singh, Mr Rajiv Gandhi and Mr Chandra Shekhar. Nobody goes even to console them. About 2.5 lakh Hindus becoming refugees in Hindustan—this is tragic. The general impression among the masses is that anything concerning Hindus should not be recommended or attended to. And anything which concerns the minorities must be attended to. Attending to the minorities and appeasing them has become the sole objective of the secularism of the government. Our record of positive secularism is there in the states where the BJP is in power.

[Question] Will the BJP continue with its efforts at creating awareness about Hinduism even after having witnessed the violent aftermath of Advani's rath yatra?

[Answer] The recent communal frenzy was not the result of the rath yatra; it was the result of the provocative speeches of leaders such as V.P. Singh and Mulayam Singh and the Left leaders. We will go on stressing the true and correct nature of Hinduism and impress upon the people that Hinduism is a geo-cultural concept. I will give you an example. The name Indonesia is of a country which has the largest Muslim population. What is the meaning of Indonesia? Indo plus Nesia—islands of India (Hindu Dweep). If Indonesia with such a large Muslim population can retain its name, then equating Hinduism with narrow concepts is either ignorance or deliberate mischief. We will go on emphasising the real identity of India's cultural texture.

[Question] Do you maintain that this awareness about Hinduism will help national integration and also the BJP improve its electoral prospects?

[Answer] These are two different aspects. National integration will certainly result from the propagation of Hindu ideals. This country has always been integrated by Hindu symbolism. Say, in 1857, the symbols were lotus and bread. Lotus is the symbol of Hindu spiritualism. It is the Bhagvad Gita which has inspired most of our revolutionaries. The Hindu symbols have been the fountainhead of sacrifice for national unity and integration. Therefore, any emphasis on Hinduism is essentially an emphasis on India's unity. In this context I would like to quote Annie Besant who said that if you remove Hinduism, India will lose the reason for its existence.

[Question] What is Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's "integral humanism" on which you have written an explanatory note and how do you propose using it in the present socio-political environment for the unity and integrity of the country?

[Answer] Integral humanism is a philosophy which believes that one should have a holistic approach. Every problem should be taken in its totality. Life cannot be compartmentalised. It has to be taken as a whole. This philosophy believes in non-exploitative socialism and economic order. It advocates adoption of development technologies which help maintain the symbiotic relationship between man and nature. Integral humanism also does not believe in narrow sectarian approach. It believes that problems can be solved at a global level. No nation can solve all its problems alone. Thus it believes in global cooperation and that various spiritual experiences of different nations could coexist because nations are not warring factions. They are manifestations of one great cosmic reality and, therefore, they are there to serve each other.

[Question] Don't you think that with the flak the BJP has invited in the wake of the heightening mandir-masjid controversy you will have to make special efforts to reassure the minorities about the secular credentials of the BJP?

[Answer] I think a situation has come where other parties have to prove their secular credentials. The BJP may not need to do so. They (its credentials) are well proven. Thousands of Muslims joined Mr Advani's rath yatra and thousands of them joined the kar seva and courted arrest. It was the provocative speeches of leaders of other parties that triggered off violence. Thus now it is the turn of these parties to prove their secular credentials.

[Question] How do you view the BJP's prospects in the next elections?

[Answer] I would say that the BJP's prospects in the next elections...they can be anything. I am very optimistic.

[Question] How long do you think the Chandra Shekhar Government is going to last? There are some political observers who feel that with the Gulf war the present government has got a new lease of life.

[Answer] I think there is a wide gulf between the Congress and the people and there is a war between Mr Sharad Pawar and Mr Rajiv Gandhi. This gulf and this war will determine the fate of the Chandra Shekhar Government, and not the Gulf war.

Akali Dal Factions To Unite

91AS0565A Madras THE HINDU in English
13 Jan 91 p 1

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] Chandigarh, 12 January: A historic gathering here of the top Akali leadership, representing the three Dals earlier headed by Mr Prakash Singh Badal, Mr Kabul Singh and Mr Simranjit Singh Mann, today decided to become a single Akali Dal under the leadership of Mr Mann. It will be known as Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD).

Self-determination: "Now our aim is one, the right of self-determination for the Sikhs," Mr Mann said.

The decision on the actual date and manner of dissolution of the Badal and Longowal Akali Dals or their merger with the Mann group was left to Mr Mann.

Mr Mann, who did the press briefing on behalf of all, was accompanied at the press conference by Mr Badal, Mr G.S. Tohra, Mr Sukhjinder Singh, Mr Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Mr S.S. Dhinsa, Mr Tota Singh, Mr Kabul Singh, Mr Sucha Singh Chhotepur and Mr Charanjit Singh Walia.

Mr Mann said that henceforth no Akali Dal would be known after any individual or his initials. He had been authorised to reconstitute the SAD when he deemed it fit. No bargaining had taken place for this. Nor had he promised any position to anyone in the reconstituted set-up.

The new aim of self-determination signifies that the old objective of achievement of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution had been thrown overboard. Henceforth no one would be known as a hardliner or a softliner in Akali politics.

Talks with PM to go on: Mr Mann said he had been given full authority for continuing talks with the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar.

The meeting underlined the Sikh opposition to "military occupation of Punjab" and decided to give a "befitting reply" to it by holding a huge rally at Ludhiana on 26 January.

Mr Mann said thousands of Sikhs were in illegal confinement in violation of Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution. Unless this repression and oppression was ended, the second stage of talks could not succeed.

He demanded "restoration of the Constitution and rule of law."

Mr Badal, elaborating the points made by Mr Mann, said the office-bearers of his and Mr Kabul Singh's Akali Dals ceased to exist from today. Mr Mann would announce the actual dissolution of their outfits.

He added in a lighter vein: "Just as we have united, the parties at the Centre should unite to solve the Punjab problem."

Commerce Minister Said 'Easy Target' of Media

91AS0587C Calcutta SUNDAY in English
26 Jan 91 pp 8-9

[Article by Vinod Mehta: "Shooting His Mouth Off"; italicizes words as published]

[Text] "He is bright, intelligent, has sound economic views, is moderately honest and has a sharp political mind, but he has one overwhelming defect. He is a megalomaniac." The speaker was a leading national politician with a taste for headlines himself, and we were discussing the life and halycon times of Subramaniam Swamy. The Lok Sabha was in uproar over an alleged insult, an apology had been extracted by the Opposition from the Prime Minister himself, but even before the dust could settle, Dr S had landed himself in yet another controversy, courtesy an interview with a British paper. Between the time of writing this column and its publication (approximately nine days), the commerce and law minister could conceivably repeat the performance. With him everything is possible.

Subramaniam Swamy is easy, too easy, a target to attack. A cursory reading of his political bio-data alone would keep adversaries adequately supplied in gunpowder and embarrassing quotes. As if that was not enough, the obliging ex-Harvard professor makes weekly announcement that make shooting at him at once irresistible and hugely enjoyable. Quite simply, there is an embarrassment of riches for the former professor's critics, and most of them are supplied by the professor himself.

If there was no Subramaniam Swamy, we would have to invent him. Party politics in India is a dull and dreary business, captured by colourless men with names like R.K. Dhawan, Sitaram Kesri, Arun Nehru and E.M.S. Namboodiripad. Caution and stealth are the gods these gentlemen worship. The invisible, tired *apparatchiks* work in closed rooms and private conclaves. Dr Swamy's theatre of activity is the public arena: press conferences, leaks, plants, interviews. If R.K. Dhawan's watchword is discretion, Swamy's is indiscretion. However, to see the present law minister as a variation of K.K. Tewari is both facile and erroneous. Swamy deals in libel suits, documents (both genuine and counterfeit), appeals to the Press Council, bank receipts, telephone transcripts, sensational disclosures: "Tewari's currency was just personal abuse. One is a serious politician with a compelling sense of destiny, the other is a small-town operator surviving on patronage.

How has a man who is "hated" (I use the word advisedly) by his colleagues in Parliament and the electorate at large survived so long in public life? Oddly, despite periodic reverses in fortune he has always managed to land on his feet. There is invariably some group in urgent need of his services and contracts spread across three continents. Khashoggi, Michael Hershman, Swiss lawyers are only a telephone call away. Dr Swamy has not yet achieved his self-confessed ambition of leading a government, but then three months ago who would have thought he would be a senior Cabinet minister early this year?

Because Subramaniam Swamy is universally reviled, people prefer to ignore his special talents. First and foremost, he is prodigiously hardworking. Once committed to a cause, his enthusiasm and energy are boundless. In the latter part of 1990 when the Chandra Shekhar camp was conspiring the demise of the V.P. Singh government, a fellow-conspirator told me. "We would be planning, discussing strategies, holding meetings with potential defectors until 2 am. At 6 am, freshly shaved and bathed, he would be back in my room bursting with new ideas.

His second gift is plotting. There is no one in Indian politics today who can match Dr Swamy's skill in plotting individual or organisational downfall. It is a negative skill but indispensable to a party living on the slenderest of margins. And he always takes on men bigger than himself. From Atal Behari Vajpayee to V.P. Singh, he positively relishes going for those whose reputation appears untainted. When Swamy took on Ramakrishna Hegde, most of the thinking public dismissed the exercise with contempt. Yet, in two years, the former chief minister of Karnataka's image has taken a severe knocking largely due to the exertions of Subramaniam Swamy. Not only did he collect vast amounts of material for the Kuldeep Singh Commission, but in the telephone-tapping affair he nailed Hegde through clever subterfuge. He managed to turn a routine central government enquiry into the practices and procedures of the Post and Telegraph department into an examination of how, and on whose instructions, telephones were tapped in the state of Karnataka. I don't know how good a friend Dr Swamy makes, but as an enemy he is deadly.

Finally, he has the rare capacity of winning select friends and influencing them. Once he attaches himself to a cause, he quickly convinces other devotees that he is crucial to its success. In 1983, Dr Swamy was a bitter foe of Chandra Shekhar, calling the Old Turk the choicest of names (a perusal of the press clippings of that period makes delightful reading); by 1990 he had become Chandra Shekhar's closest ally as the two set about sowing the seeds of destruction in V.P. Singh's fragile regime. And in this campaign of destabilisation, Swamy was both corporal (he did the dirty work) and general (he led the troops into battle just behind the commander-in-chief).

When Subramaniam Swamy claims the "lion's share" in bringing Rajiv Gandhi and Chandra Shekhar together, it

is not an empty boast. Just as he won over his present leader, Swamy managed to convince Rajiv that Congress interests were safe only in his hands. Through the months of October and November, the party president met Swamy on an almost daily basis, and when the split in the Janata Dal seemed imminent with the emergence of a Chandra Shekhar-led government supported from the outside by the Congress becoming a distinct possibility, the terms of that support and how it was to be obtained was left to Swamy.

That Subramaniam Swamy is slightly unscrupulous is the worst kept secret in India. He is not the sort of politician to waste time on norms or rules of convention. He has even less time for those who preach that means are more important than ends. Nevertheless, while he is refreshingly free from pious cant about honesty and integrity in public life, Indian polity cannot accommodate more than a couple of Subramaniam Swamys. Politics may be a dirty game but it cannot become a free-for-all.

The law minister's megalomania is a much more interesting subject for speculation. Dr Swamy is not the first backbench MP to nurse prime ministerial ambitions. What distinguishes him from other over-achievers is that he genuinely believes he is the best man for the job. Since the overwhelming majority of the electorate does not share that conviction, Swamy is given to bouts of frustration and recklessness, in which mood he is untamable.

In the past, it was Swamy's fast and furious tongue that usually got him into trouble. For instance, his threat to the Speaker was totally unnecessary. If Rabi Ray had to be pressured, the law minister could surely have communicated the threat more subtly. As an Opposition politician he got away with speaking first and thinking later: now that he is a minister, the procedure needs to be reversed.

Rash garrulousness is also the result of long years in the wilderness. How does a politician who operates from the margins attract public attention? Through the press, of course. But since he was a "loner," Swamy had to provide reporters with some dope to sustain their interest. For the past decade, the sizzling copy he makes has been Dr Swamy's appeal for the press. Alas, even a man of Dr Subramaniam Swamy's contacts cannot distribute sensational disclosures week after week. As a result, he was forced to exaggerate the worth of the material he possessed and overstate whatever case he was making.

Will ministerial responsibility make Dr Swamy more circumspect? I doubt it. The professor cannot at this stage of his life change his ways. The last thing the struggling Janata Dal (S) government needs is gratuitous uproar in and outside Parliament, but no political party or leader has yet found a method to button the Swamy

lip. Mr Chandra Shekhar cannot easily discard a colleague who helped to make him Prime Minister, especially one whose wrath is deadly. So, whether we like it or not, Subramaniam Swamy is going to be with us for as long as this government lasts. We have to learn to live with him and I suppose we could learn how. But can he learn to live with us?

Council Reports Economic Downturn

91AS0555A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 18 Jan 91 p 14

[Text] New Delhi, 17 January (PTI)—The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has expressed serious concern over "certain unexpected developments" detrimental to the growth prospects of the economy in the current fiscal year.

Reviewing the second quarter (July-September) performance of the economy in its journal MARGIN, the council said the Indian economy came under the shadow of certain "unexpected developments" like political instability at home and tension in the Gulf region abroad.

It said the pressure on government finances kept mounting as the growth in revenue fell short of expectations, while there was also a marked slowdown in the rate of export growth with the level of foreign exchange reserves persistently declining. The council observed that "the bright prospects of agricultural production and the satisfactory growth in industrial output, however, provided a semblance of relief at least in the short run."

On the price front, the council said there has been a slowdown in rise in wholesale prices during the quarter under review. But, in contrast to manufactured goods last year, primary goods contributed the most towards the price rise this year.

It said so far during the current year, there has been a noticeable deceleration in the expansion of money supply due to not only a restriction in net bank credit to the government but also due to a much-smaller-than-last year's rise in credit to commercial sector.

The council said the accent of credit policy for the first half of the current fiscal year was on restrained expansion of bank credit. The council hoped that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) would not curtail credit for productive purposes in its "zeal to prevent over expansion of credit."

On revenue collections, it said the receipt of revenue in the first half of the year was only 6.5 percent higher than last year's, as against the budget expansion of an 8.8 rise and the 14.6 percent rise in the first half of 1989-90.

While commenting on the presentation of an analysis of the budget deficit by the finance minister during the period under review, the council said the point that

missed was that the marginal check in the overall magnitude of the deficit had resulted from the generation of a sizable surplus in the capital account.

Stating that a rise in capital surplus would no doubt bring down the magnitude of the overall deficit, the council said what is really needed is "a progressive reduction in the revenue deficit."

The council was also critical of the method of curbs imposed on petrol consumption in the wake of Gulf crisis, saying this might well give rise to certain malpractices and distortions in the pattern of consumption. More importantly, it said, it would be detrimental to the country's growing transport sector and thus slow down the growth of the economy.

On agriculture, the council said the downward revision of the 1989-90 foodgrain production to the near 1988-89 level at 170.7 million tonnes should be regarded as "a damper" because it was primarily the expected rise in the 1989-90 grain production which led to the fixation of the 176.5 million tonne target for the current year.

Depreciating the agricultural pricing policy announced during the quarter under review, the council remarked that the provision for support prices which would now be based on the higher of the two-actual or the statutory minimum wage is likely to hit the interest of small farmers. This is because they have little or no surplus production for sale in the market.

It said this aspect of the policy was also disfavoured by the expert committee headed by Dr C.H. Hanumantha Rao because it could encourage a disproportionate rise in statutory wages, leading to a cost-wage price spiral, particularly in cereals.

It said the bulk of price rise this year has been caused by the rise in the prices of primary products, notably cereals.

On industrial growth, the council said the average index of industrial production registered an increase of 11.7 percent in the first half of 1990-91 as against the 4.3 percent growth in the corresponding period of 1989-90. But, growth in the second half of the year would be much lower than the first half, it said.

This is mainly because the aggregate growth of infrastructure industries accounting for 28.8 percent of industrial production slackened during the quarter under review, affecting production of coal, crude petroleum, petroleum refinery products and electricity.

On power generation, the council said to achieve the target of 271 million units set for 1990-91 a 16.6 percent growth rate would be required during the remaining 6 months of the year. But, the demand for electricity is likely to grow at a higher-than expected rate because the cut on diesel supply imposed recently would induce industrial units using diesel generation to shift to electricity.

The council said the upward pressure on cement prices continued even during the monsoon period, which is considered to be a slack season, on account of the erratic supplies and persistent demand.

On petroleum, it said in the first 6 months of the current year, the total production of crude petroleum was 16.58 million tonnes, as against 16.89 million tonnes in the corresponding period of 1989-90, showing a decline of 1.8 percent.

The slippage was largely ascribed to the disturbances in Assam, against pumping of crude outside the state, which caused a loss of about 2 lakh tonnes in crude oil production and about 2.1 lakh tonnes in pumping to the refineries.

According to the council, the demand for petroleum products for the fiscal year has been estimated at 58.87 million tonnes. While the domestic production of crude oil is likely to be of the order of 31.61 million tonnes, the gap of about 27.3 million tonnes of crude and petroleum products would have to be imported, which would cost 11,000 crore, in foreign exchange, assuming that the global prices do not go beyond \$28 a barrel.

The council said in the short-run while controls for bringing about a reduction in the consumption of petroleum products are being considered, a realistic pricing of petro-products would be "a better alternative."

It said the 15 percent rise in the prices of petroleum products in the last budget, after a 3 year period during which the general price index increased by about 24 percent, was obviously inadequate, considering the crucial position they occupy in our economy.

States Ignore Center's Advice on Polls

91AS0553A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 11 Feb 91 p 7

[Text] Three states—Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala—have refused to abide by the Union government's advice to postpone local bodies' elections beyond March in spite of several written and verbal requests.

Official sources said here today that the three states had written back expressing their inability to comply with the Centre's advice on the ground that further postponing of elections to local bodies would create "avoidable" problems for the governments concerned and belie the hopes and aspirations of the people.

The Centre had written to all states and Union territories to postpone local-level elections beyond March to ensure the "smooth and orderly" conduct of what is being billed as the world's biggest administrative exercise—the 1991 Indian census scheduled to be held between 9 and 28 February with a revisional round up to 5 March.

The sources said all other states and Union territories where such elections were due had written back giving their consent to the Centre's request.

The sources said Madhya Pradesh was going ahead with the panchayat-level election and the Kerala chief minister, Mr E.K. Nayanar, had announced the state government's decision to go ahead with the district council elections in the state assembly itself.

However, elections in these two states were slated to be completed before the actual commencement of the census but the maximum damage would be inflicted in Maharashtra where the state government was going ahead with municipal election in five major cities—Bombay, Nagpur, Aurangabad, Nashik and Pune—during the census period itself on 17 February.

The sources, who described the state government's move as a direct clash with the census operations said it would definitely affect the accuracy of the data in a serious way as the field agency for both the exercise—census and elections—was one and the same.

The holding of panchayat and district council elections in Madhya Pradesh and Kerala during January would adversely affect the training of the personnel.

They said the last and final round of training of census personnel, considered to be most crucial, was going on all over the country and any "obstacles" at this stage would affect the quality of training and ultimately the end result of the whole exercise.

The sources said ultimately it would be the states which would suffer because 80 percent of the data collected during the census operations was to be utilised by the states and a district census handbook was proposed to be brought out this time to serve the purpose of a ready reckoner for local authorities.

IRAN

Gulf War Will Have No Winners

91AS0591A Tehran RESALAT in Persian
3 Feb 91 pp 1, 15

[Commentary by Ahmad Tavakkoli: "There Will Be No Winners in Gulf War"]

[Text] Whether the end of the war is political or military, neither the United States and its Western allies nor the Ba'thist government of Iraq will win.

The political end of the war means that Saddam will give up all or some of his expansionist demands, which will mean his political defeat. The United States and its Western allies will not be winners in this case, because giving any sort of political concessions or returning to political solutions after so many promises to destroy Iraq in a few days will be meaningless.

Also, although ending the war by driving Iraq out of Kuwait will be considered the military defeat of Iraq, it will bring no glorious victory to the U.S., French, British and other armies, armies that gain victory over a

regional army by using the most advanced ground, air and sea weapons after suffering many casualties and in a time period so much longer than they anticipated. But the Persian Gulf conspiracy, which began with the stupidity of Saddam and continued with the ferociousness of the oppressive domination of the West, so far in addition to the bitter and unpleasant result of the killing of innocent civilians and wasting huge sources of Muslim wealth, has had other consequences. Scrutiny of these results shows the true failure of the United States and all the fronts of the infidels, including the Ba'thist infidels, no matter what the outcome of the war.

1. After the victory of the Islamic revolution, along with the increasing growth of pure Mohammadan Islam among the Muslim masses of the world, the government of Saudi Arabia, claiming to be an Islamic government which officially declared propagation of Islam as its duty, spending huge amounts of money, engaged in spreading distorted Islam. Because of pretending to submit to the principles of such an Islam, which propagated separation from politics, it deceived many Muslim people in the world. This event removed the mask from the face of the irreligious and hypocritical Saudi family rulers. In a word, while American Islam and capitalist Islam on the international scene was known to the alert people of our country and a group of revolutionary Muslims, it is now known to almost all Muslims. This valuable result is a deadly blow on the cultural conspiracies of the United States in fighting authentic Islam.

2. The government of Iraq created many obstacles in the course of implementing Resolution 598 and was not prepared to accept the 1975 Algerian treaty. But the invasion of Kuwait prepared the grounds for his submission to the rightful positions of the Islamic Republic, and, finally, Saddam gave up all the claims for which he was engaged in committing crimes. This was the fruit of the huge tree of the Islamic resistance of our country that bore fruit in this incident by the will of God (It brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord) [Koranic verse].

3. To confront the growth of authentic Islam, all the Western media were busy in the news and political war distorting the eight-year resistance of the Iranian people. They covered up the crimes of Saddam against the two nations of Iran and Iraq. This conspiracy caused the Western media to confess directly or indirectly that the Iranian people and the Islamic revolution were right and to disavow all that they had fabricated.

4. Although the expenses for the war are provided from the pockets of the Muslim people, the uncertainty due to the war and the increase in the taxes of the producers and consumers of the industrial countries to make up the remainder of the expenditures of the war have already had a negative impact on the economy of the countries making up the multinational forces and have brought about a relative recession, especially in the United States.

Despite the initiatives of the International Energy Agency to use the strategic reserves and impose conservation, the price of oil is higher than it was prior to Mordad [23 July-22 August]. The duration of the war will reduce the effectiveness of the initiatives of the above-mentioned agency, and it is anticipated that the recession in the West will increase along with the price of oil.

5. The United States and the West initially threatened Iraq with a military attack and openly announced that within one week the Iraqi military machine would be rendered ineffectual. The failure of the multinational forces to achieve such a goal and their apparent fear of engaging in a ground war defuses the false awesomeness of the Western militaristic power, and although it is projected and also officially accepted by the Westerners, the continuation of the war will bring heavy casualties on the invaders and weaken the domination of global oppressors, despite all this pomp in facing the regional powers. This issue will in the long term facilitate the appearance of regional centers and will increase the threat to the U.S. defense system. The result will be the strengthening of the revolutionary and independence-seeking spirit among the nations.

6. The barbarism of the Western forces, the criminal bombing of the residential areas of Iraq and the killing of the defenseless people, all of which is due to their weakness in confronting the military in Iraq, will strengthen the anti-American spirit among the Muslim masses and increase the lack of dignity on the part of the Americans among the free people of the world. The role of the presence of the Americans in Saudi Arabia and their corruption and prostitution have from the beginning brought about the hatred of the Muslim people. This issue, along with the simultaneous efforts of the United States to equip Israel financially and militarily as well as the invasion of Israel on Southern Lebanon, will bring forth problems for the imperialistic and Zionist policies in the future.

Among them, the possibility of the permanent presence of some of the multinational forces in Saudi Arabia or Kuwait and the possibility of the alienated Arab governments coming closer to the Zionist regime will decrease.

7. The eight-hour occupation of Kuwait without any military or popular resistance and the present weakness and fear of the multinational forces to engage in a ground war with Iraq shows the bravery of a people who, with a small number of people and only a few guns, put up resistance in Khorramshahr for one month against the Iraqi Army, which was armed to the teeth, and made that organized army, which was supported by all the present Western aggressors, so regret its invasion that it rapidly abandoned its desire to occupy Iran in three days.

Now the truth of the victory of "blood" over the "sword" has been proven to the world.

8. No matter how the war ends, it does not appear that the government of Kuwait and the other sheikdoms,

from the Emirates to Arabia, will be able to preserve their autocratic tribal domination. Even in Iraq, the grounds for the appearance of a popular government and the defeat of the criminal domination of the Ba'athists will be prepared. This result will also create a more open environment for the growth of the revolutionary forces and the Muslim people.

It is not for no reason that the leader of the Muslim people of the world, Ayatollah Khamene'i, said last week: "The people of Iraq will remain alive as long as it turns to Islam, and it will not be destroyed."

NEPAL

Thapa Faction Said Growing More Powerful

91AS0593E Kathmandu *THE MOTHERLAND*
in English 24 Jan 91 pp 1, 4

[Article by Govinda Rajbhandari: "Thapa Party Becoming More Potent"]

[Text] National Democratic Party (Thapa) appears braced to contest the election to the House of Representatives seriously and earnestly.

The party which formed its 75 member central ad hoc committee just before it applied for registration at the Election Commission has expanded its central committee with 20 member political committee and nominating one more treasurer. The central ad hoc committee of Thapa party, political observers said is now one of the largest and most of its 96-members are known to voters of their constituencies quite well and many of them widely in parts of the country as well.

It all boils down to the fact that most of the 96 members in central committee of Thapa party had been stalwarts of the demolished panchayat and most of them were not only elected to the dissolved rastriya panchayat but also held ministerial posts.

This, the political analysts note, can make a lot of difference in the general elections first because they have their own vote bank no matter how depleted it might be now and secondly there are a number of factors which can help them have a sympathy votes from the grass-roots. This means the elections results will show as a test case how vehement was really the resentment of the people against the panchayat system.

They remarked that the popularity of Nepali Congress could not be questioned and that the Congress is more than likely to have the simple majority in the House of Representatives if not the absolute majority but in case the Congress has only simply majority or unpredictably less than, that the Congress leadership might opt for having alliance with the party of former panchas to form the government rather than with the Left who keep talking about the revolution without any plausible reason and without convincing the people of what kind of life they were likely to have if they (Communist)

formed the government. People would not of course like to live the collective life like under the disgraced Commune system introduced in some of the Communist countries and democracy is something which Nepali Communists do not believe in, the political analysts added.

The political observers are found to be of the opinion that majority of the people who really matter know, at least, this much that Communism has suffered the worst set-back all over the world and that Communism means dictatorship of the Communist party in power with no option for people to protest and ventilate the grievances of the people, that is, worst than the panchayat system, Communists like in the past might win some seats but not all that many that can tilt the balance in the House of Representatives, they added confidently.

They said that Thapa party is looming large without making a fuss. The party is reported to have set up district party committees in 62 districts including Kathmandu. The party has also claimed that they have their units at village level in as many districts including that of peasants, students and ex-servicemen. Not to be forgotten is the fact that the party's women's wing, National Women's Forum under the Presidentship of Tula Rana has been equally active and had its first conference with representatives from all the 14 zones in Kathmandu only yesterday.

Thapa, the political analysts said, has always been a very calculating politician among the erstwhile panchas and is still remembered as the one former panchayat prime minister who openly resented the interference of the Palace secretaries in government affairs.

They added that it was Thapa who said that there was dual government in Nepal and this is one of the reasons why he is said to have kept himself away from the Palace secretaries in the organisation of the party which he has been heading now. Chand party is widely believed not to have been able to keep the Palace secretaries at a distance and once Chand party and other smaller parties of the former panchas unite for electoral purpose with the Thapa party, it might well be expected to be a formidable party next only to Nepali Congress.

This, in other words they said means a chance for Thapa party to be in the post election coalition government, the political analysts predict in somewhat guarded manner.

Elections Said Raising High Expectations

91AS0593B Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 28 Jan 91 p 4

[Article by Yuba Nath Lamsal: "Eager Expectations"; first paragraph was boxed item]

[Text] Even among the 47 parties which have sought registration with the Election Commission only a couple are believed to make any significant achievement in the

election. Majority of the parties are recently formed which have no base among the people.

As the Nepalese people are enthusiastically awaiting the forthcoming multi-party polls—the first in thirty years—the Election Commission has geared up its efforts to conduct the hustings on time. Although the formal announcement is yet to be made, the Election Commission is learnt to have decided Baisakh 23, 2048 of the Nepali calendar as the poll date.

According to the Election Commission, it has completed almost 75 percent of its preparations. After the Election Constituencies Delimitation Commission completes its work, expected to be finished by 29 January, the Election Commission will concentrate on final preparations and the conduct of the polls.

With the completion of the general elections to the House of Representatives and handing over the reins to the elected government, the interim coalition government, installed nine months ago after the ushering in of multi-party democracy, will have completed its assigned jobs. After that, the second phase of real democratization of the country will begin as the newly-elected government starts its functioning in accordance with its promises made to the people.

Over 10.7 million people are eligible to cast their votes in the election of which more than 800 thousand will be casting their votes for the first time to choose their representatives. Over 60,000 employees, and the same number of security personnel, will be involved in conducting the hustings peacefully and impartially.

As the last date to apply with the Election Commission for the registration of political parties was over on 22 January, forty-seven parties sought recognition for the purpose of contesting the election. Although the Commission is yet to declare how many parties have been allowed to contest the election on the party basis obviously not more than 47, will be in the election fray.

Since the abrogation of the partyless panchayat system and the lifting of the ban on political parties, about 60 political parties had been believed to have been believed. But only 47 parties, accepting the new democratic Constitution, have decided to fight the elections and participate in the democratization of the country. Some political parties that are much talked about in the present political scene and also thought to have some influence among the people, did not apply for the registration. And some did not do so apparently fearing that they would suffer the humiliation of not securing even 3 percent of the total votes cast.

The two communist parties—Nepal Communist Party (Unity Centre) and the Nepal Communist Party (Masal) decided to boycott the polls under the present Constitution branding it as a "black constitution." They, unlike other communist factions, do not believe in the parliamentary process to bring changes in the country. The

only way to achieve their goal of new people's democracy—the late Chinese leader Mao Zedong's model of communism—is through armed revolution. However, they also have decided to utilize the elections, through other means, not to allow the reactionaries to win.

Among even the 47 parties who have sought registration with the Election Commission, only a couple are believed to make any significant achievement in the election. Majority of the parties are recently formed which have no base among the people. Although the Nepali Congress, different communist parties, Nepal National Congress, the Praja Parishad are some old parties that have decided to go to the forefront of the hustings, the major contest is expected to be among the Nepali Congress, Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist) and the two parties of the former panchayat prime ministers—Surya Bahadur Thapa and Lokendra Bahadur Chand.

Other parties are fearing their failure to muster even 3 percent votes as required by the Constitution. If they fail to secure this percentage, they will not be recognized as national parties and their representatives in the Parliament, if any, would be considered as independents. Moreover, there will be some parties which would secure 3 percent votes but might fail to win even a single seat in the Parliament, while a few other might win a couple of seats but fail to secure the required percent of votes.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal does not allow any political party aimed at promoting communalism and regionalism. Some of the parties which have applied for registration are apparently guided by religious, communal and regional feelings. It is yet to be seen as to how the Commission scrutinizes the parties character and objectives. Asked on the matter, Chief Election Commissioner Surya Prasad Shrestha said that the Commission recognizes the parties if their statutes do not reflect such things and that the Commission is not concerned about the talks in the streets.

Although some political parties including the leftist partner of the coalition government, have raised doubts over the peaceful and impartial conduct of the polls, the government and the Election Commission are confident of conducting the elections impartially and peacefully. And the supreme leader of the Nepali Congress, Ganesh Man Singh, has expressed his full confidence that the polls would be held freely and impartially. He has also criticized the leftist partners of the cabinet for raising doubts over the impartiality of the polls.

The government has even indicated that it could invite international observer teams to ensure that there would be no poll riggings and irregularities. A non-governmental organization—Forum for Protection of Human Rights—has formed a national poll observer team and also has planned to invite foreign experts. The Elections Commission says it will have no objection about the poll observer team, instead, it would welcome such initiatives.

The political parties have already launched their election campaign massively. The Nepali Congress has expressed its confidence of land-slide victory in the polls while the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist) has also claimed to win a majority in the elections “unless muscle and money power do not influence the polls.” The parties of Surya Bahadur Thapa and Lokendra Bahadur Chand are also hopeful to win a significant number of seats in the Parliament, although their activities were often disturbed because of the people's outrage over their past.

There are some indications that if the Gulf War escalates and lingers on, it is most likely to affect the entire economy of the world and the countries of Asia in particular. Since Nepal entirely depends on imported fuel, it will also be affected to some extent. Although, as of now, there is no indication that, owing to the Gulf crisis, the polls would be affected, but such a possibility cannot be ruled out if this problem further intensifies and fuel supply is affected in the country. Mass transportation facilities are needed for delivery of election materials. And if fuel supply is marred and the entire social and economic life is affected, the polls also could be disturbed.

The most challenging task before the government now is how to conduct the polls peacefully and impartially. The government and the Election Commission have to ensure that there will be no influence of money and muscle power in the elections. For this, a limit of election expenditure for the parties has to be fixed so that no one can accuse the victorious party of misuse of money and power.

Congress Conference Termed Superficial

91AS0593C Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 25 Jan 91 p 8

[Article by Yuba Nath Lamsal: “More Sound Than Substance”]

[Text] After the three-day heated debate over several issues, the national conference of the Nepali Congress [NC] concluded on 21 January. The conference ended with some decisions relating the party's policies and programmes mainly for the forthcoming general elections.

Although the party sources said that the conference was a complete success, political observers put it the other way, saying it could not do as it had been expected to. It was more sound than substance.

With the general elections for the House of Representatives fast approaching, the conference was primarily called to make some important decisions especially to approve the election manifesto of the party, election programmes and some clear-cut policies for distributing the party tickets for the elections.

The manifesto had also been prepared but it could not be approved by the conference. It was decided that the manifesto would be given final shape and be finalised by the central leadership with some minor changes after consultation with the representatives of various districts.

In fact, the conference was to declare the election manifesto. But it failed to do so and, owing to objection and criticism from the representatives that the manifesto failed to cover several important issues, the central leadership finally agreed to incorporate some amendments.

It has raised an argument among the political observers that if the central leadership itself had to decide on the election manifesto, what was the use of bringing it before the conference.

The long suspected groupism in the Nepali Congress has been clearly made public with the three leaders—party supremo Ganesh Man Singh, acting president K.P. Bhattarai and general secretary Girija Prasad Koirala—emphasizing on unity among the workers for making the party victorious in the elections. Koirala said “if we lose the elections, it would be purely because of no other than the disunity in the party.”

The Nepali Congress had been divided into mainly two camps—K.P. Bhattarai group and Girija group. Koirala has a strong grip on the party's organizational structure while Bhattarai is believed to be comparatively weaker.

The Girija camp had even planned to oust Bhattarai from the party president and to be replaced by Girija himself, charging that he failed to work in deference to the party policies and programmes. But, owing to heightening popularity of Bhattarai among the NC supporters, they failed to do so, fearing that it will boomerang in the polls. And this issue was put off from the agenda of the conference. In this sense, Bhattarai's group, as some political observers put, appeared to be victorious.

The heated mental exercise dominated the conference. Some old activists were critical about the treatment of the central leadership towards the committed workers. They had also demanded proper evaluation of the dedicated workers and strict policy relating to taking the erstwhile panchas in the party.

They were seemingly worried as to whether the committed workers of the Nepali Congress might fall into minority and the revolutionary image of the party be damaged due to unchecked inflow of the panchas.

The open door policy of the party relating to distributing party membership has created a lot of problems within the Nepali Congress in various districts. Rivalry between the party has reached such a situation that in some districts, parallel party committees were likely to be formed. Despite efforts of central leadership to resolve the conflict, it is still ruling the roost.

Many participants had spent most of the time to criticize the Congress representatives in the cabinet for failing to

work in accordance with the party's spirit. Participants had even gone to the extent that if the ministers wanted bribe “we are ready to give but they should do our work.” The Girija camp appeared to be successful that the conference put all blames on the cabinet for failing to work smoothly and providing relief measures to the people.

The other aspect of the conference was also a seeming division relating to the party's political and economic policies. The party seemed to be divided into two schools of thought—rightist vs centrist.

This debate had been dominating in the party as well for quite a long time. Girija Koirala was believed to have been leading the former and Bhattarai the latter. The party supremo Ganesh Man Singh had been able to hold both the groups together.

The conflicts between the two schools of thought was that of relations with communists. The Girija camp was dichard anti-communists, who wanted no relation with the leftists. The Bhattarai camp and even Ganesh Man Singh had seemed to be soft towards the leftists.

When K.P. Bhattarai, after breaking a long silence over the matters, ruled out any electoral adjustment with the leftists and declared to go to the polls alone clearly suggested Girija camp's success in this respect which the conference also approved.

Some youths were even critical to the party's ideal “democratic socialism.” According to some activists, since the socialism was a form of communism which has gradually given way to liberal capitalism, the socialism needs to be dropped from the party principles. While, others, who believed in centrist policy, do not agree with this idea.

Although this debate did not seemingly surface in the conference, the young generation in the party is divided regarding this policy.

The conference was bigger than what the party leaders had expected. The big presence of the party workers from various districts and organizers' ability must have satisfied the leaders. But on the eve of the hustings, many representatives who were present in the conference, though not invited, also gave a room for thought that most of the participants came for having favour for the party tickets in the elections.

Moreover, the leaders of different camps also wanted more number of their supporters to influence the conference which could help them distribute more tickets to their supporters in the elections.

Despite objection and criticism from the party workers, the conference decided to keep its door open for any one who wanted to join the Nepali Congress. This, according to some observers, apparently tells the Nepali Congress wanted to hold the power after the polls by any means, irrespective of its principles and ideology.

The conference also appeared not to have accepted individual leadership. The language of the press release distributed at the end of the conference which read "under the leadership of trio"—Ganesh Man Singh, K.P. Bhattarai and Girija Prasad Koirala—implies that the conference believed in collective leadership but not any individuals.

Discussion, debate and diverse opinions are, of course, the characteristics of democracy. In this sense, the party seems to have been upholding these democratic cultures. This should also continue in a democratic party like the Nepali Congress.

But such diverse opinions and rivalries should be constructive for consolidating the party because major political parties should be consolidated to preserve the democratic norms and values in the country.

Unions Seek Ties To Those in South Africa

91AS0593F Johannesburg *NEW NATION* in English
7 Feb 91 p 12

[Text] The little-known General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (Gefont) has reached out to South African trade unions in a bid to strengthen its international links.

"Due to 30 years' repression of fascist rule led by an autocratic monarch, we Nepalese trade unionists are not properly known in the international working class movement... For 30 years we fought (underground) just for the right to organise and the betterment of life," Gefont secretary general B Rimal said in a letter to the SA Labour Bulletin appealing for contact with mass-based trade unions.

"All actions were orientated to destroy and dismantle the fascist government. Now the political situation has changed and we trade unionists are facing problems due to lack of trade union education."

Gefont's appeal for trade union contact comes amid moves by Cosatu [Congress of South African Trade Unions] to strengthen its links with Third World trade union movements.

These moves have been prompted by the imminent collapse of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the need for a forum for Third World trade unions to come together and discuss their common problems.

Given Gefont's history and aims and objectives, it is likely to have a great deal in common with the progressive South African union movement.

Nepal, which is situated between India and China and is famous for its Mount Everest, has a population of over 17 million. According to Gefont, the country's industry is controlled primarily by foreign capital.

After a military coup in the country in 1960, all political, professional and worker organisations were banned.

It was only 19 years later during popular uprisings in 1979 that workers began to reassert themselves.

After a series of strikes, the Independent Transportation Workers' Association of Nepal (ITWUN), Nepal Independent Workers' Union (NIWU) and Nepal Independent Hotel Workers' Union (NIHWU) were established.

In 1983, the Trekking Workers' Association of Nepal (TWAN), which organised trekkers employed by foreign mountaineers to carry their baggage in the Himalayan mountains, was established.

In 1989, Gefont was formed as an umbrella organisation uniting ITWUN, NIWU, NIHWU and TWAN.

During the 1980s, trade unions fought a number of battles with the Nepalese state for labour legislation aimed at protecting workers' rights.

Among Gefont's stated aims are:

- to end "imperialist suppression, feudal and bureaucratic capitalist exploitation and establish a democratic people's republic;

to promote "friendly solidarity among people of all classes, levels and professions for the success of the struggle that is beneficial to workers;" and

organising to secure, by peaceful means such as strikes, go-slows and barricades, workers' rights, security and unity.

Analyst Calls for Welfare State

91AS0593A Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 31 Jan 91 p 4

[Article by Binod Babu Kafle: "Towards A Welfare State"]

[Text] The Nepalese people have entered the democratic threshold after the promulgation of the new Constitution. Now the nation's attention has been focussed on the coming general elections, which will give a vital thrust to the democratic process.

Fundamental Rights

Sovereignty vested in the people, fundamental rights, judicial safeguard of people's right, among others, are the prominent features of the new Constitution. Besides these, several other provisions have been made in the Constitution in order to drive the nation to the arena of democratic values and ideals.

Basically, the fundamental law of the land in every country spells out the main guidelines of the state. The directive principles and policies of state, though they cannot be applied into practice by any court, however keep immense value in any Constitution with the aspiration to create a "welfare state." As the renowned constitutional expert of India Dr Ambedkar emphasized, the necessity of directive principles and policies in the

constitution is to raise awareness in every citizen about the economic and social goals of the state in general. These principles and policies, in fact, really reflect the sentimental expressions regarding the economic and social objectives of the country.

The new Constitution, with the above facts, has envisaged directive principles and policies in the Chapter 4 within the Articles 24, 25 and 26, respectively.

In the beginning of Article 24 it has been clearly expressed that these principles and policies are not applied through any court, however, they are to be regarded as the main guidelines of the political system and state activities. Similarly, the expressions stated in the principles and policies are supposed to be implemented within the available economic resources and means by enacting the law gradually.

As mentioned in the directive principles and policies of the new Constitution, the primary objective of the state is to strengthen the welfare system based on an open society, maintaining an effective judicial system. Furthermore, the state has the obligation to safeguard the people's life, property and liberty.

The directive principles also aim at social and judicial distribution of economic achievements. It has also reserved the guarantee to prevent any person or class of society against economic exploitation. The main economic objective of the country is to gain self-sufficiency by providing incentives to public and private enterprises and industries.

The social objective of the state is to establish and develop a sound social life by co-ordinating several communities having different languages, religions and races.

Besides these, maintaining peace, tranquility, law and order in the society, strengthening and protecting human rights will remain state obligations. One of the key issues of the directive principles is to mobilise maximum number of people in democratic exercise by the effective means of decentralization. The international relations of the country are to be guided by safeguarding the value of sovereignty, integrity and freedom of the country.

The expressions stated above have clearly spelled out the state's social, economic and political goals and objectives. Likewise, there are remarkable state policies mentioned in the Constitution. It will be appropriate to elaborate its fundamental aspect briefly.

Balanced development of different geographical regions, just distribution of economic investment, raising the standard of people's life by the provision of basic needs as health, education, employment opportunities etc. have been indicated as the main thrusts of state policies.

Similarly, proper utilization of natural resources, protection of the environment are to remain as major policies of state. As an agriculture-dominant country the task of agricultural development and promotion of agricultural

productivity as well as land reform policies are to be strengthened in the years to come.

The role of women in the task of national development is quite essential. Hence, the Constitution has taken as its obligation to promote women's education, health, and employment in order to mobilize maximum number of women in the nation-building task.

Necessary steps are to be undertaken against the exploitation of children. Also, essential conditions to safeguard the children's benefits and rights will be managed. Free education to children will gradually be enhanced. The state policy shall be concentrated for the effective promotion of science and technology, education, health and employment opportunity and similarly it will pay more attention for the upliftment of backward class of people and their society.

As the main obligation of "rule of law" is to provide equal justice to every citizen, as such, the state policies shall endeavour to facilitate the people by free legal services. Foreign policy will be entirely based upon the principles of U.N. Charter, the principles of Nonalignment and the ideals of Panchasheel.

Welfare State

Visualising the above basic state principles and policies in the new Constitution, one can be quite confident of the fact that nation's goal to turn itself into a welfare state will finally materialise.

Granting of Citizenship to Ethnic Indians Attacked

91AS0593D Kathmandu *THE MOTHERLAND*
in English 30 Jan 91 pp 1, 4

[Text] The decision taken by the government to give citizenship certificates to all the people enrolled as the voters during the time of the national referendum 11 years ago is not only self-destructive but also against the interest of the nation.

This is stated in a press statement issued here yesterday by Maday Kumar Pokhrel, the president of Akhil Nepal Prajantaptrik Swantra Majdur Sangh (All Nepal Democratic Independent Working Class Organisation).

Reacting sharply to the government decision, the press statement says it is absolutely wrong to accept the voters list of the national referendum.

The press statement says that at a time when hundreds of thousands Nepalis residing in India were in state of being evicted depriving them of their right to live in India as Indian citizens, this decision of the government exhibit servi'e mentality and short-sightedness.

It is contended in the press statement that fifty to hundred thousand Indians have been enrolled as voters in the list of voters who participated in the national

referendum and these Indian voters lived nowhere in Nepal and possessed no property.

The press statement has regretted that the interim government by doing away with work permit system had taken the bread out of the mouth of Nepali working class people and most unfortunately had taken such arbitrary decision on a most sensitive question like citizenship.

The press statement adds that with the decision the Nepalis in their own country will be displaced and has demanded that the decision on the question of citizenship be withdrawn immediately.

PAKISTAN

PPP Opposes Government Gulf Policy

Demands Recall of Troops

91AS0514A Karachi DAWN in English 22 Jan 91 p 5

[Text] Karachi, 21 January—PPP [Pakistan People's Party] Deputy Secretary-General N.D. Khan on Monday urged Pakistan to employ its diplomatic options effectively for bringing about immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the Gulf war under the UN auspices.

Talking to newsmen here he said Pakistan should move the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) and the NAM (Non-Align Movement) on the prime need for convening an international conference with Palestine as its sole agenda.

For, he stressed, no lasting peace in the Middle East was conceivable without the solution of Palestine issue on the basis of recognition of the Palestinians' right to self determination.

He demanded the recall of Pakistani troops from Saudi Arabia, saying Pakistan take care it did not become a party to the Iraq-Kuwait issue.

Mr Khan asked whether war in the Gulf was a sort of crusade that Pakistani troops were sent to protect holy places in Saudi Arabia. Even for argument's sake it was so, whether there were no holy places in Iraq as well.

"Besides, who the government is befooling by saying that the Pakistani troops were not under the U.S.-led multinational command," he argued.

Dubbing the prime minister's [PM] address to the nation as "lacking in correct perception" of the hard realities of the Gulf crisis, the PPP leader maintained that the PM's references to Saudi Arabia and Iraq had "no relevance."

The question was not which country did what to Pakistan but that Pakistan's own territorial integrity had become vulnerable due to the changing geographical scenario in the Gulf. Even a commoner realises that the U.S. administration was out to control the Gulf's oil treasures and, thereby, impose hegemony in the Middle East with Israel as its close ally, he pointed out.

Mr Khan apprehended that a situation of destabilisation was confronting Pakistan and said "the tragedy is there is no credible government which with its representative character and under a dynamic and far-sighted leader could stand up against the challenging situation."

Saying that the government was "asserting its will on the will of the people," Mr Khan demanded lifting of Section 144. He demanded that free and unhindered permission be given to the people to hold peaceful rallies and react to the rapidly changing situation in the Gulf.

On the internal matters Mr Khan said the Parliament's role was "subservient to the president. [quote marks as published]

The Parliament should have been automatically called to discuss the Gulf crisis and the prime minister should have taken the lead in evolving a national consensus, he pointed out. He, however, regretted that it is the PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] Opposition which had to send a requisition for the National Assembly's emergent session.

Pro-Husayn Rallies Held

91AS0514B Karachi DAWN in English 21 Jan 91 p 4

[Text] Karachi, 20 January—Pakistan People's Party [PPP], Karachi Division, on Sunday staged a demonstration at Regal Chowk this afternoon to express their support to Saddam Husayn.

The processionists raised slogans against President Bush, French President Mitterand, King Fahd for their "anti-Islamic activities" in the Gulf. They urged the big powers to stop war in the Gulf forthwith. They expressed their antagonism against the Allied forces and put on fire National Flags of United States of America, Israel and burnt effigies of President Bush and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

General secretary of the PPP Karachi Division, Mr Rahim Baloch, addressing the rally said that it is a known fact that the United States had set its eyes on the oil wells of the Gulf and under the pretext of forcing out the Iraqis from Kuwait it has managed to step in the Gulf.

He said that whenever the Muslim countries tried to get a resolution passed against Israel, America used Veto which is clear indication of its intentions. He said the United States before starting the implementation of the UN resolution in the Gulf should have ensured the freedom of Kashmiris and the Palestinians. He said it speaks volumes about the double standard of the U.S. Administration.

General secretary of PPP Women's Wing Sindh, Shamim N.D. Khan speaking on the occasion said that thousands of women and children are praying for the success of Saddam Husayn and declared that he will emerge victorious.

Acting president of the Peoples Youth Karachi Division asked the government to immediately withdraw the expulsion order of the Iraqi Press Councillor.

Demands Government's Resignation

91AS0514C Karachi DAWN in English 21 Jan 91 p 16

[Text] Rawalpindi, 20 January—The top leaders of Pakistan People's Party [PPP] demanded from the government to resign immediately, as the nation has stood up in protest against its Gulf policy.

Speaking at a big public meeting, on Sunday, at Fauwara Chowk Raja Basar, Rawalpindi, the leaders condemned the American aggression on Iraq and expressed their unconditional support to the people of Iraq and President Saddam Hussein.

The meeting was addressed by Sheikh Rafiq Ahmed, secretary-general PPP, Aftab Sherpao, Syed Iftikhar Gilani, Col (retd) Habib, Haji Mushtaq Hussain, Nazar Kiani, Ali Asghar Kiani, Qazi Sultan Mahmood, Sardar Saleem, Anjum Farooq Piracha and others.

Sheikh Rafiq Ahmed said the entire world has protested against the American aggression on Iraq and its designs in the Gulf. The people of Pakistan also fully understand the entire game plan which is being staged in the Gulf in the name of liberating Kuwait. He said late Z.A. Bhutto had brought the entire Muslim world on one platform while the present government was a party to the conspiracy to create a wedge among the Muslims.

Next Target: Syed Iftikhar Gilani, former law minister warned that Pakistan would be the next target if the United States succeeded in the Gulf. He said the people of Pakistan have come out in the streets in support of the people of Iraq and Saddam Husayn against the American aggression. It is in fact a conflict between the Islamic forces and anti-Islamic forces. The people view it in its real perspective, he added.

He said the people have reacted spontaneously without being led by any party. He challenged the prime minister to take out a procession in support of George Bush to prove his claim that his policy had the support of the people of Pakistan.

Syed Iftikhar Gilani endorsed the demand made by Maulana Fazlur Rehman of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam for an urgent session of the Parliament to discuss the Gulf situation.

Government Policies Criticised: Former Chief Minister NWFP [North-West Frontier Province], Mr Aftab Sherpao regretted that Pakistan which had remained in the vanguard of the Muslim world had now become so irrelevant that none of the parties in the Gulf crisis had bothered to approach it. He said the policies of the present government had brought the situation to such pass.

He recalled that during the election campaign, the IJI had promised to fight alongside the Kashmiri people to liberate Kashmir. Instead, it has sent troops to fight against a Muslim country. He said the people must have realised why the PPP Government was dismissed at a crucial stage. There was no doubt that the PPP Government would have fully responded to the aspirations of the people.

He called upon leaders of components of IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] like Qazi Hussain Ahmed and others who are critical of the policy of the present government to come out of the alliance and join the forces reflecting the aspirations of the people. The IJI has raised the bogey of opposition to the American aid during election campaign. Now it had adopted a Gulf policy which was designed to promote American and Jewish designs in the region, he added.

He contested the government claim that Pakistan troops have been despatched to Saudi Arabia to defend holy places. "May I ask our rulers if there are no holy places in Iraq which have now the target of allied bombing?" Sherpao said Saddam was a Muslim and could never think of attacking holy places in Saudi Arabia. He also condemned the expulsion of Iraqi diplomat from Pakistan.

He said hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis were ready to go to Iraq to fight along with their Iraqi Muslim brethren at the call of the PPP. A huge portrait of Saddam Hussein was put behind the stage.

A resolution passed at the meeting expressed solidarity and support of the people of Pakistan for the people of Iraq.

War Called 'Zionist Design To Destroy Islam'

91AS0590B Lahore THE PAKISTAN TIMES
in English 4 Feb 91 pp 6-7

[Text] When Saddam Husayn invaded his tiny neighbour Kuwait on August 2, 1990, creating conditions for the start of war in the Middle East, the whole world was surprised. For Zionist leadership, however, it was the reward of its sustained efforts of at least 40 years of planning and manipulation. Even ordinary observers can realise that the crisis was not a natural development and that both President Saddam and King Fahd had been misled to act as instruments of potential doom for the Islamic world, which is the main target in the whole game.

To the people the obvious manipulator seems to be the United States. Actually the US Administration led by President Bush is itself an instrument in the unseen hands. The Gulf crisis, the ongoing war, the catastrophes that will still come, are not the work of America but the scheme of the Zionists. The Jews are directing the war from both sides—visible on one side, hidden on the other.

The Zionist Jewry (ZINJRY), believed to have been organised as a syndicate of 12 top Zionist leaders, controls and directs the affairs of all the world's Jewish individuals and institutions including the state of Israel. It keeps its identity and business absolutely secret and operates through a front organisation, the World Zionist Organisation [WZO]. The WZO was formally and publicly established in 1897 at the first congress of the world's Zionists held in Basel, Switzerland. Zionism—so called after a hill named Zion in Jerusalem—is a set of secular, racial political principles and ideas which are designed to unite the world's Jews under a central leadership and to direct them to work for making Israel the foremost power and the Jews the leading people in the world. This aim suits Jew rabbis and religious scholars and so they fully support Zionism despite its being a clearly secular and racist ideology.

The scheme in the Gulf is a part—the final stage—of ZINJRY's global design to fulfil the aims of Zionism and seize direct control of the world. The goals include expanding the geographical boundaries of Israel, breaking up all other countries into mini-states or cantons on ethnic, linguistic or sectarian lines, disintegrating and diluting their military assets, including nuclear power, and economic resources, privatising all essential services, communications, media, transportation, banks, financial institutions and development projects in all the cantons thus giving their control to multinational companies and the World Bank, IMF, etc., all of which are in the hands of Jews, secularising the educational systems and political institutions, eliminating religious customs and practices including the institutions of formal marriage and home-life and enforcing Zionist culture of obscenity, promiscuity, total freedom for women and even children and freedom for all forms of entertainment and pleasure.

Any intelligent Pakistani should be able to note how much these Zionist goals are succeeding in Pakistan. The same thing is happening in almost all the countries.

The crisis in the Gulf is primarily aimed at demolishing the existing and potential power of the Islamic countries and radically changing their geographical and political status and their psycho-social conditions as mentioned above. But it is also designed to hit at all other countries including the Soviet Union and China. One of its major victims is going to be the American nation. Thousands of American dead bodies including those of woman soldiers will return to the United States. Americans will be killed not only by direct war action but also by terrorism created by ZINJRY, partly as a result of natural reaction amongst the Arabs but more by the Jewish Mafia whose terrorists from amongst Iraqi, Syrian, Palestinian, Moroccan or Egyptian Jews look and speak the native Arabs. The Mafia also finances and directs Japanese Red Army, Red Brigades of Italy and Germany, tribal gangs of Britain and the terrorists of India's Raw and Iraq's Baath Party.

It is in the global design to disintegrate the American political unity and power, just as to do the same with the Soviet Union, China and India. Right now in the United States, the fervent supporters of the war are Jews and its strongest opponents leading the movement against the war are also Jews. They are always active on both sides of the fence, i.e., in both the camps. ZINJRY has enormous resources at its disposal: money, media, industry, technology, oil, military hardware, and the intelligence agencies led by Mossad and CIA. The information media including publishing and book trade is its leading instrument of deception, disinformation, hiding truth, confusing facts and yet conditioning the minds of the public and the policy makers to perceive things the way it wants.

Look at the news on the US air offensive against Iraq. In the first three days 4,000 sorties of US aircraft dropped 80,000 tons of bombs but what were the damage reports: "10 Iraqi aircraft destroyed, some runways, air defence systems, city dwellings and buildings and chemical and nuclear plants damaged; but Iraqi air force, operating facilities, chemical weapons (and of course all the Iraqi military forces) remain intact!"

The public is told, and apparently believes, that the US Air Force chief and other military commanders, with all the ultra-advanced technology and knowledge available to them, did not know or realise that Iraq had hidden or camouflaged its aircraft and military hardware and facilities!

Just four days before the war, Defence Secretary Dick Cheney and President Bush were declaring that "it will be a very short war, it will end in a matter of days not weeks." Four days after the outbreak of war they were saying: "Well, it will take weeks, maybe months, before it can end!" Are these people a bunch of idiots? There are many people including the Americans who believed Cheney and Bush then, and believe them now! Actually ZINJRY is prolonging the war by its own design.

The sensible Americans should at least now be able to realise why Senator John Tower chosen by Bush to be the US Defence Secretary was prevented from getting the post on an utterly frivolous allegation, and why in September, 1990, General Michael Dugan, the US Air Force chief, was removed from the post by Dick Cheney. ZINJRY knew it would not be able to easily manipulate them to play the Zionist game.

ZINJRY chooses its agents, puppets and pawns well in advance and motivates and moulds them by many methods, the most effective of which is a combination of special drugs and psychological inputs. Administration of drug is easy through meals or beverage. Inputs are provided through intelligence or advice by any suitable intermediary. ZINJRY is in possession of mind-control, psycho-chemical drugs originally developed by an all-Jewish team of CIA researchers through testing on German POWs after World War II. In the mid-1960s the project was shifted from the United States to Israel. The

youth who assassinated King Faisal was reported to have been brain-washed. The story revealed he had been latched on to by an Israeli girl.

Saddam Husayn, even reported by neutral contacts, has a mind-fixation. He was convinced that the US would never intervene if he occupied Kuwait. He was outraged when the US despatched a huge military force to Saudi Arabia. But then he was convinced that the US would never start a war and all the threats of war were a bluff. Since the war began he has been convinced that by drawing Israel into the war he can defeat the US plans and thus save Iraq. Saddam's conditioning for making the move in August, 1990, had begun many years ago. ZINJRY used both Western and Soviet Jews and the Iraqi Jews-turned-Christians for the purpose. After studying Saddam's psychology, more use was made of women most of whom were Jewesses. The Bush Administration was used to convey an impression to Saddam that the US was keen to befriend Iraq, considered it as a leading regional power and looked upon Saddam as the popular Arab leader.

Much of the luring mission was accomplished by April Glaspie, the US ambassador in Baghdad, who had reportedly struck up a very friendly relationship with President Saddam. A US news magazine describes:

"At a meeting with Saddam on July 25 she told the Iraqi President that George Bush 'personally wants to expand and deepen the relationship with Iraq.' She assured him that 'we don't have much to say about Arab-Arab differences, like your border differences with Kuwait. All we hope is that you solve those matters quickly. Saddam remarked that he had already formed a judgment on the limits of US power; that is 'the nature of American society makes it impossible for the United States to bear tens of thousands of casualties in one battle.'"

Glaspie left Baghdad for Washington on August 1 and Saddam invaded Kuwait the next day.

A similar network of Zionist agents in Riyadh, Washington and other capitals had been working on King Fahd. The Saudi military intelligence agency gets almost all its strategic and operational intelligence from the Americans. So when King Fahd was told that Saudi Arabia was Saddam's next target, he believed it. In Washington the young Saudi ambassador, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, was called to the Pentagon and shown satellite pictures which according to the US analysts indicated Iraqi military poised for an attack on Saudi Arabia. He rushed a message to King Fahd to immediately accept the US offer of military assistance.

ZINJRY had methodically prepared for the implementation of this scheme. A military city to accommodate more than half a million troops had been built by 1986 at Hafar-al-Batin, about 60 miles south-west of Kuwait. All networks of most modern roads, communications, electricity and other services were completed. All naval and air force bases in Saudi Arabia were constructed as exact replicas of the bases in the United States. George Bush

had been chosen to act as a tool long time ago and was manoeuvred to become Reagan's Vice-President in 1980.

In 1985, I circulated a detailed paper under a pen name to various officials and intellectuals in Pakistan explaining the nature of ZINJRY and its threats to Pakistan. I predicted in the paper that George Bush would be the US President in Nov. 1988. Parts of the paper were published later by an Urdu monthly."

Does George Bush know ZINJRY's schemes? Does he know the Gulf war will last for years and seriously damage his country and himself? "He doesn't. Those who have read the "Invisible Government" and other books on CIA would have an idea who runs the US strategic affairs. A more recent work "They Dare to Speak Out" by former Congressman Paul Findley reveals, along with evidence, that in the United States, the White House, the Congress, the Administration all are controlled by organised American Jewry. President Carter was shocked when told in January, 1979, that Reza Shah's ouster was imminent. He lamely admits he was kept in the dark about the events in Iran.

The Zionist Jewry has come close to its final goals. It will use every weapon in its arsenal and every trick known to its think-tanks to keep the Islamic states, and the people within each state, deceived, divided and mutually fighting. ZINJRY demonstrated its power of making the leaders and the public react the way it wants in two recent cases.

Following the assassination of Sadiq Ganji on December 19, 1990, the Iranian leaders reacted towards Pakistan in an unfair and uncharacteristic manner. The second case is the pro-Saddam rallies by various political parties in Pakistan following the outbreak of war. Protesting against the United States is correct but urging support for Saddam Husayn and his Baathist administration is senseless. Pakistan cannot, and must not support Saddam's occupation of Kuwait and his deliberate actions to enable the ZINJRY to start a war to implement its designs against the Islamic countries. The misled people should also know that the Saudi monarchical system can still produce a truly Islamic leader of vision and strength of character like the late King Faisal but the Iraqi Baath Party will always produce a leadership to harm the interests of Iraqi and all other Muslims.

Pakistani troops in Saudi Arabia will also be used; not against Iraq, but to defend Saudi Arabia. When Israel enters the war, which it will according to ZINJRY's scheme, radical developments will follow. Pakistan will have to fight against Israel. The two sacred cities, Makkah and Madinah, will be attacked and will have to be defended by Pakistan forces. ZINJRY's scheme also has an India-Pakistan war in its schedule. So Pakistan has to be ready for a two-front war. Those who are scared of the idea of war or can think of only a three-week long war will shudder at this. But Pakistan will be able to cope with the situation because for the first time it will declare

a. Jihad. The great capabilities of the Pakistani people and the vast resources of the country have never been properly exploited so far. Pakistan has shirked from Jihad on at least four previous occasions: the Kashmir war 1947-48, the 1965 and 1971 wars and the Afghan crisis. The coming Jihad will provide the opportunity to bring out the great strength in this country and to atone for its past sins.

According to ZINJRY's global design the Gulf war crisis would last for around seven years. All the disasters so far projected in the ZINJRY's media; shortage of oil supplies, escalation of price to \$60 to \$70 a barrel, long fires in the Gulf oil wells, severe economic depression, great blood shed and devastation, use of chemical and nuclear weapons, will take place. Israel will enter the war and then all Middle East countries, Yemens, Sudan, Libya, Algeria, etc., will also declare war. The United States which has a defence pact with Israel will be made to defend it, and American men and women soldiers will be killed for the sake of the Jewish state. There will be great uprising in the American people. The NATO countries will be drawn in by the United States. Gorbachev will be ousted. ZINJRY will bring a new Russian leadership and make it support Iraq and oppose the United States. Iraq will also have a new leadership, and Iran will become its ally. China will also be drawn into the war. Saudi Arabia will also have a new leadership who will fight against Israel and the US, with the enemy troops on its soil.

ZINJRY will continue to employ its other strategies of psychological and subversive warfare to engineer coups and crisis and shape the events as it wants. It will create conditions to oust King Hussein and establish a secular pro-American Palestinian state in Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Iran, Sudan and Saudi Arabia, all will be broken up. The Soviet Central Asia will be turned into independent cantons. ZINJRY employs multi-layered deception in its schemes and exploits everything in its favour. It will use the spirit of Islam in the Central Asian republics to separate them from the Soviet Union and then reshape them into ethnic units. Ethnic and sectarian prejudices are being inflamed in the people there side by side with Islamic fervour.

This is a glimpse of ZINJRY's design. Allah the Almighty however has His design which we cannot know. But it is Allah's practice to bring about conditions which individuals and nations deserve according to their actions. If the Muslims wish for a better outcome of the current crisis, they must act to deserve it. The first requirement is to put up a determined struggle against the enemy of Islam and the Muslim Ummah. But the struggle will be useless if the real nature of the enemy is not known. For example the Muslim leaders and policy makers do not know how the Jewish people, the ZINJRY's principal asset, are organised and directed to produce the desired results. Note what the charter of the World Zionist Organisation lays down:

a. The unity of the Jewish people and the centrality of Israel in Jewish life;

b. The ingathering of the Jewish people in its historic homeland.

c. The strengthening of the state of Israel which is based on the prophetic vision of the justice and peace;

d. The preservation of the identity of the Jewish people through the fostering of Jewish and Hebrew education and of Jewish spiritual and cultural values;

e. The protection of Jewish rights everywhere.

So every Jew whether he is Stephen Solarz, Mark Segal, Armand Hammer, Henry Kissinger, Caspar Weinburger, Eduard Shevardnadze or Douglas Hurd, or of a lesser stature, is working for the schemes of the Zionist Jewry.

The leaders and scholars in Pakistan as also in the other Islamic countries must study the Zionist enemy in full detail. Only then will their deep-seated misplaced perception of events change and they will begin to see the reality behind the crises taking place around them. And only then will they begin to face the grave challenges threatening the Pakistani nation. And then Allah's help as promised by Him will also start coming.—T.M

JUI Criticizes Government Gulf Policy

91AS0513D Karachi DAWN in English 17 Jan 91 p 5

[Text] Lahore, 16 January—The Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam [JUI] declared here on Wednesday that it would strongly oppose an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia and, in case of such an eventuality, would play its role to protect the identity of the Islamic world. It also called for the solution of the Gulf crisis through the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] and Arab League.

The JUI's central Shoora, which met under the chairmanship of acting party President Maulana Mohammad Ajmal Khan, through a resolution, opposed Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and demanded pullout of its troops from that country.

"We see with contempt the presence of American troops in the Gulf. The role of the United Nations and the United States on the Kuwait issue is an example of double standards," the resolution said.

The results of the deliberations were announced at a news conference by Secretary-General Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Other leaders, including Maulana Ajmal Khan, Maulana Ajmal Kadri, Maulana Mohammad Khan Sherani, Senator Hafiz Hussain Ahmed, Maulana Mehmud Khan Achakzai, Maulana Abdul Malik, Maulana Amir Husain Gilani, Maulana Abdur Razzaq Aziz and Maulana Amjad Khan, were also present.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman said the situation in the Gulf was very grave, but the public sentiments and the government policy were at variance with each other. "The government should play the role of a mediator and not that of a party," he added.

Referring to the government's indifference to the Gulf crisis, the JUI secretary-general said Prime Minister

Nawaz Sharif had thought of launching peace efforts only when the danger of war loomed large.

He announced that the JUI workers were starting demonstration against the United States all over the country.

Shariat Bill: Through another resolution, the JUI executive condemned the government for its failure to table the Shariat Bill and the Qisas and Diyat Ordinance during the previous session of the National Assembly. It was nothing but a renegeing on its promises to enforce Islamic system in the country, the resolution said.

It warned the government that if this attitude continued its role the government might lose people's confidence.

The meeting reiterated that the JUI's cooperation with the IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] government would depend upon the latter's attitude towards the Shariat Bill and the JUI's already 10 points presented to the government. It also decided that in future, the JUI members in the National Assembly and the Senate would only attend the IJI's parliamentary meetings and not other IJI meetings.

The JUI has also set up a committee, comprising Senator Samiul Haq, Maulana Mohammad Khan Sherani, Senator Hafiz Husain Ahmed and Senator Qazi Abdul Lateef, to hold talks with the government.

Ten Points: The following are the JUI's 10 points:

- Enforcement of all Islamic laws, specially the Hudood laws;
- Introduction of the Shariat Bill and all recommendations of the Council of Islamic Ideology in the National Assembly for legislation, and reconstitution of Council of Islamic Ideology;
- Removal of all dens of vulgarity and obscenity;
- Ban on the preparation import and export of liquor and cancellation of all liquor permits issued so far;
- Maximum autonomy to the provinces and amendment to the Constitution to place the provincial resources at the disposal of the provinces;
- Ban on the publication, broadcast, telecast of vulgar material and establishment of a commission to keep a vigil on the media;
- Islamisation of education system through revolutionary changes, popularisation of education, an end to the co-education and establishment of separate colleges and universities for women;
- Independence from the influence of the superpowers and making of efforts to set up a separate bloc of the Islamic States. It should be the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy;
- Constitutional guarantees for the basic rights and making provision for all basic requirements like job, shelter, education, medical treatment, electricity, drinking water; and
- A fresh legislation to ensure safety of life and honour of the people.

The meeting expressed grave concern over the murder of Maulana Esarul Haq Qasmi, and called upon the government to arrest the culprits.

Government Gulf Policy Seen 'Oblivious to Popular Sentiment'

91AS0513H Lahore *THE NATION* in English
20 Jan 91 p 6

[Article by Mushahid Hussain]

[Text] With one military move, Saddam Husayn has managed to create serious dents in the American strategy in its Gulf War and proved that he still retains enough of his military power and political will to strike against Israel, the worst enemy of the Muslim World. Within the first 100 hours of America's Gulf war three significant aspects are evident. First, Iraq has survived the massive American bombing which was probably the most extensive use of sophisticated weaponry and technology in conventional warfare in modern times. Two thousand one hundred seven bombing missions and 196 Cruise missiles were fired in 2 days alone, weaponry which was being tested in actual war for the first time apart from sophisticated electronic jamming devices.

Second, most of America's assumptions, when it launched the Gulf War, seem to have collapsed in the face of determined Iraqi resistance. Some of these assumptions were:

- The war will be short and quick;
- the war will be confined to engagements in the air only and the massive pounding by American bombers would lead to the destruction of both Iraqi military power and political will, thereby avoiding a costly and protracted ground war;
- the war would be a laboratory where sophisticated American technology would be tested and end in a triumph given the uneven conflict with Iraq as it had no matching technological or military capabilities;
- the war would remain confined to the two principal combatants with the American-led allies giving a battering to an isolated Iraq.

There are several indicators that, much to their dismay, it has dawned on the Pentagon planners that the war may not follow the script which they had so carefully crafted for the last few months. Several indicators point to this new painful reality for America's policy-makers:

- The United States has had to enlist Turkey's active assistance and contrary to the oft-repeated assertions of the Turkish government, Ankara has allowed American bombers to use its bases for non-NATO purposes, i.e., the bombing of Iraq (40 planes are reported to have used the Incirlik air base, which is located 400 miles from Turkey's border with Iraq);

- as of the evening of 18 January, the Pentagon assessment is that “the air war will go well into February, before the ground assault can be launched,” adding that “it will be a difficult and prolonged war since Saddam Husayn will not surrender and will fight to the bitter end”;
- President Bush has signed an Executive Order ordering the call-up of reservists numbering up to a million and extending their tenure of duty beyond the initial mandate of 6 months;
- the U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney has ordered that 181 commercial planes be commandeered for an emergency airlift of cargo supplies to the Persian Gulf;
- during a 45-minute conversation with Mikhail Gorbachev, President Bush told him that “the war can go on for several weeks,” and following this telephonic talk, there have been soundings in the United Nations for a fresh Soviet peace initiative.

The third significant development has been Saddam Husayn's missile attack on Israel, thereby earning the distinction of being the first Muslim leader to launch a military attack on the Zionist state in 12 years. All previous military engagements between Israel and the Arabs were outside the territory of Israel. For the first time, an Arab leader has instilled fear in Israel and there seems to be a general scare in that American-propped outpost in the Muslim hotland. On 18 January, after the Iraqi attack, there were no less than three separate air-raid alarms within a 24-hour period alone. This is a far cry from the first day of the war when the Israeli Defense Minister proudly proclaimed that “it is a good morning in Israel and Israel is safe.”

If as now seems increasingly likely, it will be a protracted war running into several weeks, America may be successful in the physical destruction of important segment of Iraqi society, but it will be sucked into a politically unwinnable war. Some of this political price-tag is already evident in the quick transformation of Saddam Husayn as a popular hero among Muslim masses, the isolation of pro-American regimes in the Muslim World and a growing wave of anti-Americanism which has swept the Muslim World from Mauritania to Malaysia. Today, whatever his previous sins, Saddam Husayn has become an embodiment of Muslim aspirations as Jamal Abdel Nasser was in 1956, King Faisal was in 1973 and Imam Khomeini in 1979. He is seen as one of the few leaders in the Muslim World who has delivered on what he promised, namely attacking Israel and dared to defy American military might.

Meanwhile, the attitude of Pakistani officialdom defies logic and is oblivious of popular sentiment. If we are living on borrowed money, it seems that we are also living on borrowed thinking and perceptions peddled by the West. Invariably, when it comes to Muslim causes, Pakistani governments are obsequious to what they have learnt from the West. Whether it is the 1956 Suez War, 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran or America's Gulf War

against Iraq, Pakistan's governments have invariably ended up on the wrong side of the fence, the only notable exception being the 1973 Ramazan War.

Take the case of Friday's much-publicised expulsion of an Iraqi diplomat on allegations of “indulging in objectionable activities.” This move does no credit to the government of Pakistan at a critical juncture in the Gulf War since shorn of the verbiage, the Iraqi diplomat has been accused of funding the pro-Saddam campaign. In effect, if the government is to be believed on this count, the people of Pakistan in most urban centres of the country are willing to sell themselves cheap to a foreign power to demonstrate in favour of Saddam. It is certainly a very low opinion which the government has of its own people and it shows that it is unable both to gauge the depth of popular sentiment as well as the level of political consciousness among our people. And this argument, that people come out in the streets after somebody pays them, is an old-hackneyed one. This was said by the government during the 1977 PNA [Pakistan National Alliance] Movement, it was repeated in 1986 when Benazir Bhutto returned from London and again it was reaffirmed by the government when people demonstrated against Salman Rushdie in 1989. It is a shameful commentary on the conduct of the leadership, both official and non-official, that while the government is going against the popular sentiment, the Leader of the Opposition too is vacationing in the West while the Muslim World faces its greatest test in 35 years.

Now that the conflict has been transformed into one in which Israel is pitched against a Muslim country, it is the duty of Pakistan and Iran to take a clear and forthright position against Israel which is the common enemy of the Muslim World. In any case, apart from the question of convictions, enlightened self-interest demands such a position since if America and Israel's Gulf War succeeds in destroying Iraq's military power, they are then bound to turn their guns against countries like Iran and Pakistan who still have a military capability and aspirations for a regional role. Saddam has already dealt the first blow by shattering the mystique of American military power. Pakistan, for one, should not side with the forces of aggression now as it did earlier by despatch of its military contingent to Saudi Arabia.

War Claimed 'Revival of Imperialist Traditions'

91AS0590F Lahore *THE NATION* in English
28 Jan 91 p 3

[Article by Dr Maqbool Ahmad Bhatti: “The Gulf and the Muslim World”]

[Text] The outbreak of the Gulf war in the early hours of 17 January, 1991, has had a profound impact on public opinion in Pakistan and other Muslim countries. The fact that the conflict has consisted mainly of massive and continuous air attacks on Baghdad, one of the historic centres of Islamic civilisation and culture, and that large numbers of Iraqi Muslims are being killed or wounded

has produced reactions of profound anxiety as well as of sympathy among our people. As the bulk of the forces ranged against Iraq are from the Western countries, and the use of military muscle is being coordinated by the United States of America, which has close links with Israel, the regime of Saddam Husayn has sought to depict the conflict as a confrontation between the forces of Islam on the one hand, and the non-Muslim and Zionist forces on the other. The success of this propaganda is reflected in demonstrations in many parts of Pakistan directed against the United States. Criticism has been widely voiced of the decision to send Pakistani forces to Saudi Arabia since they appear to be a part of the anti-Iraq coalition that is led by the United States. The talk in Western media of the need to destroy the Iraqi war machine has led even knowledgeable people in Pakistan to question the wisdom of Pakistan becoming associated with plans that are aimed at eliminating the military power of a Muslim country.

That there should be confusion in the public mind about Pakistan's attitude is understandable, and the flood of news about the death and destruction being rained on an Islamic country by largely Western air and naval forces cannot but be distressing in the extreme. Notwithstanding the sentiments aroused by this sad spectacle, it is necessary to put the situation in its proper perspective.

Since it does not make sense at all to assume that Iraq under President Saddam Husayn deliberately courted disaster by taking on such a formidable coalition of forces, the only plausible explanation is that he did not expect the crisis over his occupation of Kuwait to escalate into a shooting war. At the same time, it has to be recalled that the Iraqi leader's actions and policies have shown scant respect for the principles of inter-state conduct. In 1980s, his attack on Iran produced an eight-year long war that gravely damaged the cause of Islamic unity and resulted in enormous losses of men and material. In that conflict, he had been encouraged and supported by many Arab as well as Western countries that were opposed to the regime of Imam Khomeini in Iran. Though the war ended in a virtual stalemate, he emerged with a powerful war machine manned by battle-hardened soldiers. It is worth recalling that Kuwait was one of his principal financial backers during that venture, pumping an estimated \$35 billion towards his war effort.

Iraqi claims to the territories included in Kuwait are based on their having once formed part of the country, though this rationale cannot but cause crisis and turmoil in the world as virtually every country can make such claims on its neighbours. The sequence of events in August 1990, when Iraqi forces moved into Kuwait, ostensibly at the invitation of local revolutionaries, and then incorporated the state into Iraq as its 19th province showed that the Iraqi leader had chosen to use his powerful war machine to conquer a small, independent state, in defiance of the UN Charter.

The forceful annexation of Kuwait by Iraq under Saddam Husayn came at a time when the two Superpowers had achieved detente, the Cold War had ended, and the trend was towards greater respect for the principles of the UN Charter. Furthermore, the United States, now virtually the only Superpower following the decline of the USSR, saw this as a challenge to its strategic and economic interests, and in the long run, to the security of Israel. It was further felt that given the size and strength of the Iraqi war machine, and the inclinations of its leader, this would be a prelude to further ventures of similar nature in this sensitive and oil-rich region.

President George Bush spearheaded a diplomatic campaign, in which efforts were concentrated on the passage of a number of resolutions by the UN Security Council, beginning with a demand for Iraqi withdrawal, followed by imposition of sanctions, and finally by authorisation of use of force in case the Iraqi forces did not withdraw by 15 January, 1991. The United States obviously wanted to acquire legitimacy for its moves by involving the United Nations even as it undertook the most massive military build-up in the region since Vietnam and secured the participation of its European allies. Several Arab and Islamic countries also responded to appeals by Saudi Arabia by sending contingents, so that at the time of the outbreak of fighting, some 26 countries from all continents had joined the coalition against Mr. Saddam Husayn. Pakistan sent some units of its forces to Saudi Arabia, with the stipulation that they would be used for defensive purposes only.

The Iraqi leader, for his part, sought to link the withdrawal of his forces from Kuwait to an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories. This stratagem won him considerable support in the Arab, Islamic and Third World countries, where the media and public opinion took note that there was discrimination in the concern for UN resolutions, which were ignored in the case of Palestine (and Kashmir), but were made the basis of police action over Kuwait.

During the period of five and a half months that passed between the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the launching of the military action, attempts were made to bring about a peaceful settlement. The Arab and Islamic initiatives did not really get going on account of the deep divisions between the members of the Arab League and OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference]. Initially, at least, there were reservations in the public opinion in the United States, Western Europe and elsewhere about the resort to force before sanctions had been given a chance. Contacts were sought between the leadership of the United States and Iraq, though the Americans insisted that such contacts would not be "negotiations" in terms of any give or take, but just the means of conveying to Iraq that the United States was dead earnest about employing force, unless Iraq withdrew from Kuwait.

The Iraqi overtures for negotiations were designed to delay or possibly avert military operations. Given the extent of American commitment to Israel, it was unlikely

that a political linkage of Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait to Israeli vacation of Arab territories would be allowed to materialise. The following considerations doubtless figured in the stance of the Iraqi leadership:

i) The linkage of the Kuwait and Palestine problems was expected to evoke a response in the Arab, Islamic and Non-Aligned countries, and almost confer legitimacy on Iraq's occupation of Kuwait;

ii) Given the widespread distaste for resort to war, in the United States, in Western Europe, and in the world at large, the show of reasonableness by Baghdad would render the use of force highly unlikely. The size and strength of the Iraqi forces, and the probability of large-scale casualties might strengthen opposition to President Bush, who had to contend with a Democratic majority in Congress in moves to get its approval for war;

iii) The worldwide trends towards detente, and the progress in disarmament following the ending of the Cold War must have been seen as discouraging the kind of massive resort to force that the United States was contemplating;

iv) The various "peace moves" being launched in Western Europe, and by prominent world leaders also may have made Saddam Husayn complacent about a resort to force materialising.

The 'battle of dates' that developed in the last two months, when accepting or rejecting deadlines set by the United States assumed a crucial character saw Saddam Husayn making it a point of prestige not to be tied down to any timetable for meetings or a withdrawal prescribed by the United States. He must have calculated that he could drag things on, and in the meantime, that political opposition within the United States, and in other parts of the world might make it difficult for President Bush to launch a military operation when all that was apparently at stake was a matter of a few days delay. On the other hand, the US President had a number of compulsions of his own:

i) The United States and its allies were agreed that Saddam Husayn should not be allowed to get away with the blatant violation of international norms in occupying Kuwait by conceding a linkage with the Palestine problem. This would amount to "rewarding" him for aggression;

ii) The most suitable time for military operations would be from mid-January to mid-March after which the hot weather would begin, as would the fasting month of Ramadan;

iii) The large American and allied forces, that had been assembled since August 1990, could not be kept in a state of alert indefinitely, specially as the degree of mobilisation required for an assault had been achieved.

Saddam Husayn stood tough as the last moves to avert the uses of force were made. From the Western point of

view, the mission of the UN Secretary-General was the final initiative, as the use of force was to be justified on the basis of the UN resolutions. The last-minute move by France in the Security Council to link an Iraqi withdrawal to the promise of a Conference over the Middle East issues, was vetoed by the United States and Britain, and after allowing barely one day after the expiry of the deadline, the fearful array of fire-power and technology from a worldwide coalition was unleashed against a small Arab and Muslim country.

The revulsion and sympathy aroused by this spectacle of the merciless pounding of an Islamic country is accompanied by fears that once Iraq's military might is crushed, the United States and its Western allies will revive the imperialist traditions that existed prior to the Second World War, and establish both political and economic hegemony. The US leadership and media have harped mainly on two concerns, namely access to the region's oil, and the security of Israel. There have also been rumblings of concern among Western intellectuals, that after the discomfiture suffered by Communism, the next 'threat' to the West would be posed by "Islamic fundamentalism." The type of military presence which the United States is already contemplating in the region provides legitimate grounds for anxiety that in "safe-guarding" its interests, the United States may seek to interfere with the right of the Arab and Muslim countries to shape their institutions and future direction on the basis of their own ideology and aspirations. In other words, the long years of struggle for political independence and cultural renaissance of the Arab and Muslim countries might go to waste as a neocolonialist structure is re-established.

At this point, it is desirable to be very clear about priorities and principles involved in understanding the emerging scenario in the region.

The vacation of Iraqi occupation of Kuwait is the first priority, since the conquest of a small sovereign country by a more powerful neighbour is not only a violation of the fundamental principles of inter-state relations, but also sets a bad precedent if it goes unchallenged. The Iraqi leader should be persuaded to realise that the prolongation of the conflict will cause such terrible destruction and carnage in his country as to put it back by many years, causing enormous suffering and misery to his people. Once he signifies his readiness to withdraw his forces from Kuwait, the attacks on Iraq must cease, and arrangements should be made for a force drawn from Arab and Islamic countries to move into Kuwait, to prepare for the return of its legitimate government.

The diplomacy of the Muslim countries should thereafter concentrate on moves designed to secure the withdrawal of the foreign forces presently assembled in the Gulf region. President Bush has based the US involvement on the resolutions of the UN Security Council that centre on Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. Once that occupation is over, the United States and its allies have no legal justification for maintaining a military presence.

Efforts to secure a return to the situation existing prior to the war must involve the principles of the same UN Charter that conferred legitimacy on the use of force. Indeed, the fact that the international community acted in the case of the rights of Kuwait on the basis of resolutions of the UN Security Council would reinforce demands being made for the same concern being shown for UN resolutions on other issues such as Palestine and Kashmir. The United States and other powers have invoked principles in dealing with the issue of Iraqi occupation of Kuwait that are equally valid in other issues involving violations of human rights and causing of tension and bloodshed.

In practice, the unfolding of events may not be so simple, and as past history has demonstrated, reason and logic are pushed into the background once passions and pride have been aroused by battle. However, the prolongation of the war, which in its present phase consists of round-the-clock bombardment of Iraq with bombs and missiles of fearsome destructive force, will only mean the obliteration of large areas, and the killing and maiming of large numbers of people. The present scenario in the Gulf is totally out of character with the global trends over the recent years, when the Cold War has ended, military pacts are being disbanded, and arsenals of nuclear and conventional weapons being reduced. Saddam Husayn's use of his bloated war machine to take over a small neighbour should be seen as an aberration. Once that is put right, it would be ironic if the admittedly vast power and technological superiority of the United States is employed to hark back to the age of imperialism and colonialism, by maintaining a presence in the heartland of the Muslim world.

The moves of the Soviet Government to browbeat the Baltic republics have drawn criticism from President Bush and attracted the sanctions of the West European Community. Against that backdrop, it is unthinkable that totally different standards would be applied to US actions, should it choose to maintain a military presence in the region.

As against this worldwide trend, the Gulf may well be the scene of local developments that might provide the justification for a Western presence to continue in the region. The US and British backing is primarily for the established regimes which are monarchical, and which have been apprehensive of the anti-monarchical rhetoric used earlier by Iran, following the Islamic revolution, and lately by Saddam Husayn. If the propaganda war accompanying the present conflict increases the sense of insecurity of the ruling families, some of them may well seek the continuation of US military presence. This is a possibility that has to be kept in view, and that could well keep this strategic oil-rich region as the focal point of tensions.

The people of Pakistan are deeply concerned over the situation that has emerged in the Gulf region. The popularly elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has personally undertaken an initiative designed to bring

this tragic conflict to an end. In his earlier address to the nation, he had explained Pakistan's principled stand, in conformity with the resolutions of the United Nations, which calls for the Iraqi vacation of Kuwait. But he also voiced the agonising distress of the people of the country over the death and destruction of Muslim lives and property precipitated by the war.

The mission he has undertaken seeks to enlist the support of friendly Islamic countries to a solution that conforms to universally accepted principles but replaces conflict with conciliation. Ostensibly, the task is daunting, and the stand Pakistan has taken is not to the linking of the leadership of Iraq. Still, the effort is worth making; at least it should not be said that Pakistan failed to exert itself in the cause of peace, and in efforts to safeguard the interests of fraternal Islamic countries.

So far as the Muslim Ummah is concerned, it is tragic enough that the ongoing conflict and destruction affect the Islamic world. We need the clarity of vision to appreciate that Iraq's vacation of Kuwait is dictated by morality and justice. After that is accomplished, we need the resolve and the unity to ensure that the long-term interests of the Muslim world are not trampled by any power. In other words, our participation in the multinational coalition should remain limited to securing the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait. After a week of highly destructive air strikes, there is justification for a pause to give diplomacy a chance, during which the OIC, the United Nations and other peace makers could renew efforts to secure compliance with the UN resolutions. Should President Bush and his Western partners insist upon maintaining a blitz related to political and strategic aims that go beyond an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, Pakistan and the other Islamic countries should not only dissociate themselves from any such policy but should actively oppose it. This is the sentiment that popular anti-war agitation is reflecting in the Muslim countries in general and Pakistan in particular.

MQM Chief Opposes Allied Attack on Iraq

91AS0513E Karachi DAWN in English 16 Jan 91 p 5

[Text] Karachi, 18 January—MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] Chief Altaf Hussain has appealed to humanity at large, particularly Muslim Ummah to demonstrate their unity to bring to an end the Gulf war which if continued would spread to the whole region.

Addressing a press conference at the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital from his hospital bed he said that this war should not be taken as war between allied troops and Iraq but an attack on Ummah.

He made it clear that MQM did not support the action of Iraq against Kuwait but it could not endorse the attack by 28 countries against Iraq on the plea that Iraq had refused to honour the UN decision for withdrawing its forces from Kuwait.

He also urged Iraq to vacate its occupation of Kuwait as well as the United States and its allies to cease fire. He called for a conference of OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] to resolve the issue between Iraq and Kuwait amicably.

He regretted that it was a unique example that the United Nations which came into being to resolve the issues peacefully had allowed the United States to take military action against Iraq. He said no conscientious people could back or support the war. He pointed out that even in America the people were holding rallies against the war.

Mr Hussain, who was given injection to reduce his pain as he spoke to the newsmen, said if the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq was shocking for the civilised world, then why did it not react in a similar manner against Israel when the latter occupied Arab lands and India took over Kashmir by brutal force. When Israel massacred Palestinians at Sabira and Shattila camps, the western countries' conscience remained unmoved.

He appealed to all Muslim countries to think over the matter as all those being killed in Kuwait and Iraq were Muslims. Mr Hussain also appealed to president and prime minister of Pakistan to take steps and use their influence for ceasefire. He paid tributes to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for initiating policies of self-reliance policies despite heavy odds, such as the Gulf crisis, Kashmir situation and problems inherited from the PPP's [Pakistan People's Party] 20 months misrule. He assured him full support for measures he would take for the security and survival of the country.

He reminded the (2 percent) privileged class in the country that all their wealth and privileges were because of Pakistan, and now when Ummah's survival was at stake they should come out and support the defence of the country.

JI Leader Says U.S. Enemy of Islam

91AS0513F Karachi DAWN in English 22 Jan 91 p 8

[Text] Lahore, 21 January—Amir of Jamaat-i-Islami, Senator Qazi Hussain Ahmad, said that America considered Islamic bloc as the biggest threat to its might after the failure of communism and the attack on Iraq on the pretext of regaining Kuwait was an excuse to achieve its malicious designs against Islam and Muslims.

He was addressing the district Amirs of the Jamaat for the Punjab at Mansoor on Monday.

He said that America was spending an amount of 3 million dollars yearly on the anti-Islamic lobby in order to save Israel and achieve its objectives. He said that America could not see any Islamic power becoming strong in the region, so that its agent Israel's supremacy could not be challenged by any Islamic power.

Discussing the foreign policy of the country, he said that it should be framed keeping in view the interests of Muslim Ummah instead of deriving timely political gains.

About the threat of allied American forces of totally annihilating Iraq by raining thousands of pounds of ammunition daily, he said that Pakistan should not be a silent spectator and practical steps to save Iraq was the dire need of the hour. He said America could repeat the aggression against Pakistan as well with the help of its allies, if it was given a free hand.

He said it was not the question of supporting President Saddam Husayn, but the issue at hand was denying America realisation of its malicious designs.

Commenting on the viewpoint of the Prime Minister Mr Nawaz Sharif, in his Sunday's speech he said that his speech neither reflected sentiments of the people nor true facts of Gulf problem.

He called upon the district Amirs' of the party to make people of their respective areas aware of the dangerous American designs.

President Stresses Need for Scientific Education

91AS0590A Lahore THE PAKISTAN TIMES
in English 7 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 6—A meeting of the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Sciences and Technology of Pakistan (SOPREST) was held here today with President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in the chair, who is also the President of the society.

The academic, architectural and financial aspects of the proposed Ghulam Ishaq Khan (GIK) Institute being established at Topi (NWFP [North-West frontier Province]) in private sector with an estimated cost of Rs. [rupees] 1,252m were reviewed at length during the meeting.

In his remarks, the President said that a constant review of the plans was necessary to keep abreast of the advancement in technology. He desired that integration of various disciplines of the Institute should be given due attention while conceptualising the Plan and firming up the design of the building.

The President reaffirmed the need for high quality advanced scientific and technological education in the country and stated that the proposed GIK Institute would help provide a strong industrial base for economic growth and prosperity of the country.

Expressing his satisfaction over the progress, the President desired that all out efforts must be made for the timely and successful completion of the project.—PR

Sindh: 'Establishment' Said Partial to Chief

91AS0510D Lahore VIEWPOINT in English
10 Jan 91 p 39

[Boldface words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] "I would certainly admit that **I do drink** alcohol and do not hide it anyway," said Jam Sadiq Ali, Chief Minister of Sindh, a province of the Islamic Republic and ruled by a Islami-Jamhoori-Ittehad [IJI]-Haq-Parast-coalition.

While admitting to drinking Jam Sadiq Ali did not make any revelation. It was common knowledge in Karachi and Sindh and also that his house was open to all devotees of Bacchus.

The Islam-loving President picked him up as Care-taker Chief Minister, despite this knowledge, only because of his ruthlessness which was required to crush the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] in its home province by strong-arm methods. The Jam remains a blue-eyed boy of the President who is never tired of exhorting people to follow the Quran and the Shariat.

Answerable to Allah

Asked by journalists whether what he was saying was for the record, Jam Sadiq Ali shouted: "Yes, it is very much on record **I drink daily**, and do not care for anybody (the Quran, the Shariat or the President) except Allah.

Political observers have noted that the Jam's admission has not created an uproar among the too pious ulema, especially those in the Jamaat Islami, the vocally religious Muslim Leaguers, the Prime Minister and the doyen of bureaucracy, Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan.

These pious people never miss an opportunity to malign an opponent at the slightest lapse.

When newsmen broached the subject again, the Jam reiterated that he stood by his earlier statement that he was fond of alcohol and cared two hoots about those (the few 'stray' ulema and leaders of public opinion) who criticised him for drinking. He said that he was not the type who would disown a statement for fear or favour. When newsmen continued to question him, he got irritated and said that he was not a liar and would continue to say that he drank.

However, when the demand began to be made for his resignation and for his trial under the Hudood law, the Jam resiled from his earlier statements and said that he used to drink but had sought **toba** (forgiveness) from God and had now given up alcohol. Earlier he had said that he drank under medical advice.

The Jam's strength, despite his open violation of the Shariat, stems from the services he was required to render by the President and the Establishment to destroy the PPP. If the Jam had stuck to his guns he would have earned a lot of praise for himself. But he buckled under

pressure. However, the hypocrisy and selective fanaticism of the 'Islam-lovers' and the 'Haq Parast' was exposed in the process. Observers recall that when Mr Bhutto told a public meeting in Lahore in the seventies that he drank alcohol and not the blood of the poor, he was condemned by the Islam-lovers in chorus which continued for a long time even after his death. When Mr Bhutto made his confession, the religious sensitivities of the ulema were so hurt that they issued innumerable fatwas (edicts), condemning him to hell and decreed that he was not a Muslim. When Mr Bhutto made his confession, alcohol was not banned. Today it is **haram** and comes within the mischief of the Hudood law. But the Jam knows his mentors will never punish him. The law is for the common man.

Like the ordinary law, the Shariat is also applied selectively. If an ordinary citizen is caught for this offence, he may be jailed and lashed and declared an outcast. In Jam Sadiq Ali's case, the law can be held in abeyance because of his tremendous utility for the Establishment.

South Asia Seen Lacking Economic Competitiveness

91AS0513C Karachi DAWN in English 17 Jan 91 p 12

[Article by Sultan Ahmed: "Losing the Economic Race"]

[Text] In two conferences within 6 weeks in two rather dissimilar countries I have heard how South Asia with its 1.1 billion people, or one-fifth of the world's population, is getting more and more marginalised in the world scene. In a world moving forward rapidly, standing still is in effect going backward or worse. That is what is precisely happening in this region—awesomely poor with a fringe of the excessively rich—when a new economic century is to begin in the world.

In Dhaka the fear was of physical extinction of Bangladesh within 60 to 70 years as the sea level in the south is rising, the water table in the north is sinking, the forests are vanishing and environmental degradation is becoming more acute under heavy population pressure and endemic poverty.

In Islamabad last week distinguished economists spoke of the problems arising from poor economic progress in South Asia in the face of rising population, while the rest of the world, including East Asia or the Pacific region was marching ahead. Not only Japan and the four famous Asian Tigers are forging ahead economically and awaiting the dawn of the Pacific Century 9 years from now but also Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia are moving fast behind them.

In Dhaka Prof Nurul Islam, the famous economist who knows Pakistan too well, spoke of "those are left behind." He says that South Asia contains 46.4 percent of the poor, while its population is 31 percent of the total population of the developing world. The total number of the poor in South Asia was estimated at 520 million in

1985 or 51 percent of the population, while the number of extreme poor is about 300 million or 29 percent of the population.

And S.A.M.S. Kibria, Under-Secretary of UN and Executive Secretary of ESCAP [UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific], spoke of the grim prospects for this region unless it radically alters its approach to economic growth and development of its human, material and financial resources.

The two economists were speaking at the South Asia Regional Conference on policies and strategies for sustainable growth in the region, sponsored by the Society for International Development, Bangladesh Chapter. They could afford to be loud and clear in ringing the bells as they were working for international organisations outside Bangladesh, while the speakers at the seventh annual meeting of the Pakistan Society for Development Economists [PSDE] were somewhat restrained as they were distinguished foreign economists or those working largely for the government. Nonetheless their message was clear if the nation wanted to listen and act.

If such warnings are not disturbing enough for us the State Bank of Pakistan's annual report for 1989-90 reminds us that the Pakistanis are living on 1 dollar per capita per day, while the UN Human Development Report prepared by Dr Mahbubul Haq says that Pakistan is among the most backward countries which spend less than a dollar on education or public health per capita in a whole year. That dollar would have meant only Rs [rupees] 3.35 in the early 1950s, Rs 4.75 until 1972 and Rs 9.90 until 1982. If a dollar means Rs 22.05 now it only shows how weak is our rupee and how miserably the mass of us are living and how niggardly is our investment in our future, particularly in respect of education and public health. That certainly is not the road to progress, and that is not how we can enter the 21st Century confident of facing the challenges that lay ahead, although by then our population may be between 150 to 160 million—an awesome prospect in the kind of chaotic conditions which prevail in our midst.

South Asia has an infinite capacity to increase its miseries. If not shooting wars, there are often threat of wars or military tensions between neighbours, while India, the largest country, goes on amassing arms in an unbridled manner. There are religious and ethnic killings, a calamity that seems to get worse. A very large part, and an increasing part, of the meagre financial resources of each country is being spent on their armed forces which seems inadequate because of the ceaseless rivalry in this regard.

Most of us are preoccupied with irrelevant or small issues that divide the people rather than unite them. In Pakistan the Shariat Bill has become a new contentious issue, while the cops are misusing the Hudood Ordinance not to enforce moral stands but to make more money. So even a 10-year-old helpless girl is charged under the Hudood Ordinance and sent to jail. Religion

as a whole is being used not to promote progress and betterment of man but to pull back the people and retard national growth.

We have been rather silent on our most critical problem, population explosion, which reduces our per capita income, increases the number of the illiterates, undernourished, sick and the unemployed.

Finance Minister Sartaj Aziz who inaugurated the PSDE conference lamented that our per capita GNP [gross national product] was growing at the rate of only 2.5 percent, and at this rate it would take 50 years to become a middle income country with a per capita income of over 1,000 dollars. He hence urged that we "recapture" the 7 percent GDP [gross domestic product] growth rate achieved in the first quarter of 1980s. If along with that the population growth is restrained, an average 4 percent per capita income growth will become possible.

Almost the same was said at the same conference last year by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. He said that despite the 6 percent GDP growth the per capita GNP growth was only 2.5 percent, and at that rate it would take 50 years for Pakistan to become middle income country. Instead he wanted that goal to be achieved within 25 years, which, too, was rather too long, and so he sought an increase in per capita GDP of 4.3 percent annually, through a sustained 6.5 to 7 percent GDP growth.

The State Bank of Pakistan's annual report for 1989-90 shows that a GDP growth rate of 5.2 percent was achieved last year compared to 4.8 percent in the preceding year. If we make allowance for a population growth of 3.2 percent, our per capita gain last year was 2 percent only, and the year before 1.7 percent. If we make allowances for the gross distortions in distribution of incomes in a land of extremes of poverty and wealth the poor are no better.

We have come to a situation in which we have the same doctors prescribing the same medicines to the same patient year after year with nothing much happening, save the patient getting relatively worse. Mr Sartaj Aziz came up with an 11-point prescription for economic progress, trimming his sails to suit the IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] winds. All of them were very valid, but hardly any point was new. The real question was the capability of the government to implement those prescriptions, even of the IJI government with its overwhelming support in the National Assembly and the Senate, to enlist the cooperation of the people, particularly of the business and industrial community, and make the officials less corrupt, more efficient and clearly more goal-oriented.

In a period in which the U.S. aid has been suspended, with the possibilities of other aid being reduced on the nuclear issue, we are hearing loud and resonant slogans of self-reliance without clear and positive moves in that direction officially. It takes more than one-dish wedding parties to achieve that. The talk of eating stale bread

rather than accept tied aid unbecoming of our sovereignty seems futile as that is based on the assumption that there will be ample fresh bread overnight to be eaten as stale bread the next morning or afternoon.

There was ample wholesome advice from top experts at the PSDE meeting. Prof Ansley Coale from the Princeton University, a famous population expert, spoke how other countries had reduced their population growth and how we could go about it. Mr Gamini Corea, former Secretary-General of UNCTAD [UN Conference on Trade and Development], spoke of the "International Development Perspectives in the 1990s" and said how badly the developing countries were likely to fare in the increasing international economic competition, and Prof Robert Baldwin of the University of Wisconsin-Madison spoke of how the failed Uruguay Round that had largely ignored the interests of developing countries amidst the battle of the rich and super-rich nations for their own gains, while the Nobel-prize winning Lawrence Klein spoke of why we should prefer foreign capital to foreign loans. Syed Nawab Haider Naqvi, director of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economists, cautioned against going headlong towards total privatisation and wanted a mixed economy in which the market and the government had ample place to play their rightful roles.

Now the State Bank talks of the government getting into a dead trap because of excessive domestic borrowing while reports speak of the vast unutilised aid in the pipeline, exceeding 10 billion dollars or over 3 years of aid committed in recent times. It has been said that out of 7.3 billion dollar aid committed by the World Bank only 4.2 billion dollars have been disbursed so far. Out of the aid commitment of 5.9 billion dollars by the Asian Development Bank, 3.3 billion dollars or 58 percent remains undisbursed.

The issue now is not only getting new aid commitments but also using the aid in the pipeline. While we are quick to use commodity aid, and keep seeking more and more of it for budgetary support or current consumption, we are too slow to utilise the large project aid as we do not have the matching rupee funds or the projects are not ready or there are disputes between the Centre or the provinces regarding their implementation.

So we muddle along, with more of slogans and less of action, with more of the plans and less of the execution, more grappling with crisis real or needlessly created and perpetuate our poverty without the political will to get to the heart of the matter.

Editorial Terms Population Growth 'Nightmare'

91AS0590C Karachi DAWN in English 28 Jan 91 p 11

[Editorial: "Population Nightmare"]

[Text] What better proof could there be of the utter failure of Pakistan's population programme than the unbelievably high demographic growth rate in the country. Although the census to be held in March will

give us the final picture—presuming that the count will be carried out honestly and diligently—experts have been forecasting a scenario of doom. The latest is an official report that confirms that the population growth rate has not gone down even by a jot. It continues to be three percent as it has been for the last two decades. This is cause for serious concern. It shows that the millions which have been poured into the population programme have gone down the drain. Here is a grim message for our policy-makers, who must begin worrying about the implications of a rapidly growing population for the political stability and socio-economic development of the country. Given the paucity of resources available, it will become increasingly difficult for the government to meet the health, education, nutrition, shelter and other basic needs of the people. Studies on the subject have clearly established the magnitude of the problem Pakistan will face if the population growth rate continues to gallop as at present. Take just one example, namely, education. By the turn of the century, Pakistan will have 23.6 million children in the age group 5-9 years to educate. This will call for 241,323 primary schools. At present we have 90,942 institutions for the children in this age bracket. Will we be able to cope with the burgeoning demand?

What is seriously lacking is the political will on the part of the government. Prodded on by foreign aid donors, successive governments in Islamabad have sustained the population welfare programme, but rather half-heartedly. In the absence of a strong political commitment to a policy aimed at reducing the population growth rate, the programme has wobbled on but without making the kind of impact it was meant to. Hence the lack of results. The small-family norm can be made generally acceptable only by reorienting the social attitudes of the people and bringing about behavioural changes in them. This would require a massive motivational campaign which can be effective if those at the highest level of authority accept it as a principal focus of policy and provide the necessary moral and financial underpinnings for its implementation. Though our leaders at times express concern at the rapidly growing population—only the other day the President touched upon the subject in his speech at the inauguration of the National Power Centre—they generally fight shy of identifying themselves too closely with the population programme. This would explain why we have never had any President or Prime Minister inaugurating a population welfare centre or participating in any of its functions.

This tendency on the part of our leaders to keep themselves at a safe distance from the population programme while professing support for it, may be attributed to the popular myth that Islam does not approve of family planning. Although the most learned religious scholars in the Islamic world, such as the ulema in Al-Azhar, have issued fatwas supporting contraception, it is difficult to

understand why our religious leaders take a different view. It is time the issue was taken up on this plane, as many other Muslim countries such as Bangladesh and Indonesia have done. Given the influence the Imams

and Khatibs exercise on the community, the government could give the much needed fillip to its population welfare programme by involving them in the family planning campaigns.

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