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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Israeli Attempts To Influence PLO-Hamas Relations Described

44040240 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
11 Feb 89 pp 22-24

[Article by Nabil Khalifah: "Israel Scheming for Sedition in Bank and Strip; Will War Break Out Between PLO and Hamas; Israeli Statements on Withdrawal from Bank and Strip Cities and on Holding Democratic Elections Aimed at Pushing PLO and Hamas To Vie for Control, i.e. to Confrontation"]

[Text] Israel continues to practice the "carrot and stick" policy vis-a-vis the Palestinian intifadah [uprising]. However, a significant development has surfaced since the beginning of this year, 1989, and it is embodied in a "political offensive" of a "peaceful" nature, launched by Minister of Defense Yitzhaq Rabin and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. This offensive calls for releasing some detained local leaders (Faysal al-Husayni) to initiate dialogue with figures from several national and Islamic currents for holding elections to "elect legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people to provide a broad self-rule for a specific period of time to be followed by direct negotiations without any preconditions in which the final status of the occupied territories will be determined" and to hold talks with some of the intifadah leaders, including Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the spiritual leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) who declared in an interview with Israeli television his support for holding elections, expressing the belief that "there is no other way to elect representatives of the Palestinian people." The position of the Hamas leader was expressed in the wake of the 33d statement issued by the pro-PLO UNC [Unified National Command], urging "rejection of the political elections recently proposed for the occupied territories by more than one Israeli official."

In a statement it issued from Nicosia (2 February 1989) in direct response to Hamas leader Shaykh Yasin, Fatah [Movement for the Liberation of Palestine] warned all against getting involved in the Israeli game of elections. Hamas' position and Fatah's response reflect the tense relations between the two sides. After having been secretly controversial, these relations have now taken a turn toward open conflict.

What are the limits of the conflict between the PLO and Hamas?

And how is Israel scheming to ignite a war between the two sides and to turn it into a war similar to the Amal-Hizbullah war in Lebanon?

If the Palestinian intifadah [uprising] has constituted, and continues to constitute, a show of strength against the Israeli occupation, it has also constituted a show of strength between two major Palestinian currents: The PLO current, embodied in the Intifadah's UNC, and the Islamic

resistance movement current, embodied in Hamas. With the passage of time, the gap has widened between the two sides. This is normal, considering that each of the two currents emanates from and operates on the basis that it is the true and legitimate representative (in the political sense insofar as the PLO is concerned and in the religious sense insofar as Hamas is concerned) of the Palestinian people. What is proven historically is that the PLO is the older in representing the Palestinian people and that Hamas is recent, born in the late 1970's and early 1980's, and concentrated in Gaza Strip in particular. This means that Hamas is vying with the PLO for representation of the Palestinian people in the Bank and the Strip, not vice versa. A review of Israeli-Palestinian relations from the early 1970's (especially since the emergence of the PLO on the international theater in 1974) to the present demonstrates that one of the constants of the Israeli strategy is to strike and end the relationship between the PLO and the Palestinians in the occupied territories. The objective here is clear, to strike the Palestinian identity and to facilitate Israel's control of the Bank and the Strip.

To accomplish this strategic objective, Israel has employed numerous means. We are content to note these means, without dwelling on their details:

- The endeavor to implement self-rule.
- Establishing the village leagues.
- Direct intervention in the appointment, dismissal, and liquidation of mayors.
- Fostering political loyalty in the bank and the strip to certain Arab countries at the expense of the PLO.
- The Lebanon war, which Israeli analysts have characterized as a "war in Lebanon for the Bank," meaning that elimination of the PLO from Beirut is the only means to end its influence on the West Bank Arabs. They called this war the "Bank safety war" instead of the "Galilee safety war" because "severing the Palestinian body in the occupied territories from the Palestinian head in Lebanon will bring a quick and easy solution to the problem of the West Bank Arabs and to the political status of the territories," according to Feldman, a member of Tel Aviv University's Strategic Studies Institute.
- Bombing and destroying the PLO headquarters in Tunisia.
- Assassinating PLO leaders, including Abu Jihad.

Using all means of enticement and intimidation has not accomplished for Israel the objective of weakening the PLO's role and authority over the Bank and Strip Arabs. Consequently, encouragement has had to be given to a fundamental political movement with an Islamic religious dimension in order to split the political loyalty of the Bank and Strip citizens. This is the meaning of the indirect support Israel has given Hamas. Here, the following must be made clear:

- The Islamic resistance movement is a deep-rooted movement in the Arab and Islamic societies. It must

not be understood that Israel is the party which has founded this movement.

- Ideologically, the Islamic resistance movement poses a threat to Israel. Therefore, it is not in Israel's interest to encourage this radical Islamic tendency.

However, Israel has found that this is the only means to create a deep and real split among the Palestinians in the Bank and the Strip and, consequently, to encourage a new leadership to gain internal control at the expense of the PLO and the Palestinians abroad. For Israel to be able to play the game of controversies among the Palestinians, there have to be two nearly-equal Palestinian forces whose conflict leads to destroying the strength of both.

PLO and Hamas: Conflict Background

By reviewing the Palestinian reality and the PLO's political address on the one hand and Hamas' address on the other, it becomes clearly evident that there is a major split between the two currents at the geographic, ideological, and political levels. We will be content to note here the general features of this split:

Geographic split: Hamas considers the PLO a part of the Palestinians abroad and believes that "its departure from Beirut shook the confidence of the Palestinian at home in the PLO and motivated him to seriously consider taking hold of the reins of a cause squandered by the defeated leaderships abroad," according to Hamas. Hamas is the desired alternative at home, i.e., it is the young alternative leadership. Regardless of how hard the PLO tries to defend the statement that the "Palestinians are an indivisible whole" and that there is no external and no internal in the struggle process, the objective geographic reality of Hamas' presence at home and of the presence of the PLO, with its cadres and its institutions, abroad leaves a certain impression on the political reality of the occupied territories' citizens. With Israel's indirect support for Hamas, the latter "is gaining greater and greater importance in the territories at the PLO's expense," according to LE MONDE.

Ideological split: There is a wide gap between the Islamic state on all of Palestine, which is one of Hamas' objectives, and the democratic secular state projected by the Palestinian factions' literature—a gap which motivated Hamas to give a higher priority to fighting the Palestinian left than to fighting Israel. Hamas did not shift the higher priority to fighting Israel until mid-1987. "We have our thinking and the PLO has its thinking, and the people are the sole judge. The state constitution must be Islam," according to Shaykh Yasin.

Political split: Proceeding on the basis of its ideological position, Hamas has rejected all the political options approved by the PNC's latest session in Algiers. These options have become the PLO's options and they include: The peace projections, the international conference, and the creation of a Palestinian state on a part of Palestine. "All the peace initiatives and proposals and

international conferences must be rejected because they lead to relinquishing a part of Palestine, which is tantamount to relinquishing a part of our religion," according to Hamas. What is required is a struggle for "an Islamic state on all of Palestine."

This split has been reflected in the two sides' positions during the intifadah. One of the split's merits is that it has made the two sides' positions vis-a-vis the Jewish state more intransigent and more radical, thus turning the intifadah into some sort of a duel between the two sides over who is to lead and control the ordinary Palestinian. But one of the split's drawbacks is that it has intensified the division between the two sides which has gone as far as engaging in acts of one-upmanship which have annoyed the Palestinian citizens who are caught between two fires and two pressures pulling at them and who no longer know what to do. However, these citizens have come to better understand the dangers of this tendency for the future, meaning that greater efforts are exerted in the competition and struggle between the PLO and Hamas than in fighting the Israeli troops. This weakens the Palestinian capability and it certainly affects its future negatively.

Elections Are Crossroad

The Israeli officials who "encourage" the PLO-Hamas conflict and observe it carefully and with interest have found their desired object in the election issue, considering that it is the central issue which will cause the camel's back to break and the real sifting between the two sides to begin. The reason is simple and obvious: Elections in the Bank and the Strip will produce the political leaderships which will represent the Palestinian people at home. With the growth it has achieved in the Bank and the Strip and with the indirect support it could get from Israel, Hamas perhaps feels that it is gaining the representative majority in the territories, that it will become the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people at home, and that it will consequently become the party speaking and negotiating on behalf of the people in any future negotiations with Israel. This is why Hamas Leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin has declared his approval of the elections whereas the PLO has rejected them and has called for boycotting them, unless held under the auspices of UN or European forces.

It seems that the Israeli tendency to hold the elections is tied to calculations confirming the possibility of a Hamas win against the PLO. Israel's policy, as delineated by the West Bank governor, has been founded on the principle that "there will be no elections as long as the PLO controls the political arena in these territories." Israel's current dash in the direction of holding such elections seeks to achieve three objectives:

- First, politically exploit the disrepair developing in the balance of forces to the PLO's detriment (at least theoretically), embody and entrench this disrepair by allowing the emergence of local leaderships, headed by Hamas, as an alternative to the PLO.

- Second, turn these leaderships into an acceptable and desirable negotiator in all Israeli-Palestinian negotiation at the regional level or at the international conference level. Turn the issue of Palestinian legitimacy from a subject of Palestinian-Israeli conflict into a subject of inter-Palestinian conflict.
- Third, ignite sedition between the PLO and Hamas over a thorny and serious issue over which neither side can make any concessions. This would simply mean an open war between the two sides.

Shamir Ignites Fuse

Yitzhak Shamir surprised the world by declaring for the first time ever in the Likud's history his willingness to withdraw from the population centers in the Bank and the Strip within the framework of a two-phase plan:

First, the phase of a broad self-rule for the Palestinians for a specific period of time.

Second, the phase of negotiations without any preconditions the final status of the territories, provided that the Israeli forces withdraw from some of the Bank and Strip cities and that "democratic elections be held to select legitimate representatives of the Palestinians." Practically, this means that after completing all the preparations for a PLO-Hamas war, Israel will withdraw from the major population centers and will thus ignite the fuse of war between the two sides for control of the areas vacated by Israel. The Israelis will not hesitate to supply the combatants with the "necessary" weapons directly or indirectly so that more blood may be shed by the "brothers-turned-enemies." The Israeli scheme seeks to achieve the following:

- Distort and destroy the Palestinian identity.
- Contain both the PLO and the Islamic movement simultaneously. The PLO will become a political force with an international weight, but a force severed from its roots in the territories. The Islamic movement will turn into a local force in the territories, but a force severed from any international weight. This will by necessity mean "deflating" the PLO's international halo and deflating the Islamic movement's dynamic political capability.
- Depict Israel as being more compassionate toward the Arabs than the Arabs themselves, and depict the massacres Israel has committed in 1 and 1/2 years of the intifadah's life as being unequal to massacres committed by the "brothers-turned-enemies" in 1 and 1/2 weeks.
- Keep the wound between the two sides open. If the Amal-Hizbullah war has required the efforts of Syria and Iran to stop it, then the Bank war, should it erupt—which is what is being schemed, as we have already seen—will be an open war, and Israel will be the only party capable of controlling it, i.e., of keeping it ignited for as long as possible and of supplying it with the necessary fuel! The Arabs in Palestine will

then have a second fireplace, along with the "Lebanese fireplace," next to which to warm themselves.

Having read a statement by Uri Lohrman, coordinator of the Israeli activities in Lebanon, a companion of mine said to me recently: These Jews are surprising. Lohrman warns that he will not allow Hizbullah to control the south. On the other hand, the Israelis and their faction permit Hizbullah to transport fighters and weapons from al-Biq'a to Jiba' across the security belt. Can you explain this to me?

I said: What is surprising, keeping in mind that the objective of the weapons is to let us fight each other? It makes no difference who is killing whom and who will kill whom as long as the killing and the fighting will ultimately serve Israel's interest. I did not conceal my feeling from my colleague, telling him: I see the sedition marching upon the Bank and the Strip and I see another Lebanon burning on the banks of the Jordan River and the shores of Gaza.

Taken by surprise, my companion said: Say God forbid. I immediately responded: I have deep faith in God, but on occasions like this, I reiterate al-Mutanabbi's verse:

"This is an invocation that deflects neither the foreordained nor the inevitable."

My greatest hope is that the future will prove me a liar.

Effects of Uprising on Galilee Populace Described
44040229 Nicosia *FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH* in Arabic
15 Jan 89 pp 23-25

[Interview with Ibrahim Nimr Husayn, chairman of the National Committee of Heads of Local Arab Councils, and Father Shahatah Shahatah, chairman of the National Committee for Defense of the Land, by Ayyad 'Abd-al-Khalik; Prague, 9 Dec]

[Text] *FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH* met two Palestinian personalities in Prague, leaders of the Palestinian people in Israel. They are the chairman of the National Committee of Heads of Local Arab Councils, and the chairman of the National Committee for Defense of the Land. They spoke about the right of a Palestinian entity with the same force with which they spoke about the right of equality. One should bear in mind that Ibrahim Nimr Husayn holds the prize for Palestinian-Israeli coexistence. He is head of the municipality of Shafa 'Amr, where the "Parliament of Arabs of Israel," as the Israeli newspapers have described it, has often been held.

Israel's president, a member of the Labor Alignment, Hayim Herzog, hesitated and did not know what to reply, when Ibrahim Nimr Husayn, chairman of the National Committee of Heads of Local Arab Councils in

Israel answered him, "The Jews do not have more feeling and patriotism than we; so you will never be able to keep us from feeling solidarity with our people in the West Bank and Gaza." Herzog had asked him to "halt acts of solidarity with the intifadah [uprising]."

On 15 November 1988, the day the state of Palestine was proclaimed, Palestinians in Galilee, the triangle, and the Negev demonstrated support at the invitation of the National Committee. On that day, Father Shahatah Shahatah cried from joy at the birth of the Palestinian state. This is the way he described that day to us when we met him and Ibrahim Nimr Husayn in Prague on 9 December: "There was universal joy in every house, village, and city. Celebrations were held. As is the Palestinian custom on holidays, we all began visiting each other to exchange greetings. Candy and date cake were distributed. But I want to add that if the state is established, we will remain in our villages and cities, struggling within Israel, because this land is our land, too. We will remain in it and exert pressure for equality. We will never leave it, except as dead bodies; other than that, it is impossible."

The Palestinian masses inside Israel had marched on 30 March, the anniversary of the Day of the Earth, in large marches to express their support of the intifadah in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. In the beautiful Galilean village of Kafr Kanna, as a group of girls wearing traditional Palestinian dress laid three wreaths of flowers on graves representing "the martyrs of the intifadah," "the martyrs of the Sabra and Shatila massacres," and "the martyrs of the first Day of the Land (March 1976)," thousands of voices shouted, "With blood and spirit we will build Galilee!"—"Our people, march, march in victory and liberation!"—"Yes to the independent Palestinian state!" On that day, Muhammad Mi'ari, member of the National Committee of Heads of Local Councils and member of the Israeli Knesset, spoke at the march on behalf of the Progressive List for Peace: "There will be no peace until the four sacred colors of the Palestinian flag are raised over Jerusalem, the capital of the independent Palestinian state, under the leadership of our revolutionary brother, Yasir 'Arafat."

A 'President' Embarrassed a President!

During the time of the intifadah, Palestinian activities have developed in Galilee. Various committees have been established to collect contributions and organize material and spiritual solidarity initiatives with the masses of the intifadah.

When we met him in Prague last 9 December, Ibrahim Nimr Husayn, chairman of the National Committee of Heads of Local Councils, said:

"Since its establishment, the committee of heads of local jurisdictions has worked to exert pressure on the Israeli government to move toward peace and for our equal

rights as local jurisdictions or a Palestinian sector generally. When the glorious intifadah erupted, we more or less left the issue of equality and began to concentrate our activity on supporting the intifadah through demonstrations, marches, and protests. From the beginning, this activity of ours has accompanied relief efforts, such as contributions of money, medicines, and food. We have also established information centers. When Israeli authorities hindered the activities of journalists in the occupied territories, we supplied them with full information. We have continued this activity of ours to the present day.

"We always tell the Israelis frankly that the Palestinian people have rights that they must obtain. The Israeli leaders have tried by intimidation to keep us from supporting the intifadah, but have not succeeded. Our resolution in the local jurisdictions and the Committee To Monitor Arab Citizens' Affairs, which I also head, is 'Support and complete solidarity with the intifadah.'

"Roni Milo, Shamir's advisor for Arab affairs (now minister of environment) said to me frankly, 'Your announced solidarity and support for the intifadah only encourage citizens in the West Bank and Gaza to throw more stones at Israeli soldiers.' I answered, 'Your explanation is wrong. You counter stones with bullets. The young people who are throwing stones have a national right to independence. If you learn that anything has happened to a Jew anywhere in the world, you feel pain in your mind. Do not think that you have more patriotism and feeling than we. Those who are exposing themselves to your bullets in the occupied territories are our brothers. You must not ask us or pressure us to abandon support for them. That is something impossible.'

"I gave a similar answer to President Hayim Herzog. On Peace Day, 19 December 1987, during which we marched in large numbers to support the intifadah, he stated, 'The Palestinians in Israel will experience as disaster like that of 1948, if they continue such activities.' I headed a delegation of local officials to meet with him and told him, 'You are president of two peoples in this country. It is sad to hear such words from you.' At that moment, I felt that he was embarrassed. He addressed me, saying, 'I hope you will be a bridge of peace.' 'We are ready for that,' I replied. 'Give us whatever opportunities you can.' He answered, 'I am not the man who makes the decision on that.'

"The intifadah surprised Israel. I told the foreign ambassadors who visited me—among them the ambassadors of Sweden, Norway, Britain, Spain, and France—that the intifadah had not been prepared—I meant from the point of view of timing. The important thing was that the Palestinians were provoked by the fact that their cause was ignored at the Amman Arab summit conference and at the superpower summit. They therefore decided to seize their rights with their own hands. The intifadah

started on 9 December to give expression to this under the slogan, 'Dignified life, or martyrdom.' The outbreak of the intifadah was a natural thing, but its timing was a surprise."

About the resolutions of the Palestinian National Council, Abu Hatim [Ibrahim Nimr Husayn] expressed the following view: "They were objective and reasonable and expressed great political maturity. They bestowed respect on the Palestinian people and drew broad international solidarity. In Israel, they aroused sharp debate within organizations and universities that demanded the taking of a positive position toward the Algiers resolutions. Some Jews are saying, 'What more do we want than this?'"

"I can say that after Algiers, the PLO moved from one phase into another; to be precise, from an organization to a state, and it became independent in the Middle East region. After today, no one can think of dominating or controlling the PLO, now that it has become an independent state."

Father Shahatah Shahatah

Speaking to us about the development of Palestinian identity in Israel, Father Shahatah Shahatah said, "While it is true that we have been left without leadership for a certain time, within the groupings of our people patriotic forces have developed that have been able to lead and direct the national struggle. We were in an unenviable position in terms of social, economic, and political pressures, particularly when we were under military rule (until the mid-sixties, FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH); yet our struggle forced Israel to retreat and abandon many arbitrary measures it had imposed upon us."

"I can say that Palestinian identity began to assume a clearer and fuller form after the first Day of the Land, 30 March 1976. I say this not because I am chairman of the National Committee for Defense of the Land. After that day, we no longer feared to show our national personality and be proud of it."

"When the intifadah began, the Palestinian people in Galilee, the triangle, and the Negev arose to help without fear or hesitation, which shows that the Palestinian personality had fully crystallized. Marches, demonstrations, and strikes were organized. Announcements and leaflets were distributed. Various committees were established to collect contributions of money and food for the people of the occupied territories."

The priest [Father Shahatah] continued, "Many thought the intifadah had come to remedy particular wrongs our Palestinian people had suffered within the occupied territories—confiscation of land and water, settlements, and economic or administrative pressures. However, in our mind, as Palestinians in our country, these things are

not basic. What is basic is our people's defense of its personality and national rights. That is why the slogan of the intifadah is, 'Yes to martyrdom to achieve national independence!'"

"I say that we are a people that has been able to stand resolutely to develop its personality and independent Palestinian existence. What made the intifadah even more successful was this solidarity and unity which manifested themselves in their best forms at home and abroad."

"Unfortunately, some obstacles have appeared and might seem to imply a certain conflict. I mean the Islamic resistance movement, HAMAS. I say that we, as Palestinians, must remain united. Any exclusive manifestation—here I am speaking as a man of religion—is very dangerous, since religion should be a uniting factor. If it is the opposite, it is not religion. I therefore ask all brothers to take as their slogan, 'More unity, more democracy!'"

"Something that stirred my feelings to the point of tears was the moment in Algiers when all the Palestinians, including the opposition, announced that they would abide by the decision of the majority. This indicates a united consciousness and vision of our issues of destiny. We may differ over a particular method of application, but we must take into consideration the view of the majority of our people. So I direct a call to our people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in Israel, and scattered abroad: 'Strengthen unity and democracy; they are the only way to insure victory and overcome the difficulties!'"

When we asked Father Shahatah Shahatah about the destruction by Israeli authorities of 15 homes in the Palestinian town of al-Tayyibah in Galilee, which led to a Palestinian general strike in Israel on 15 November 1988, he said, "Israel is embarrassed. There is a clear decision to destroy hundreds of Palestinian houses, based on recommendations approved by a committee formed by the Israeli government, called the Markovitch Committee. It has studied the building situation in the Palestinian villages from Haifa south. However, in Haifa and the north (i.e., Galilee), hundreds, even thousands of 'unlicensed' houses await us, according to the view of this committee. We have told Israeli officials, 'The problem is not our problem. You are the ones preventing the expansion of Arab villages to keep pace with their normal growth. Most Arab villages still do not have land-use maps. Your purpose in this is clear. As long as such maps do not exist, you can do anything. If such maps existed, the local authority in the Arab village could deal with the lands existing on the maps, whether industrial, agricultural, or public, and forbid you under the law to confiscate any plot of ground without approval of the local authority.'"

Speaking about preparations for the Day of the Land, the chairman of the Committee for Defense of Arab Land, said, "Our agricultural problems are many. We held a successful agricultural conference to develop our local agriculture. On the Day of the Land, we will raise our voices aloud against all forms of oppression, arbitrariness, and discrimination against us. We shall demand that the file on the building problem in Arab villages be opened. The problem is not limited to the destruction of houses. There are even more serious problems. Today there are village communities that have existed since the days of the Turkish occupation. The Israeli government still has not been recognized them and is demanding to move these communities to other sites. We have therefore formed a committee called 'The Committee of Forty.' On the Day of the Land, we will demand that the location of these villages on their sites be legally confirmed, and that they not be removed or transferred to other sites."

It was almost 1 o'clock in the morning. We said goodbye to the two Palestinians, Ibrahim Nimr Husayn and Father Shahatah Shahatah. The latter whispered, "I miss the flag and map of Palestine in my office in Kafr Yasif. Goodbye! I travel home tomorrow."

ALGERIA

Fourteen Regional Coordinators Appointed *45190039c Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 8 Jan 89 p 5*

[Text] Abdelhamid Mehri, secretary-general of the FLN's [National Liberation Front] Central Committee, presided yesterday over a full meeting of the members of the Executive Secretariat held at the front's headquarters. During the meeting, he installed in office the following 14 Central Committee coordinators, in charge of coordinating the regions as indicated below:

- Algiers: Mohamed Boukhalfa
- Tizi-Ouzou: Mustapha Boudina
- Oran: Said Bouhadja
- Constantine: Nourredine Djellouli
- Batna: Bertal Labidi
- Ouargla: Kassa Aissa
- Setif: Salah Kaouani
- Blida: Abdelaziz Djouhri
- Tlemcen: Mohamed Seghir Helaili
- Medea: Dienane Mohamed
- Bechar: Reguig Benaouda
- Saida: Ali Riahi Tiaret: Ibrahim Mesbah
- Annaba: Mohamed Bouricha.

The coordination regions were geographically defined as follows:

1. Algiers-Boumerdes; regional capital is Algiers.
2. Tizi-Ouzou-Bouira-Bordj Bou Arreridj-M'Sila; regional capital is Tizi-Ouzou.

3. Annaba-El Tarf-Guelma-Souk Ahras; regional capital is Annaba.

4. Oran-Mostaganem-Mascara-Relizane; regional capital is Oran.

5. Constantine-Mila Oum El Bouaghi-Skikda; regional capital is Constantine.

6. Batna-Biskra-Khenchela-Tebessa; regional capital is Batna.

7. Ouarghla-El Oued-Ghardaia-Illizi-Tamanrasset; regional capital is Ouargla.

8. Setif-Bejaia-Jijel; regional capital is Setif.

9. Blida-Tipaza-Ain Deflafla; regional capital is Blida.

10. Tlemcen-Sidi Bel-Abbes-Ain Temouchent; regional capital is Tlemcen.

11. Medea-Djelfa-Laghout; regional capital is Medea.

12. Bechar-Adrar-Tindouf; regional capital is Bechar.

13. Saida-Naama-El Bayadh; regional capital is Saida.

14. Tiaret-Tissemsilt-Chlef; regional capital is Tiaret.

Two Consumer Protection Bills Passed *45190039a Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 23 Jan 89 p 3*

[Article by Mohamed Koursi: "Two Bills Adopted"]

[Text] On the floor of the APN [National People's Assembly] with Rabah Bitat presiding, the deputies passed two bills yesterday: one supplementing Ordinance No 75-58, dated 9/28/75, on the civil code; and, the second regarding general consumer protection rules.

As for the first, a new legal category, the management contract, is added to the ordinance in question. This is the latest to come out of the new national economic environment created by two laws: one on the autonomy of enterprises, and the other involving use of agricultural land.

Following the vote, Justice Minister Ali Benfliss made a brief speech congratulating the legal and financial commission for its clarification of the comments made by the deputies at the plenary session pertaining to the scope of this type of contract and the legal status of the national partner.

A management tool, it is expected to improve the productivity of management, the only way to ensure more effectively performing enterprises. By controlling the means of production, increasing profitability, and

acquiring know-how, the management contract will make this improved performance possible, or this at least is what is stated in the supplementary report submitted to the deputies.

What is the management contract? The first article explains: It is a contract "by means of which a partner who enjoys a well-established reputation as a manager, undertakes to manage, on behalf of and for the account of a public economic enterprise or semipublic corporation and on a remunerative basis, all or part of the assets of said enterprise or corporation, giving it its seal of approval on the basis of its rules and standards, and to enable said enterprise or corporation to benefit from its promotion and sales networks."

This law spells out both the obligations of the public enterprise or semipublic corporation and the obligations of the management firm or the objective of the management contract.

The economic entity is in fact required to "maintain the property being managed in good condition throughout the period of the contract," while the management firm is required to work towards "optimizing the economic return and conquering foreign markets."

The management contract may be terminated for one of two reasons: expiration of the term specified in the contract; or, cancellation by one of the two parties to the contract, in which case compensation will be provided to the partner by the cancelling party.

The second bill, passed after amendments, involves "general consumer protection regulations." Here, too, Commerce Minister Mourad Medelci was quick to congratulate the deputies for their contributions to this bill aimed primarily at protecting citizens, who in this case become consumers of goods as well as services made available to them. The deputies at the plenary session where this bill was debated focussed their attention on the aspect of services, which had been left out of the bill. This oversight "led the commission to revise all the pertinent articles."

During the debate on this bill, the deputies also referred to the problem of the failure of imported products to meet required specifications. We cannot ignore the increasingly apparent fact that the domestic market has frequently been cheated: import firms discover at their expense that the goods received are not those expected. There need to be better and more controls at the ports and borders.

The new Article 22 of the bill provides for the creation of a "consumer protection commission responsible for giving its opinions and proposing measures that will help prevent risks to consumers inherent in products and services offered to them." In view of the importance and the broad scope of action of this commission, it was converted to a national council by amendment.

The first important step in building consumer associations, the amended Article 22 states that these associations can "conduct studies and obtain expert opinions on consumption, which could be published." These are new prerogatives, but the associations must assume the costs and responsibility involved.

In conclusion we will reprint this extract from the amended Article 3: "In all cases, the product or service must meet the consumer's legitimate expectations regarding, among other things, its nature, species, origin, basic qualities, composition, content of useful ingredients, identity, quantity, expected results, packaging standards, point of origin, date of manufacture, deadline for consumption, method of use, precautions or other related instructions, and the controls it has been subject to."

Economic Reform Committee Lists Autonomous Firms

Initial Reform Efforts

45190041 Algiers *REVOLUTION AFRICAINE*
in French 20 Jan 89 p 8

[Article by Yacine Oul-Moussa]

[Text] They're off and running: 67 state-owned economic enterprises [EPE's] are toppling into autonomy. The event in itself marks the end of a reorganization process and the start of work to implement reforms in the field.

This first list of enterprises representing various sectors of activity was drawn up on the basis of proposals by the enterprises themselves, particularly as regards their levels of capital, following study and notification by the National Planning Council. Then, the National Committee on Economic Reforms, recently established under the authority of the head of government, made a final examination of the question before publishing the list of enterprises currently meeting the necessary conditions for their conversion to autonomous management.

It is to be noted first that the entire banking and insurance sector has taken possession of its new clothes. This is understandable, since the banks will be the privileged interlocutors of the enterprises within the framework of the new commercial system being instituted by the reform. It is therefore natural that the banks, themselves regarded as EPE's, should be organizing themselves in keeping with the new deal so that other enterprises can prepare to become autonomous between now and 30 June 1989.

Concerning this first group of EPE's, general stockholders' meetings for organization purposes will be held in the very near future to adopt bylaws, appoint directors, and set up boards of directors. This process of putting structures and people in place is in complete accordance with the various laws and texts passed by the APN

[National People's Assembly] in connection with state-owned enterprises and economic reforms. With the nine funds and the new EPE's, the national system for the production of goods and services is going to see profound changes in the behavior of the operators, particularly as regards risk management, the use of resources, study of and adaptation to the market, and the planning of actions for development and redeployment.

The distinction between the state as government and the state as stockholder will therefore be clear and transparent. The medium-term plans of the enterprises will be their only commitment to the state, whose interests will be managed by the funds set up for the various sectors.

It is clear that the conversion to autonomy will bring difficulties which, when all is said and done, are natural and controllable, but the new rules of the game in terms of responsibility, market position, consistency with the national plan, and management of human and financial resources will very quickly require new reflexes aimed at dynamizing the enterprises. It will therefore be up to the people involved to again show their know-how and ability to communicate so as to lift their enterprises to levels of production, productivity, and competitiveness in keeping with their mobilized capital; the means at their disposal; and the current and future market. Autonomy will also provide the opportunity to strengthen the cohesion of workers' organizations by an improvement in the life and spirit of the enterprise that can only come from the ability to engage in dialogue, define objectives, and mobilize to achieve those objectives through a system of management which places the human element at the center of everything involving the dynamics of the enterprise.

When the process is complete, "to each enterprise its due" and "to each worker the credit he deserves" will have to be the principles leading to the better microeconomic management of our enterprises if we want to improve the country's macroeconomic situation. That is why the new rules of the game will ensure that individuals and enterprises will be able to rely only on themselves if they want to preserve their existence, first of all, and also enlarge their potential for themselves and for the national community.

List of Companies

45190041 Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French
9 Jan 89 p 2

[List of the first group of autonomous enterprises]

[Text]

List of First Autonomous Enterprises

Acronym	Name	Head Office
AGENOR	National Agency for the Distribution and Processing of Gold and Precious Metals	Algiers
BADR	Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development	Algiers
BDL	Local Development Bank	Staoueli
BEA	Algerian Foreign Bank	Algiers
BNA	National Bank of Algeria	Algiers
CAAR	Algerian Insurance and Reinsurance Fund	Algiers
CAAT	Algerian Transportation Insurance Fund	Algiers
CCR	Central Reinsurance Fund	Algiers
CNEP	Algerian National Savings and Insurance Bank	Algiers
CPA	Algerian People's Bank	Algiers
SAA	Algerian Insurance Company	Algiers
BATIMETAL	National Metal Buildings Enterprise	A. Delfa
EMB	National Metal Packaging Enterprise	Kouba
ENIE	National Electronic Industries Enterprise	Sidi Bel Abbes
ENPEC	National Electrochemical Production Enterprise	Setif
SIDEM	National Enterprise for the Design and Implementation of Iron and Steel Projects	Bouzareah
SONARIC	National Company for the Establishment of Related Industries	Tenes
EMA	Algiers Subway Enterprise	Kouba
EP Annaba	Annaba Port Enterprise	Annaba
EP Bejaia	Bejaia Port Enterprise	Bejaia
EP Mostaganem	Mostaganem Port Enterprise	Mostaganem
EP Oran	Oran Port Enterprise	Oran
EP Skikda	Skikda Port Enterprise	Skikda
EP Tenes	Tenes Port Enterprise	Tenes
TVE	Eastern Public Passenger Transportation Enterprise	Constantine
ENAFOR	National Drilling Enterprise	Hassi Messaoud
ENAGEO	National Geophysics Enterprise	Hassi Messaoud
ENGI	National Industrial Gas Enterprise	Kouba
ENGTP	National Enterprise for Petroleum Construction Projects	Reghaia
ENSP	National Well Service Enterprise	Ouargla
ETTERKIB	National Industrial Assembly Enterprise	Blida
KAHRAKIB	National Electrical Work and Assembly Enterprise	Algiers
KAHRIF	National Enterprise for Electrification Work	A. Edheb
KANAGHAZ	National Pipeline Laying Enterprise	Bordj Menaïel

List of First Autonomous Enterprises

Acronym	Name	Head Office
SAIDAL	National Pharmaceutical Production Enterprise	A. Dheb
CETIC	Center for the Preparation and Processing of Commercial Information	Algiers
ENAEED	National Household Products Supply Enterprise	Hussein Dey
EGCT Sahel	Enterprise for Management of the Sahel Tourist Center	Staoueli
EGCT Sidi Fredj	Enterprise for Management of the Sidi Fredj Tourist Center	Staoueli
ENAFEC	National Enterprise for Educational and Cultural Supplies	Kouba
CTH	Engineering Control of Hydraulic Works	Algiers
HP West	National Western Hydraulic Project Enterprise	Oran
INFOR-MATHYD	National Enterprise for the Processing of Hydraulic Information	Kouba
ONTF	National Office for Forestry Work	Chebli
ENROS	National Enterprise for the Implementation of Underground Projects	Reghaia
EPTP Bechar	Bechar Public Enterprise for Public Works	Bechar
EPTP Constantine	Constantine Public Enterprise for Public Works	Constantine
EPTP Ghardaia	Ghardaia Public Enterprise for Public Works	Ghardaia
EPTP Sidi Bel Abbes	Sidi Bel Abbes Public Enterprise for Public Works	Sidi Bel Abbes
LEM	Laboratory for Maritime Studies	Algiers
SERO East	Eastern Company for the Design and Construction of Bridges and Tunnels	Batna
SEROR	Western Company for the Design and Construction of Bridges and Tunnels	Tlemcen
SET Annaba	Annaba Engineering Studies Company	Annaba
SET Tiaret	Tiaret Engineering Studies Company	Hydra
SNETI	National Company for Infrastructure Studies	Oran
ENOPHARM	National Pharmaceutical Supply Enterprise	Oran
DISTRICH	National Enterprise for the Distribution of Shoes and Fine Leather Goods	Algiers
EC West	Western Sanitary Ceramics Enterprise	Tlemcen
ENCG	National Fats Enterprise	Algiers
ERC Center	Central Cement and By-Products Enterprise	Meftah

List of First Autonomous Enterprises

Acronym	Name	Head Office
ERC West	Western Cement and By-Products Enterprise	Mascara
ANAT	National Agency for Territorial Development	Kouba
BEREG	Office for Research and General Engineering Studies	Bab Ezzouar
CNIC	National Construction Engineering Center	Birkhadem
CTC East	Eastern National Structural Engineering Control Organization	Constantine
CTC West	Western National Structural Engineering Control Organization	Oran
ECM Sidi Moussa	Sidi Moussa Metal Construction Enterprise	Sidi Moussa

BAHRAIN

Social Security Law Discussed

44040133 Manama AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ in Arabic
4 Oct 88 p 3

[Article by 'Ismat al-Musawi: "Article IV Inoperative and Must Be Implemented in Unemployment. Raising Minimum Wage Necessary To Improve Annuity"]

[Text] Twelve years have passed since the social insurance law was enacted in Bahrain. This law insures policy holders for job-related injuries, occupational diseases, disability, old age, and death.

Does this law provide good benefits to policy holders and their beneficiaries to help them meet the ever-rising living expenses?

Can this law fulfill its role of providing unemployment insurance, (the as yet unimplemented Article IV), and raising the standard of living for low-income people, as well as its role of providing social and labor services?

This report deals with nagging questions the people and social insurance officials have in an attempt to redress the law's flaws and shortcomings.

Rising Demands

[AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ] Has the Social Security Organization been able to offer policyholders enough coverage to help them meet rising living expenses?

Mr Ahmad 'Abbas, director of the Insurance Benefits Department of the Social Insurance Organization, answers by saying:

"It is difficult to answer this question with yes or no. It can be said, however, that within the limits of wages employers pay to policyholders, which are mostly low,

and within the framework of the valid social insurance law and its amendments, and taking into consideration time of participation in the organization and employer and employee contributions, the organization pays policyholders and their beneficiaries their full benefits and more than what is provided for under the basic law. This is not to say that these benefits can provide the kind of living standard to which policyholders and their families aspire. The Social Insurance Organization, however, is working hard to achieve this goal: to keep pace with the country's standard of living when circumstances allow, restoring contributions to their previous levels of 21 percent of salary, 7 percent of which is paid by the employee and 14 percent by the employer. At present, the organization receives only 15 percent of salary, 5 percent from the employee and 10 percent from the employer. This amounts to a 33-percent drop in contributions while obligations have gone up, not down!"

President of Middle East Consulting Center

'Adnan Bsaysu, president of the Middle East Consulting Center, believes that social insurance has achieved this goal. The insurance law provides lifetime death and disability benefits. Without the Social Insurance Organization, such benefits would not be available, and heaven knows where employees could get help after retirement. To be sure, they would have to turn to the government to decide their case!

"With respect to contributions, I think that under current conditions it behooves us to re-examine the subject of contributions with a view to restoring them to their previous levels. However, the Bahraini economy is still in a recession. We are now witnessing signs of relief which are nothing but a wave of optimism that has not been translated into a practical reality."

'Abbad Hilal: "Our social insurance experience has been in existence for 12 years which is not a long time. With respect to the transfer of trade legislation in the Gulf area, however, we are supposed to begin where others left off in order to avoid mistakes and to provide benefits under new provisions suitable to our society so that we may accomplish in a short time what took others a long time to achieve in order to get ahead. Accordingly, the actual age of the agency should be 20 years instead of 12."

Unemployment Insurance

[AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ] Bahrain now has close to 5,000 unemployed workers, according to Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs records of people seeking work. How can we guarantee the rights of this unemployed group at a time when the number of foreign workers working in Bahrain—those registered with the Social Insurance Organization alone—is 70,269! Moreover, unemployment insurance has not yet been implemented in Bahrain on grounds that it is not necessary!

'Adnan Bsaysu says: "It is a problem that applies to all the Gulf states. How can we say that we have local unemployment when we have these high numbers of foreign workers in our midst? The dilemma lies in one of two things: either the national labor force is shunning certain kinds of jobs, in which case greater awareness is needed, or the wages offered for such jobs are unsatisfactory, something that can be solved by raising the minimum wage. Private firms must pay higher wages to Bahraini workers, so long as these firms are doing well in Bahrain and do not have to pay taxes to the government. Furthermore, they utilize the infrastructure built by the government and avail themselves of free medical care and subsidies. We have relied a lot on the government and must help our citizens inasmuch as our country has given us benefits and facilities. Therefore, a minimum wage must be instituted."

Lawyer 'Abbas Hilal goes into the legal aspect of this issue by saying:

"The enactment of the social insurance law was concomitant with the 1976 labor law. In regulating the labor law provisions, most of which were taken from the Egyptian labor laws, the legislator included in the Bahraini 1976 labor law unique provisions dealing with the special circumstances of the economic situation, such as regulations for foreign labor employment and the like. However, in drawing from the arbitrary firing provisions, for example, he followed the course set by the Egyptian law—a course found in most Arab labor laws—of paying compensation, but without reinstatement (an issue still under examination and discussion). Article IV of Section 1 of the Social Insurance Law, which defines the areas of social insurance, deals with unemployment insurance. Naturally, implementation began with the first two articles: insurance against old age, disability and death and against job-related injuries only."

He added: "Today, more than 12 years later, Article IV, Unemployment Insurance, is still not implemented. And whereas Egyptian and other labor laws limited benefits to compensation in arbitrary firing cases, these and other supplemental laws provided for safety valves to prevent firing or to restrict its use through the existence of social and labor pressure groups and unemployment insurance."

"If practical implementation was proceeding in accordance with provisions contained in the labor law and supplemental ministerial decrees, the implementation of unemployment insurance may be less pressing because by and large our society, an oil-producing one, is not without prosperity and job opportunities are available to our citizens, our Arab brothers and perhaps to foreigners as well. But failure to limit precedence to implementation by the private sector, which is the area of implementation for the 1976 social insurance law, and given the existence of a local labor force that goes through varying periods of unemployment, implementation of Article IV of Section One of the insurance law has become urgent to

protect local labor against unemployment, thus protecting living and educational standards in a country described as an oil-producing state."

Low Wages

The General Social Insurance Organization gives the policyholders full benefits based on their wages, but there are groups making 100, 150, or 200 dinars a month whose coverage is barely enough to meet their needs. What is the best way to deal with this problem?

Ahmad 'Abbas says: "Low-salaried employees benefit more from the pension system than high-salaried ones. The law provides for a minimum wage, even for employees with 10 children. For example, an employee making 120 dinars a month is only entitled to a 25 to 30-dinar annuity, based on a short period of participation, while in reality this annuity is raised to the minimum wage level of 52 dinars, in addition to 10.5 dinars for each child, more than tripling his annuity."

'Adnan Bsaysu puts the blame on the absence of a minimum wage policy in the country. He says that, under this situation, the Social Insurance Organization will not be able to give policyholders more than what they are entitled to. The Social Insurance Organization is a nonprofit organization and its goal is to provide some kind of social security to help workers and employees to maintain a good and decent living within their last income and wage levels.

An employee making 100 dinars a month will receive as an annuity, albeit small, which is better than nothing! This is a fair system for it creates incomes that guarantee policyholders a decent life, (decent life is subject to several criteria, foremost of which is the amount of income and the life to which an employee was accustomed in the last job he had). In other advanced countries, social insurance guarantees policyholders many things, like medical insurance with full coverage for treatment in the country or abroad and unemployment and permanent disability insurance. The idea of insurance is that it is a joint investment fund that takes a load off the government. If only the Gulf states would set up within this framework a social health insurance program to provide medical care to save the government the cost of opening hospitals and clinics.

To go back to the subject of how to provide a decent life to policyholders, I believe that the minimum wage must be raised and this calls for a rearrangement of many matters before a law or a decree can be enacted.

Lawyer 'Abbas Hilal believes that the solution to low wages can be reached through higher government subsidies to the Social Insurance Organization. Economic decisions, according to him, have caused contributions to drop from 14 to 11 percent. This 3 percent must be restored to the organization because it actually falls under private firm expenses which means that it comes

not out of the employer's pocket but out of the pockets of ordinary individuals, the consumers. Moreover, if the Social Insurance Organization is allowed to set up its own bank, it will double the return it gets from other banks. Consequently, it will be able to offer subscribers easier financial services, thus raising its income and offering higher annuities, and to realize many accomplishments because the labor law and the social insurance law cover health, occupational and job-related injury services. With the growth of the oil supplemental industries, it became necessary to dedicate some of the insurance money, in effect the workers money, for an occupational clinic more specialized than medical services provided by the state hospitals and big corporation clinics, since a large number of ministerial decrees that supplement the labor and insurance law define, regulate and deal with dangerous and hazardous occupations, including occupational safety and the provision of occupational medical services that require a sophisticated occupational clinic.

Since the most important function of social insurance organizations is to provide social services to workers, and given the limited income of the great majority of the local work force and widespread high- and medium-cost daycare centers and commercial kindergartens, it became necessary for the organization to sponsor, as a social benefit, nonprofit kindergartens and private daycare centers, (which are not offered by corporations and large factories), for its employees at nominal fees. These services will not put a dent even in the interest from investments.

Policyholder Benefits

Many General Insurance Organization policyholders wonder about their benefits, how they can make use of them, before maturity in certain cases, and whether they can collect them in cases of need?

Ahmad 'Abbas replied: "Every person or every social insurance policyholder thinks that it is easy to find out about benefits and maturity dates any time he wishes, or so it seems to him. This is not the way it is because social insurance is not a bank where a person deposits a certain amount of money which may be withdrawn with interest at any time. Social insurance is different. It is primarily a corporation with unlimited responsibilities and not a savings fund. its purpose is to provide for the needs of families when their provider is disabled, retired or passes away. Anything else is an exception. In other words, it is a social organization serving policyholders and their dependents within the confines of the law in cases of disability, old age, death, and job-related injuries."

He adds: "I personally do not know what benefits an individual is eligible for because each case is different. Is it a case of ordinary resignation or is it a case of death or disability? Did the person die of natural causes or was his death job related? Benefits are determined on the basis

of the individual's status at the time of eligibility. That is why it is not easy for employees to inquire about their benefits without reason. They may be quoted figures which may not be correct because benefits differ depending on whether the claimant was retired, passed away, or was disabled. Even job-related death is different from natural death. Let us say that a policyholder making 500 dinars a month was insured with us for a period of 6 months. His benefits, based on deductions, would be 5 percent of salary and 10 percent from the employer. His contributions would add up to 450 dinars only, the amount of his benefits. If he withdrew this small amount, what good would it do him? He would lose his retirement benefits. However, if he kept this amount with us and died of natural causes, his beneficiaries would receive the following benefits:

"First, a 300-dinar death allowance equal to a 6-month salary ($500 \times 6 = 300$ [computations as published]).

"Second, funeral expenses of 300 to 400 dinars.

"Third, a minimum annuity of 40 percent of salary plus other allowances and bonuses, or a minimum of 220 dinars, until the spouse dies or the son reaches the age of 22, or 26 if he is in college, and until the daughter gets married or goes to work. The mother receives benefits for life and so do the father and brothers and sisters if they are his dependents.

"The situation is different with job-related death. In addition to the death allowance and funeral expenses, there is a monthly pension of 412.5 dinars because the accidental death benefit is calculated at 75 percent of the last salary plus a 10 to 15 percent bonus. In other words, such an individual will receive the sum of 412.5×12 , or 4,950 dinars in one year and 49,000 in 10 years. Add to that the amounts received initially and this sum goes up to 52,800 dinars.

"Imagine that this individual paid only 450 dinars in insurance premiums. This same person, at the age of 60, without disability, death or retirement, will receive an annuity based on the length of participation and salary at retirement.

"An employee with an average salary of 500 dinars and 25 years of contribution to the insurance fund, plus a 5-year bonus added by the insurance organization, bringing the total to 30 years, will receive the sum of $500 + 60 \times 30 = 250$ plus 10 percent, or 275 dinars a month for life which the aforementioned beneficiaries—spouse, children, mother or siblings—will receive after him."

'Adnan Bsaysu confirms Ahmad 'Abbas' view, saying:

"Social insurance is not a bank but rather a partnership between employee and employer. It is not a deposit that can be withdrawn at any time, but an insurance. What good would it do if this money can be withdrawn at any time and what kind of security is that. Let us suppose for

the sake of argument that the money was given back and invested in a losing venture and the person involved came back crying? Policyholders must realize that this money is like a life insurance policy."

'Abbas Hilal: In certain cases, policyholders may have to cash in their money but in order to protect the family, this money must not be paid out in one lump sum so that it would not be spent on other than what the insurance law had intended. I believe that even in cases where a policyholder who does not complete 10 years in the system before retirement, the organization must not give him his money back in one lump sum but must credit him with additional years to make him eligible for an annuity which provides protection for his family. There is a bill under way to this effect but a decree has not been issued for its implementation. The agency must encourage and support this tendency to help workers obtain an annuity. Consequently, the state must subsidize the insurance system.

In Conclusion

Ahmad 'Abbas calls for the restoration of contribution rates to their previous level to enable the insurance system to meet its obligations and upgrade its services. 'Adnan Bsaysu believes that the only way to solve the problem of low wages is by raising the minimum wage even if it meant rearranging many things. 'Abbas Hilal focuses on the need to implement unemployment insurance and offer social and labor services. he calls upon the follow-up office to offer more studies and research in this field.

EGYPT

Party Leaders Discuss New Shura Council Election Process

45040201 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic
20 Jan 89 pp 18-19, 75

[Article by Majid 'Atiyah and Nabil Rashwan: "In Wake of Decree To Elect Shura Council by Individual System, There Are Now Three Methods To Elect Egypt's Political Councils—People's Assembly, Shura Council, and Local Councils; Dr Ahmad Salamah: Multiplicity Is No Vice; No Amendment of Council's Powers; Kamal al-Shadhili: Amendment of Law Means Dissolving Council and Holding New Elections; Ibrahim Shukri: We Prefer Relative List to Individual System; Yasin Siraj-al-Din: Personally, I Feel Very Comfortable With Relative List; Lutfi Wakid: Individual Election Is Most Proper Means of Expression; Ma'mun al-Hudaybi: We Want Representatives Who Make Decisions, Not Just Give Advisory Opinion"]

[Text] With the emergence of the new amendments of the Shura [Consultative] Council law, we now have three election systems:

- Shura Council elections which are held by individual election.

- People's Assembly elections which are held by list while taking relative representation into account.
- Local council elections which are held by the absolute list.

These amendments have touched off the issues of democracy, of the form of parliamentary representation and of the opposition parties' visualization which differs from the NDP [National Democratic Party] visualization.

Moreover, these amendments have given rise to the following questions:

- Is there any connection between these amendments and the imminent issuance of the Constitutional Court's decision on the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of the Shura Council election law? Moreover, till when will law amendments continue to be linked to our anticipation of the issuance of court decisions or to the actual issuance of such decisions?
- Will we elect the Shura Council by the individual election system, keeping in mind that only one half the council members will be elected? Will the remaining half continue to be elected by the list system while the other half is elected by individual election? Will not this create an abnormal situation? Will it not require that the council be dissolved, that all council members be elected and that their number be increased?
- Will these law amendments raise the idea of amending the council's powers in the Constitution? Is this likely at present?

AL-MUSAWWAR has presented these questions and ideas to Dr Ahmad Salamah, the minister of the People's Assembly and Shura Council affairs. AL-MUSAWWAR has also been eager to explore the opposition parties' opinion and has interviewed Kamal al-Shadhili, the NDP secretary general for organization, on all these issues.

To begin, Dr Ahmad Salamah said: Let us define the concept of democracy and the ways to achieve it.

Democracy is government of the people by the people. This means that the people should select their representatives or deputies to speak on the people's behalf and to express their will. This is why this form of democracy is called parliamentary democracy.

In ancient societies, there was another form of democracy which is no longer compatible with the spirit of the age. This form is what was known by direct and indirect democracy. In this form, all the people met in a public square and made their own decisions on affairs concerning them. This form is, of course, no longer possible. What remains of this form is the pale so-called public referendum.

So, only parliamentary democracy, by which the people select their deputies, continues to exist. As to how the people select their deputies, there are two ways only and nobody can claim that one is more democratic than the other because both are of the essence and core of democracy.

These two ways are:

1. The individual election system.
2. The list election system.

Let us note that election by list comes in two forms:

1. First, election by the absolute list.
2. Second, election by the relative list.

Let us also note that these two forms are applied in the countries most deep-rooted in democracy. Some of them apply the individual election system and then retreat from it to the relative or absolute list system. Others apply the list system and then change it to the individual election system. It cannot be said that the first case is tantamount to retreat from democracy or that only the second way is the democratic way.

Why Plurality?

[AL-MUSAWWAR] There must be strong justifications that motivate a country to alter its selection of the form of democracy and of election it embraces?

[Salamah] This is altogether due to society's structure, to the circumstances and complications of a certain phase and not another and to choosing the method compatible with the social environment in which an election is held.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Meaning?

[Salamah] Meaning that if there are numerous institutions that come into existence by way of general election, then there is nothing to dictate that the representatives in these institutions be altogether selected by one of the election methods. It is possible to select the members of a certain council by individual election and the members of another council by the list election system. There is nothing wrong with this. As already stated, both systems are 100 percent democratic.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Specifically, what are the justifications for electing the local councils by the absolute list, for electing the People's Assembly by the relative list and for electing the Shura Council by the individual election system?

[Salamah] In the local councils, the citizen himself is the candidate and the voter. The nature of the family and social relations in the countryside dictate that we take these relations into consideration. On the other hand, we

seek to create harmony and cooperation in these councils in order that they may exert greater effort and accomplish more and that they may make decisions or offer recommendations promptly.

As for electing the People's Assembly by the relative list, this is done out of the government's eagerness to see that other parties are represented so that democracy may be strengthened. Whether the election is by the relative list or by individual election, a villager supporting a certain candidate will vote for this candidate whether he is running individually or running within a party list.

Constitutional Court's Decision

[AL-MUSAWWAR] On the occasion, the opposition parties offer a different interpretation for adoption of the individual election system for the Shura Council. They believe that the reason the law has been amended is the Supreme Constitutional Court commissioners' report on the unconstitutionality of the past election. They believe that this report is the reason why the government has amended the law before the court issues its decision. What is your comment?

[Salamah] First, the opposition is strange. It opposed election by list. Now that we have established the individual election system, the opposition has been filling the world with clamor and talking about election guarantees!

Second, I defy anybody to state absolutely what decision the Constitutional Court will issue. The commissioners committee's report is no more than an advisory opinion which the court may or may not embrace in making its decision.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] But why are laws contravening the Constitution issued in the first place?

[Salamah] As long as the state embraces the system of judiciary control over the constitutionality of laws, we cannot under any circumstance determine with certainty that a given law will inevitably contravene the Constitution or will inevitably agree with the Constitution. Ultimately, the decision is with the Constitutional Court. Before the Constitutional Court says its word, one may interpret rightly or wrongly.

For example, I, as a lawmaker, try my best to make the law compatible with the Constitution. But I cannot predict what decision the Constitutional Court will make. On this basis, it is no disgrace for the lawmaker if he makes a law contravening the Constitution because the law was compatible with the Constitution while he was drafting it. This is on the one hand. On the other hand, as I have given the lawmaker the freedom of the initial assessment of constitutionality or unconstitutionality, I must also give freedom to the individuals and

circles concerned with contesting the constitutionality of any law. The matter ends up with the Constitutional Court and neither the lawmaker nor the challenger is faulted.

These words probably answer the rumors that the government hastened to amend the Shura Council law when it realized that the Constitutional Court will decide against the constitutionality of the Shura Council election law.

Unconstitutionality

[AL-MUSAWWAR] But the commissioners committee's report states decisively that the law is unconstitutional.

[Salamah] It is true that Constitutional Court Commissioners' Committee has drawn up a report denying the constitutionality of some articles of the law. But with my profound respect for the commissioners committee, the report is no more than an opinion which the court may or may not embrace. If the court embraces the report, there is nothing wrong with this and if it doesn't embrace it, then there is nothing wrong with this either. In both cases, the court applies the rules of the Constitution and of the law to the issue presented to it.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Do we have an equal in the multiplicity of election laws? What I mean is: Are there other countries which apply multiple systems of election?

[Salamah] I will cite one example in the FRG which combines individual election with the list election system in a single institution, namely the Bundestag or the state parliament. For the same council, some deputies are elected by the individual election system and others by the list election system. A certain percentage of the council is selected by individual election and another percentage by list election.

Will Present Council Be Dissolved?

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Will amendment of the law make it necessary to dissolve the council?

[Salamah] There is nothing to dictate that the council be dissolved, even if the Constitutional Court issues its decision because new amendments cannot be applied retroactively.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] How can the by-elections be held in accordance with the individual election system whereas the other half of the council members were elected by the list election system? This being the case, don't you see the need to dissolve the council?

[Salamah] This is true. This case will actually create a situation lacking in homogeneity. This is why a general election should be held for the entire council. The law is, as we are aware, a social entity that influences and is influenced. Consequently, dissolution would be a normal step.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] It is said that it is necessary to transform the Shura Council into a legislative council which encompasses expertise that can be put to use. Such transformation will also create partisan, political and legislative balances and agreements.

[Salamah] To my knowledge, there is no plan to touch the Constitution's current articles with amendment.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Why?

[Salamah] Because there is a fundamental principle with which we are concerned, namely the principle of the sanctity of the Constitution which protects the Constitution from being open to change and alteration from time to time. Such hasty alteration is totally incompatible with the principle of the Constitution's sanctity and eminence.

What governs the entire situation is the Constitution itself. If we do otherwise, then we would stray from the Constitution's rules and would violate the Constitution, especially since our Constitution is a rigid, not flexible, constitution.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] How?

[Salamah] A rigid constitution is a constitution which, by its own provisions, charts the method of its amendment. Violating this method is a violation of the Constitution itself. I am surprised by those who simultaneously call for respecting and not respecting the Constitution.

If we read our Constitution and the method it charts, we would find that it states the following explicitly:

- First, one third the People's Assembly members shall propose the desired amendment.
- Second, two thirds the People's Assembly members shall approve the principle of amendment.
- Third, after this approval, the principle of amendment shall be submitted to a public referendum. If it is approved by a majority, the Constitution shall be amended.

The Shura Council's powers are defined by the current Constitution [and will continue to be the same] until it is amended according to the abovementioned method. This situation leaves no place for interpretation or opinion insofar as the council powers are concerned.

After this lengthy interview with Dr Ahmad Salamah, we explored the opinions of a number of opposition figures within the People's Assembly and outside it. Before

reviewing these opinions, it is to be noted that those who hold them are now opposing the individual election system which they had previously advocated and are talking about the benefits of the list system. Here are their opinions as they have expressed them personally.

Two Important Points

Engineer Ibrahim Shukri has said: In my comment on the reply to the government statement, I said that I have reservations on a number of points. The first reservation is that I reject the absolute list. I have, secondly, demanded that clear and definite guarantees be established to control the election process. These two points come ahead of election method preferences. The judiciary must control the elections and whatever pertains to them, making sure that a voter signs or stamps his thumbprint next to his name upon voting.

Ibrahim Shukri added: Even though individual election is much better than election by the absolute list, altering the Shura Council election system from the absolute list to individual election does not mean that this is the best election method. The best system is the unconditional relative list system according to which all [parties] present lists that reflect platforms. This is the sound and normal way for the presence of parties in parliamentary assemblies.

I cannot say that individual election is the best system because it prevents numerous public opinion representatives from joining a responsible and legitimate party which has its own platform and which can implement its programs when it wins seats.

The second point is that what is important are the guarantees that engulf elections and allow them to reflect the people's votes—guarantees that reassure people of the elections and of the procedures observed, whether procedures pertaining to nomination or to outcome.

Relative List Is Better

Yasin Siraj-al-Din, chairman of al-Wafd Parliamentary Committee, has said that election of the Shura Council by the individual election system has come in response to the opposition's demand, especially the demand of al-Wafd Party. Naturally, this system offers numerous benefits which are denied in the list election system.

Even though I, in my capacity as chairman of al-Wafd Parliamentary Committee, adhere to the decision made by al-Wafd leadership, I personally feel more comfortable with the relative list, if we can eliminate some restrictive requirements from this system, such as the eight percent requirement. I believe that for this system to become serious, two percent should be enough as a requirement. The requirement demanding that a party be represented by a delegate from the subsidiary committee is also a debilitating requirement. This is why I

believe that the relative list represents several opinions and parties, each with a commensurate number of votes which are translated into deputies.

This is the most appropriate and representative system. The individual system can cause nearly one half the votes of an election district to be wasted. At times, a candidate may get 20,000 votes and his rival may get 20,300 votes and win. Thus, one half the district's votes go unrepresented. Perhaps the two [candidates'] programs are different.

Yasin Siraj-al-Din added: Before anything else and regardless of what election system exists, I believe that control should be exercised by a totally impartial authority and that all intervention by any security agency must be eliminated.

Wakid Lutfi, the Progressive National Grouping Party assistant secretary general, has expressed his party's view, saying:

Even though the party is still consulting with the other opposition parties and has not made a definite decision, I believe that, to start, the Shura Council has no genuine jurisdiction emanating from the core of the Constitution. It is just a consultative council whose concerns are the same as those of the specialized national councils which can do a better job than this council can.

As for the elections, before talking about individual election or election by lists, elections must reflect the people's will and options and must determine their representatives in the elected councils. The voter lists do not at all reflect the reality. They contain repeated names, the names of dead people and imaginary names, all of which have an impact on the outcome of elections, especially in the rural areas where centers of influence exist. If the government were to tie voter lists to the Civil Register, it would discover that imaginary votes are more than double the real votes.

Even though I believe that individual elections are the most appropriate means of expression for Egypt, I demand that this election system be fortified with safeguards, impartiality and removal of pressure. As for election by the list, it is not appropriate for the Egyptian people, especially in the countryside. Moreover, the biased news media, which are in collusion with the government party, have a strong influence on the outcome of election by lists.

Restoring Guarantees

Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, a People's Assembly member, has said: The draft law has not been presented to us yet and it is not known what final form it will take. What is of primary importance is that the elected team be elected by the people and that those whom the people have selected and deputized should have the power of decision-making. The people want to see their representatives

make the decisions that concern them and not just offer an advisory opinion. Moreover, one third the Shura Council members are appointed, and this determines the council's majority in advance.

Kamal al-Shadhili: Mere Amendment

We have had a different interview with Kamal al-Shadhili, the NDP secretary general for organization affairs and chairman of the party's parliamentary bloc. Al-Shadhili views the issue as a law amendment and not as a new law governing the Shura Council, considering that not the entire law is replaced. The amendment focuses on 11 articles only, leaving the other articles untouched. This much is dictated by adoption of the individual election system. The amendment is harmonious with the remaining articles of the law that have not been amended. The amendment also deals with duties which may emanate from adoption of the individual election system. These amendments will necessarily require reviewing the election district. A district in the list system is by necessity different from a district in the individual election system.

Kamal al-Shadhili elected to look at the questions in their entirety and answered them in the following points:

Regarding the law amendments, they must be first debated within the party so that it may express its opinion on them. They should then be debated in the Shura Council itself. Finally, they should be debated in the People's Assembly so that it may promulgate them and enact them immediately.

As for the opposition view of the voter lists, of election guarantees and of judiciary control of the elections, al-Shadhili said:

It is certain that a judge heads and supervises the general committee and receives all the complaints. Moreover, any candidate is entitled to contest the outcome of an election before the State Council. On top of this, the Appellate Court investigates any contest of membership in the People's Assembly or the Shura Council even though such contests are submitted through the council.

As for the demand that the judiciary supervise the election districts, it is certain that such activity will obstruct the judiciary facility's work during the elections. Does the opposition imagine that any country would permit justice to be suspended because the judiciary are preoccupied with elections? Moreover, why do we think ill of other citizens who head the branch committees under the judiciary's guardianship and supervision?

As for the voter lists issue which is raised whenever elections are held, these lists are opened every December for registration and every January for contestation. In any case, this issue will be solved altogether with the national figure plan which the government has actually begun to implement. [Election] discipline will be brought

to society in its entirety through the national figure. As for tying the voter lists with the civil register, it is easier said than done. Implementation is not as easy as some people imagine.

Regarding the Shura Council, Kamal al-Shadhili said: The matter pertains to political harmony. The timing is up to the political leadership. However, the new law requires holding a general election for all the council members, not just a by-election.

Regarding amendment of the Shura Council's powers, al-Shadhili said: Amending the Constitution is not one of the priorities at this time.

There remains the talk about the multiplicity of election systems. Kamal al-Shadhili attributes this talk to the nature of the jurisdiction of each of these councils. Local councils require a degree of similarity that can be achieved only through the absolute list. In the People's Assembly, which is the legislative council, we are eager to have the parties represented through the relative list. As for the Shura Council, it is a consultative council and its jurisdiction is different from that of the People's Assembly.

Concluding, Kamal al-Shadhili urged the opposition parties to compete where the opportunities are available and where the competition is open. Instead of clamoring over statements repeated all the time, let us all look forward and cooperate for the country's progress and prosperity.

Opposition Describes Government Crackdown in University Area

45040156b Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 20 Dec 88 p 8

[Article by Mahmud Jamal al-Din: "Here Is the First Letter from the Besieged 'Ayn Shams"]

[Text] No admittance for journalists.

We are not on the West Bank. We are not in the Gaza Strip.

Here is 'Ayn Shams, occupied by the hosts of central security, Zaki Badr's coterie of informers and the "government fear" agency. Here is the besieged 'Ayn Shams.

I entered 'Ayn Shams in the evening. Someone entering 'Ayn Shams in the evening these days must do so fearfully and attentively. The guard who is watching one of the buildings under construction at one of the entrances to 'Ayn Shams told me, when I asked him about Adam Street, "So what's with you and that street, son?"

"I have people relatives there, boss; I'm going to visit them."

"God help me! For the most part, go straight ahead. You cut left and...." In this manner he continued to describe the address to me and bade me farewell with his fearful good phrase, "May our Lord protect you and let their evil not be too much for you, and may you arrive safely."

When I asked a grocer about the Adam Mosque, the mosque of misfortunes, he told me, "There it is behind you, sir." He quickly immersed himself in his sales, as he was about to close his shop. A man who proceeded with me near the street picked up the thread and told me in a low voice, "Here the mosques can now be identified by the bound Korans and the central security vehicles."

I went about in the area making inquiries, seeking information and investigating. The face of the old woman wearing white on white turned yellow when I asked her about her son M. Gh., a corporal in the Army who had been arrested for a period of 4 days and released. She had imagined that I had come to arrest him again. The faces of her three daughters also turned yellow, and all my attempts to reassure them failed. All the notebooks I was carrying could not ward the yellow of death from their faces. The mother told me in great trepidation that her son was not present, he was traveling. "God bless you, my son, excuse me from speaking."

One man told another as he was conversing with him, "Imagine they are even hitting the schools with tear bombs. The Al-Hurriyah School was hit with bombs. They have no fear of God. Sir they arrested the principal and the sports education teacher for 2 days and left them, and now the principal, Hasan 'Askar, is dying of fear and bringing out the children one by one, every 5 minutes."

Someone leading worship in a mosque near the bridge told me later that his son, a student in the al-Matariyah Institute, one of the places the security is striking and besieging, with the al-Sayyidah Khadijah School and other educational organizations, had stopped going to the institute until conditions settled down because he frankly was not just afraid of arrest—"There are shots being fired, my son, and the government is showing no mercy, it is hitting everything and picking up everyone. Now analyze what you see for me. In any case, it's better for us for our feet to rest at home."

The man told me in a whisper about a neighbor of theirs who lives in Kafr Faruq and has a son, Muhammad, working as an orderly in the airport. He returned at night from his job with gifts and a bag for his little child, "a bomb." The government men of fear detained him 5 whole days, during which he was subjected to beating, harrassment and severe torture.

The man told me with extreme sorrow, "No one is even praying in the mosques now—that mosque of ours which used to be crammed with people praying whenever there was a religious duty; now you won't find five or six people praying whenever there is a duty. Everyone now

is praying in his home, that is, our government is trying to destroy the mosques and the government has emptied out the mosques. It's become a matter of grave suspicion."

A. A. B., a student in general secondary, told me that thanks be to God he does not pray and go to the mosque at all, and in spite of that his mother is very worried about him, in spite of his mature age, and goes to wait for him at the door of the school. His schoolmates' mothers go also to wait for their children and at the primary schools, at the time the pupils come out, you find the most of the pupils' mothers waiting for them, to whisk them away home quickly out of fear of the government which previously had sprayed fire on God's creatures.

The father of the arrested person M.Q., his mother from Upper Egypt and his wife made me swear to Almighty God with all that is precious, time and again, not to mention the name of any of them. His son, a student at the al-Salahdar secondary school, who just prays at home, was arrested for a very flimsy reason. He was sleeping, suddenly heard cries and noise in the street, and looked out from the balcony, and the officer ordered that he be arrested at once. "We are subjected to daily inspection and the informers come and squat on us and dine and drink tea whether we like it or not."

M.J., an engineer with the railroad: "Here in 'Ayn Shams there is no movement in any house, anywhere, on the part of anyone. The people here frankly are living in extreme terror. We are very much afraid to open a window at night or take in the wash after 2000 hours in the evening, lest a shot be fired.

"One person was late from class for example after 2000 hours in the evening. Maybe she was subjected to exacting, degrading inspection. Things have reached this point. Security resorts to provoking us and terrifying us in very terrible ways. Imagine, during this period they have resorted to hitting people they arrest not just in their homes or in front of their families but they are kidnapping them in the middle of the street, tied up, pulling out their beards, breaking their teeth or kidnapping them after pulling out their fingernails and hitting them with rifle butts in front of everyone. In spite of that there is not a single government security officer who can move about in the area under his real name. They are all moving about with pseudonyms, especially those who openly commit aggression against young people and revile women with the filtiest curses for no reason."

'Aliyah Mahmud, wife of one of the heroic October martyrs, said that she had been living alone in her home following the martyrdom of her husband and did not have a child or brother with her; in spite of that her house was subjected to degrading inspection on the part of the government fear people. When she told them that she was the wife of a martyr they told her, "Without a martyr, without anything of value." She was very afraid that they would beat her.

In spite of all this intense fear, I observed little chairs lined up at the entry to a house during my tour of one of the passageways, and the ceremony of lights and a wedding, totally silent. I went in and asked the family of the couple and learned that they had been forced to hold this silent wedding because the groom was travelling that week to Saudi Arabia and no one could guarantee the circumstances, and that after a little they would disband the wedding because their few guests were very afraid and wanted to leave quickly.

I turned away quickly in order to get to safety, with my papers and observations, from more than 100 security vehicles, 50 armored vehicles and dozens on dozens of government security officers and thousands of central security troops who in spite of this extreme fear which they were spreading about the area were feeling extreme fear over every journalist and every camera. Do you suppose that in spite of that they were secure?

Labor Productivity, Unemployment Problems Reviewed

45040135 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
28 Dec 88 p 7

[Article by Amirah Basyuni: "Challenges Facing Labor Strategies in Egypt"]

[Text] On the subject of man, who is not considered just a consumer and producer but also possesses the greatest resource, intelligence, which God bestowed on him so that he would be innovative and choose values, some of our organizations have perceived the extreme importance of his problems, whether he is employed or out of work, and have declared that the crisis will not tolerate a delay in confrontation.

Therefore, the two most important of conferences have been held in Cairo on the work force. The first of them was the "regional conference on the development, use, and migration of manpower," prepared by the Central Agency for General Mobilization and Statistics in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund and the International Labor Organization. The second was the "conference on the labor strategies of the Egypt of the nineties" which was prepared by the Ministry of Manpower and Training with the International Labor Organization and the United Nations Development Program. This is in addition to the specialized national councils' awareness of the magnitude of the problem, since the National Council for Production and Economic Affairs discussed it some weeks ago and the Faculty of Economics and Political Science is currently preparing for a similar conference next February.

In diagnosing the conditions of the work force, the final report of the Ministry of Manpower's conference with international organizations was characterized by realism, frank talk, and depth, and the report arose from

detailed studies and broad scientific discussions which are all considered a sign of a true serious beginning in forcibly addressing the increasingly aggravated manpower crisis.

In this report it was stated that the work force is characterized by an increased volume of overt and disguised unemployment and that work productivity and capital are low on most occasions. It was also stated that the proportion of people working in the agriculture sector is declining in terms both of absolute numbers and percentage; that the industry sector has started to decline as an employer of manpower; and also that the building and construction sector, which expanded rapidly in absorbing part of the work force, has ceased doing so; that the government sector is no longer able to absorb the increasing numbers of graduates at various levels of education and; that, thus, the role of the informal sector has become prominent as a basic sector in labor employment.

The report also stressed that in view of the contraction in the possibility for migrating to work abroad in coming years, the labor problem will become exacerbated if some steps are not taken immediately with the goal of absorbing labor and changing the pattern of incentives. It pointed out that these labor problems may be attributed to many causes, such as the poor distribution of investments and the inappropriate structure of prices.

In general, these conferences and meetings, in their research works, discussions, and recommendations, addressed themselves to a number of issues such as wages, prices, education, training, technology, income distribution, productivity, income disbursement, internal and external migration, capital formation, the problem of poverty in the urban and rural areas, the importance of speed in confronting it, industrialization, the informal sector, short, medium and long-range plans, and so forth.

Analyzing some of the data and statistics cited in the papers of these conferences, and other sources, it is possible to describe the conditions of the work force as follows:

First, a decline in the rate of contribution to labor and a rise in the rate of support:

1. The number of individuals in the work force (persons employed and unemployed) has been estimated at about 14.5 million in 1988. This means that the rate of contribution to labor (the number of individuals in the work force divided by the population times 100) is about 28 percent, while this rate comes to more than 40 percent in the advanced industrial countries and about 50 percent or more in the socialist countries. This low rate in Egypt and some developing countries may be attributed to the high ratio of persons of low age to the total population and the low ratio of women's contribution to labor.

2. The rate of support is characterized by a high level (the number of persons employed divided by the population; this rate came to 4.13)—that is, every employed person supports this number of individuals, according to the 1986 census. If to that we add low levels of wages and incomes in comparison with the levels of prices, the burden of support becomes severe.

Second, the continued increase in unemployment:

1. All statistics point to a constant increase in the volume and rate of overt unemployment, to the point where this rate came to 14.7 percent of the work force according to the 1986 population census. If the increase in unemployment continues at this rate because of the failure of broad changes to occur in economic and noneconomic conditions, this rate will become about 18 percent, which is one of the highest among the nations of the world.

2. The increase in the work force from 1988 to 2000 has been estimated at about 6 million individuals. This means the necessity of creating productive job opportunities for them and for people currently unemployed, who are estimated at about 2.5 million.

3. About 90 percent of the unemployed persons, that is, young people, have not previously had jobs.

4. Forty two and four-tenths percent of the unemployed persons are women, although their share was about 15 percent of the work force in 1986.

5. A high proportion of employed persons are in disguised unemployment. There are no precise data on this. This high rate may be attributed to many causes, among them the accumulation of employed persons in the government and public sector (about a third of the work force), and the employment of a high percentage of employed persons in sectors where the real work time takes only part of total work time, such as farming, services, and trade, as well as poor administration and the absence of an effective incentives system.

Third, the low productivity of employed persons:

The various studies concur that there is a general tendency toward low productivity among employed persons in Egypt. The Ministry of Administrative Development recently released a study which the ministry had carried out with Japanese experts, [stating] that the productivity of an employed person in Egypt is one-sixth that of an employed person in the countries of Western Europe, one-ninth the productivity of a Japanese, and one-tenth the productivity of an American.

The low productivity may be ascribed to economic and noneconomic conditions, including the low standard of living, the organic and psychological health level of employed persons, the low level of technology applied, the paucity of capital in many small-size projects, the low

level of education and training prevailing, values, conduct and traditions in life and work unsuited to development, organizations and institutions and climatic conditions. Participation in labor and the labor cycle and productivity are considered among the basic indicators of economic growth.

These conferences, meetings and discussions ended after they had sounded a warning and declared the inevitable need rapidly to confront the crisis. In view of the serious nature of the manpower crisis and its connection to all economic and noneconomic conditions, it is necessary to state the importance of the following:

First, the work team that is assigned, as stated in the report of the Ministry of Manpower conference, to work on the subject of economic reform and labor must include our senior scholars in economics, planning, administration and so forth (most of whom are unemployed) in order to set out a comprehensive scientific plan for economic and social development, the mobilization of all human and economic resources and restriction of the tremendous loss in them.

However, the new plan must be compatible with current conditions and in keeping with changes in the future. The ministry has in fact sought the aid of one of these scholars and some other young experts in preparing the papers of the conference, along with experts from international organizations.

Second, the plan for comprehensive reform on the nationwide level must include another urgent plan to develop performance in the context of organizations which lag on a large scale over time and seriously to monitor execution of the plan. All the people working in all organizations must prepare this plan and its preparation must not be restricted to the higher management leaders. That is what Japan has engaged in and for this reason it has been predicted that it will outstrip America and others in the course of achieving progress. That must be with the aid of management experts.

Third, changing values, conduct and customs unsuited to development must be the object of extreme attention, toward the end of remedying indifference, an absence of work proficiency, the presentation of misleading reports, the grant of preference to personal interests over national ones, corruption in all its forms, and so forth.

Fourth, a base must be set out for data and information bearing on the work force, as stated in the recommendations of the final report of the conference, so that the absence of this will not be an obstacle to the initiation of comprehensive reform, if this absence is not a major problem facing scholars, especially with respect to tremendous problems which can be dealt with only over a substantial period of time.

Fifth, a change must begin with comprehensive reform in standards for selecting administrative leaders.

Sixth, without effective bills for incentives, carrying out the desired reform might be out of the question. Therefore it is necessary to give all organizations a period of 2 months, for example, to set out such systems, with all workers in every organization participating in preparing them with the aid of management experts. The government organizations and the public sector are deficient in such systems.

NPUG Party's Secretary General Reviews Party's Policies

45040170A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
19 Jan 89 p 6

[By Ahmad al-Batriq]

[Text] In his speech at the opening of last Thursday's 2-day Central Committee meeting, Mr Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, secretary general of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping (NPUG), stated that the meeting could be considered the beginning of strong party activity in light of many local and international events. He explained how international politics were developing to achieve mutual and balanced security in light of balanced interests on the international level. He asserted that an attempt to reach solutions of many regional problems would have an effect on domestic party politics within Egypt.

The party's secretary general described 1988 as a year of peace and positive initiatives at the international level. On the other hand, he described Egyptian policy, especially its economic aspects, as a continuation of economic policies that had already been followed for a time and that had led to an aggravation of the problems.

He also mentioned the Islamic groups, describing them as the reactionary, Salafi tendency that had cloaked itself with religion. He explained that this tendency was disappearing and retreating.

He called on members of the Central Committee to play an important role, particularly in this period, in an attempt to regain the masses, who were angry with the Islamic groups.

Regarding the leftist or socialist-Nasirist-communist alliance, the party's secretary general explained that the NPUG had succeeded in its effort to establish this alliance. There were contacts at the leadership level and coordination in labor union committees. He described this step as important and said that it would soon bear fruit.

Regarding internal party organizational activity, Khalid Muhyi-al-Din expressed disapproval of the position of a number of NPUG leaders. He described them as denying to themselves and their party every merit. They saw only the mistakes and the negative side of the picture, especially when they accused the party of having lost its

distinctiveness from other government and opposition forces and of no longer being a radical opposition party, but only "the government's left."

Khalid Muhyi-al-Din then enumerated the party's merits and achievements during the recent past. He explained, however, that there were ruthless challenges facing the party from big capitalism, which he considered the party's basic enemy on account of its differing economic and political perspective—in addition to what he called the Salafi tendency.

The secretary of the Central Committee then spoke, introducing his report on the role of party activity during the recent past. He explained that there was laxness in many governorate-level secretariats, which he described as not adhering to implementation of Central Committee decisions. He found fault with certain others for concealing membership statements and not collecting subscriptions regularly.

The discussions that took place included many subjects, including the alliance question, the reasons for the party breakdown, and the Salafi tendencies. Also discussed was the need to promote youthful leaders. In the discussions about participation in the coming elections, the member Fu'ad al-'Attal called for participating, so that the required party spread could be achieved. On the other hand, the member 'Ali al-Hadi warned about entering elections, particularly at this time. He said that the party had emerged tattered from the 1987 elections and that the coming elections could be expected to finish off the remaining remnant of the party, if it entered them. Member 'Atiyah al-Sirafi wondered why workers' votes had gone elsewhere, after they had been devoted to the NPUG. He also asked the reason why individuals from the party had refrained from entering the elections. Answering this question, he said that most party members lacked voting strength; those with voting strength were simple local members and were a group whose rights had been mistreated.

Dr Isma'il Sabri 'Abdallah called for bringing up a new generation of young leaders. He also demanded that the current leadership—the so-called "elders"—not be a roadblock to the young.

Member 'Ali Talkhan attributed the reason for the NPUG's loss of membership to the party leadership, its method of dealing with members, and its insistence on holding to slogans that he described as useless.

On the NPUG's alliance with the Nasirists and communists, the majority of members called for clarification of the method of contact with them and for publicizing the provisions of any agreement. Dr Ibrahim Sa'd-al-Din asked about this alliance and the manner in which it had been made.

The Central Committee approved holding the party's third conference this coming 23 and 24 February to approve the changes that had been agreed upon, so that elections could be held on their basis.

AL-AHRAM Praises Al-Azhar Shaykh's Call
NC2502050289 Cairo MENA in Arabic
2208 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] The newspaper AL-AHRAM has lauded the call by the Al-Azhar shaykh to confront British author Salman Rushdie's calumnies by publishing a book with refutes his falsehoods and lies so that this ferocious onslaught may disappear.

In its editorial to be published in Saturday's edition, the paper asserts that the Al-Azhar shaykh's call is praiseworthy, for the entire matter of the book "The Satanic Verses" exceeded its natural dimensions when an Iranian decree to kill the book's author, whom Islam renounces, was issued. Issuing the decree backfired because it helped promote the book and created for its author an undeserved standing with international and political dimensions that the author had never dreamed possible.

The paper notes that Khomeyni's offer to reward \$3 million to the one who assassinates Rushdie has aided some parties that accuse Islam itself of terrorism. In this regard, the paper says, the whole process has gone perfectly and there is clear provocation here to drag Islam unjustly to court on the pretext that Islam incites bloodshed against citizens of foreign countries and reacts to freedom of opinion by killing. In conclusion, the paper hopes that the objective call from the Al-Azhar Shaykh will put things right, because falsehoods can only be refuted by facts and the book can only be defeated by another book.

Labor Party Chairman Discusses Islam, Socialism
45040170B Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
19 Jan 89 p 6

[Article: "Alliance Continues Despite Changes of Laws, No Opposition Between Islam and Socialism"]

[Text] Engineer Ibrahim Shukri, head of the Labor Party, explained that the ending of the party's alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood and the Liberal Party was a hope which had seduced certain people. Some people, he said, were unhappy about this alliance, but he asserted that the alliance was still in effect and was continuing, despite all the changes that might be made in the laws regulating elections. He said that all that was involved was that the alliance would always be arranged in light of developing changes and conditions.

On a related matter, the Labor Party head said that it was natural for there to be discussion within each party, especially when these parties were about to hold their annual convention. Elections for Labor Party leaders

would be held at the party's convention this coming 9 and 10 March. What was happening, he said, was a stimulus for discussion. However, he saw no opposition between the Labor Party's socialist identity and its Islamic identity, based on the fact that Islam, in its foundations and principles, included the best socialist tendencies and Western democracy. "In my view," said Shukri, "Islam is an integrated system and also a way of life."

Prominent Former Assembly Member Discusses Shari'ah Implementation

45040085 Cairo AL-NUR in Arabic 9 Nov 88 p 4

[Interview with Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar 'Aziz by Sha'ban Minyawi; in Cairo, date not specified]

[Text] After being a shining star under the dome of the People's Assembly and after the Islamic tendency expected him to do much to defend the passage of Islamic shari'ah laws, he suddenly withdrew from political and public life, refusing to run in the previous elections. He left for Saudi Arabia to teach at one of its universities.

During the summer vacation, we seized the opportunity of Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar's presence in Cairo to ask him about the circumstances surrounding his sudden departure to Saudi Arabia and about his opinion on issues raised in the arena.

I asked Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar about his current activities and his disappearance from public life after his activities inside and outside the former People's Assembly had made him the center of attention.

He said: "I went to Saudi Arabia to teach at the Higher Islamic Call Institute of the Islamic Imam Muhammad Bin-Sa'ud University and to train students in the practice of various methods in this field which requires the employment of every possible and available preaching technique.

"I did not go in order to shirk my responsibility of spreading the Call in Egypt or to dissociate myself completely from political activity. Rather, I felt that action for the benefit of the Call at this particular time required a method different from the one I used to employ in Egypt. I discovered that my work through the previous People's Assembly under the prevailing conditions and circumstances did not allow me to achieve the kind of service to Islam I had hoped to accomplish. Buffoonery, deception, and the subdual of members' freedom prevented me from merely stating my point of view vis-a-vis many issues because of the assembly's president, Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub's, may God forgive him and us, dictatorial control.

"Add to that my illness and the fact that the people had grown accustomed to seeking my help during my tenure to fulfill their needs.

"All this placed pressure on my action and activities for the benefit of the Call. My departure for Saudi Arabia gave me a great opportunity to shine academically and write serious academic research that can be used to come up with an Islamic remedy for the problems afflicting the Islamic world. I believe that this is more useful and beneficial to Islam at this particular time in the wake of the emergence of secular writers and creators of misguided and heretical ideas that attempt to distort Islamic thought and oppose the application of the Islamic shari'ah. Means and capabilities available at Saudi universities have permitted me to make good progress in this area."

[AL-NUR] In view of your People's Assembly experience, can you disclose to us some of the truths and convictions you have come out with from this experience?

['Aziz] I am busy writing about my complete political experience in the People's Assembly and, through this experience, stating my candid opinion of how these political and social problems may be solved in view of my knowledge of much information, many secrets and convictions that may surprise the Egyptian people.

I can say that these secrets have convinced me and have underscored my view that many ministers and some high officials are not loyal to the National Party to which they belong. Add to that their displeasure with certain behaviors by the government despite their participation in it, their criticism of many political conditions and also disapproval of many decisions that are being issued. What is strange is that some of these decisions were issued through their ministries and signed by them in the name of partisan commitment and the enforcement of orders and directives issued by higher authorities. A group of them, some still in power and some out of power, used to encourage us to persist in our demand for applying of the shari'ah. They used to explain to us some of the mysteries through which this objective, the application of the shari'ah, could be obtained.

[AL-NUR] An Islamic tendency faction is pressing for the immediate and full application of the shari'ah. What do you think about this point of view?

['Aziz] I disagree with this faction in their demand. I believe that the application of the shari'ah requires time and the setting of priorities for issues with which we can begin. In other words, application must be accomplished gradually. This opinion is not mine alone, but is shared by experts of the Call who believe that religious reform in societies which moved away from the shari'ah a long time ago, is subject to the same rules governing reform and change in idolatrous societies to which apostles and prophets were sent, with regard to the social and political aspects in particular, and not the dogmatic aspect which is totally inconsistent with Islamic doctrine.

Sociology believes that a sudden change in any situation without paving the way for it and preparing the people to accept it may be counterproductive. If this is done quickly and forcibly, it can be retracted quickly as well even without the use of force because man is a creature of habit in everything, even religious observances. Moral obligations and good virtues found in many western countries are merely the product of habit, notwithstanding that some of them are not aware that they are a principle of religion and a call preached by all creeds and religious laws. Otherwise, we would say that they are more religious and faithful than we are despite our belief in God and our knowledge of His commands.

Many of us still separate conduct of men toward God from conduct of people among themselves, failing to abide by any Islamic virtue in our conduct among ourselves despite our seeming religiosity and our observation of the divine rites such as prayer and fasting!

I would like to emphasize that I am not using this to absolve the government of its failure so far to apply the shari'ah. On the contrary, I accuse it of dereliction in this matter and of failure to get it under way. The step-by-step approach is not the same as standing still and a thousand-mile journey begins with one step. We would be very pleased if some of the ready shari'ah laws are put into application now and preparations got under way for the remaining laws. But, unfortunately there is no hope so far that the ready laws passed by al-Azhar will be ratified. Even their promise to sort out and select the laws has not been fulfilled and not a single law has been considered.

[AL-NUR] Some people claim that 95 percent of the Islamic shari'ah is currently in application in Egypt. What do you say to that?

[Aziz] The claim that 95 percent, or less or more, of the shari'ah is being applied in Egypt should not be used to justify the deferment or obstruction of the so-called purification of laws that are contrary to the shari'ah and the amendment of contrary laws to conform to it. Assuming that the country is applying 95 or even 99 percent of the shari'ah and believes at the same time that the remainder, however insignificant, does not need to be applied and that it is not violating the shari'ah, it is an unbelieving country. Even if the obstruction of this part is due to disbelief and the notion that it is not necessary, it is still judged to be an unbeliever and at the very least as being derelict and no doubt will be held accountable for its dereliction by God Almighty.

Perhaps we know that Abu-Bakr grouped with the apostates those who refused to pay alms to him after the Prophet's death, believing that it was a special tax paid to the Prophet during his life, despite their belief in God and His Prophet, their utterance of the two professions of faith, their observance of other duties and even their acknowledgement of Abu-Bakr's leadership and their observance of and abidance by Islamic rule. However,

Abu-Bakr regarded the renunciation of one of the Islamic tenets as a repudiation of faith and as apostasy within Islam, so he fought them until they submitted to all the divine laws.

[AL-NUR] One opinion says that it is not up to man to ratify or not ratify the application of God's law because God's law must be obeyed by everyone. What is your comment on that?

[Aziz] This view is unacceptable from a pragmatic point of view. First of all, which of God's laws are the people supposed to approve or disapprove of? Is it God's revelations in the Koran as is, without explanation of the provisions and laws contained in its verses? Or is the Prophetic tradition which, like the Koran, carries many meanings and on which points of view sometimes differ?

If this is what is meant by God's rule and God's law, it is a misconception of true Islam and the divine laws. There are senior ulemas and jurists who have specialized in the understanding of these verses and traditions and religious faiths whose followers lived their whole life researching legal provisions and writing down their understanding and interpretations based on their knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence. If these opinions and independent judgments that differ from one faith to another and from era to another, especially those regarding other than the conduct of man toward God, or what is known as conduct of people among themselves, were to be left as they are and we were to give our judges the right to rule as they see fit based on their own independent judgments, we would have anarchy and sometimes conflicting judgments in the same matter, depending on the independent opinion of each judge. This is provided that we have educated judges who have studied Islamic jurisprudence and have assimilated all these provisions which must be assimilated. But since it is impossible to get these judges no matter what we do and regardless of the number of specialized schools and universities we open, the so-called modern-age concept must be used to codify the Islamic shari'ah. This means drafting provisions in the form of articles and laws that judges and students of law can study, learn by heart and abide by in their judgments. That these laws are first approved by specialized ulemas, then referred to the legislative council for ratification, there is nothing wrong in that as a system used to ratify laws in our country. This is provided that council members do not have the right to object to any legal provision or law that complies with the shari'ah and to replace it with a different one or even to delete some of these articles that are necessary for our society. The only right they would have is to object to the form and not the substance and to voice their opinion on certain wording and propose replacements to clarify the meaning and to remove any ambiguity and confusion, provided that such changes are submitted to the specialized ulemas.

[AL-NUR] Now that you have left the People's Assembly, how do you view its image, particularly the Islamic tendency practices under the dome?

[ʿAziz] Even though I refused to run for the current People's Assembly, despite the fact that more than one party insisted on placing me at the top of its ticket, I fully believe that Islamists must be present in the assembly, if only to be a stumbling block to the passage of laws and legislation incompatible with Islam. Furthermore, these Islamists may be more able than I am to put up with the harassment that occurs under the dome and to devote their time in the service of the people. The one observation I have against some Islamic tendency representatives in the People's Assembly is their total preoccupation with the people's problems and their failure to heed Islamic causes, the Islamic shari'ah in particular, for the benefit of which I was expecting them to do much during this session. Nonetheless, I wish them to increase in number, more success and an audible voice resounding inside and outside the hall, determined to apply the Islamic shari'ah.

Latest Population Statistics Show Increase to 53 Million

45041067 Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic
1 Jan 89 pp 26-27

[Text] The most recent statistics on population growth show that Egypt's population was 53 million on 5 August of last year. About 8 months before that date—on 2 December 1987, to be exact—the population was 52 million. In 8 months and 4 days we increased by 1 million!

This means that we are increasing by 1,472,000 a year—i.e., 123,000 a month, 4,032 a day, or one individual every 21.4 seconds. The figures are terrifying, without a shadow of a doubt!

They mean, quite simply, that in 10 years we shall become 70 or 75 million people, and in 20 years 80 or 85 million. Where can they all live?

Although Egypt's total area is about 1 million square km, most of this area is desert. The habitable part where we can live does not exceed 5.5 percent of this area, i.e., about 55,039 square km.

This is the entire area on which 53 million male and female citizens now live.

This will probably also be the entire area on which 70 and 80 million male and female citizens will live, even though the government is working to increase the inhabited area, in order to avoid population crowding and decrease population density.

Incidentally, present population density is 963 persons per square km, despite these attempts. Despite the fact that the government has constructed and is constructing a number of new cities and has annexed new areas to Alexandria, Suez, Isma'iliyah, al-Buhayrah, and al-Jizah governorates, in preparation for their being built up and settled with residents, population growth constantly

leads to increased population density. The latter figure rose from 446 persons per square km in 1937 to 963 persons per square km in 1988.

That is, population density rose by 107 percent in about 51 years.

The preceding applies to Egypt as a whole; Cairo's disaster has been even greater.

Latest figures on population growth in Greater Cairo show that on 5 August 1988 Cairo's population was 10,216,000. On 2 December 1987, it had been 10,031,000. In other words, the population of Greater Cairo increased by fully 185,000 in 8 months and 4 days!

The frightening meaning of these figures is that the population growth rate in Cairo has reached 272,000 persons a year.

Even more critically, Cairo's population density has entered the danger stage.

When we follow Cairo's population density, we see just how markedly it has increased. In 1927, the density was less than 7,000 persons per square km. In 1988, in the space of approximately 61 years, it had jumped to about 29,100 persons per square km.

Censuses show that the density continually increased by 13,000 persons between the censuses of 1928 and 1966. Between the censuses of 1966 and 1976, it increased by 4,000 persons, and it again increased by approximately 5,000 persons between the censuses of 1976 and 1986.

The most terrifying fact these censuses indicate is that population density in the city of Cairo has always exceeded population density in all of Egypt in all years, from 1927 to 1988.

While more than 29,000 Cairenes live within a square km within Cairo, studies show that there is a great disparity between different areas of Cairo as regards population density.

While the density is about 6,800 persons per square km in Qasr al-Nil precinct, it reaches about 99,500 persons per square km in al-Sharabiyah precinct, 88,000 in Rawd al-Faraj, 80,000 in al-Zaytun, 78,000 in Hulwan, and 75,000 in Bab al-Sha'riyah.

Imagine 99,000 citizens living within a single square km!

Is it comprehensible?

While the disaster is great for Cairo, it is not small for Egypt's other governorates.

Other Governorates

For example, the population of Alexandria governorate was 2,990,000 on 2 December 1987. By 5 August 1988, this number had reached 3,035,000—i.e., the population of Alexandria grew by 45,000 in 8 months and 4 days.

Although Alexandria's population density has decreased since 1960 to about less than half, because new areas have been annexed to the city, the population density of a precinct like al-Jumruk is about 118,500 persons per square km. This figure is so high that not even the most crowded precinct in the city of Cairo (al-Sharabiyah, with 99,500 persons per square km) equals it.

Apart from Cairo and Alexandria, population density is increasing rapidly in all the governorates of Egypt. In Port Sa'id, for example, population density increased from 1,539 persons per square km in 1937 to 5,673 persons per square km in 1988. The population density of al-Daqahliyah increased from 463 persons per square km in 1937 to 1,041 persons per square km in 1988.

Al-Sharqiyah increased from 222 to 843; al-Qalyubiyah from 650 to 2,591; al-Gharbiyah from 280 to 1,519; al-Minufiyah from 728 to 1,497; al-Jizah from 675 to 3,599; Bani Suwayf from 514 to 1,127; al-Fayyum from 342 to 883; al-Minya from 467 to 1,212; Asyut from 593 to 1,486; Sawhaj from 726 to 1,631; Qina from 569 to 1,269; and Aswan from 365 to 1,239.

Even if we have finally been able to find an answer to the question we had to answer—namely, where all these people live—there are tens and hundreds of questions that will remain without an answer.

Questions Without Answers

How will all these people eat? Where is the agricultural land that can produce half of what they need, especially since we all know that no matter how much we succeed in adding to our green land, we shall lose parts of it to pale buildings.

What we gain with our right hand, we shall lose with our left, since we shall assuredly take parts of our land in the Delta and Nile Valley as building sites, so that we can reside, live, marry, and continue to reproduce.

—If we find our food!

For how shall we move and travel and go to our jobs?

The traffic problem in Cairo alone is fearsome. There are more than 33,000 taxis in the streets of the capital, in addition to 59,000 trucks, 2,796 public buses, 311,000 private automobiles, and 70,000 motorcycles.

What will it be like in 10 years? In 20 years? Where will all this fleet be able to park. We don't say "move and travel," but rather "park"!

If we find places to park this horde of cars, vehicles, and motorcycles, where shall we find room enough to build the apartments, houses, and buildings we assuredly need in order to live?

The housing problem is an intractable one in Egyptian society. Experts say that if by miracle we could halt the population increase and in 10 years remain the same 53 million people we are now, we would still not solve the housing problem.

What do you think will happen if we increase? What do you think will happen when our numbers become 70 or 75 million in 10 years?

How many apartment buildings will we build?

Even if we build, where can we educate our children?

The number of classrooms in which all the students in Egypt—elementary, preparatory, and high school—are studying is now 232,000: 232,000 classrooms in which 9 million male and female students study. In the year 2000, the number of students will reach about 16 million at current rates of increase. This means that we need 235,000 new classrooms. I.e., we have to build 65 classrooms a day! Will we do it? Can we do it?

Reason and logic say that a continuation of present rates of population growth means that we shall find no land to farm in order to satisfy hungry mouths. We shall find no shelter for all those who dream of a very small apartment. We shall find no means of transportation to carry us where we want to go; either they will be crowded to the full, or stuck in one place and unable to move. We shall find no seat for a student.

So what is left after this?

What is left, if we find nothing to eat, no place to live, no schools in which to be educated, and no means of movement?

What future can Egypt look forward to, if this is the future?

In fact, numerous attempts have already been made in recent years to alert people to the problem, to know its dimensions, and comprehend its significance.

What is certain is that the response is insufficient.

Why? Why do we continue to realize these high rates, as if our only goal in life were to reproduce, and reproduce, and reproduce—and that alone?

We should realize that even if we faced tens and hundreds of intractable and not-so-intractable problems and thousands of crises, we would be able to solve all the crises and overcome all the problems, if we found a solution to the problem of population growth.

Population growth is the mother problem that gives birth to tens and hundreds of problems we do not need. Certainly, the population increase is the disease; it can never be the cure!

Lawyers Association Head Interviewed on Clashes
PM2102115189 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
15-21 Feb 89 p 11

[Interview with Ahmad al-Khawajah, head of Egyptian Lawyers Association, by Siham 'Abd-al-'Al in Cairo—date not given]

[Text]

['Abd-al-'Al] It is the first time that bloody incidents have occurred at the Lawyers Association. What is your explanation?

[Al-Khawajah] What happened was a hostile attempt against legitimacy. The only beneficiaries are Israel's supporters and the enemies of democracy. This is because the Lawyers Association is the only Egyptian association to have raised Palestine's flag since the Camp David Accords.

['Abd-al-'Al] Financial and political reasons have been mentioned. Are the association's problems professional or political differences? And what is at stake?

[Al-Khawajah] They are political problems and differences. And what is at stake is the association's continued independence.

['Abd-al-'Al] And who wants to take control of the association?

[Al-Khawajah] No comment.

['Abd-al-'Al] Some say that what happened inside the association was a "civil war." Was it due to maladministration?

[Al-Khawajah] There is no maladministration regarding the association's affairs. In the past, those leveling accusations against the association's board had informed the Central Audit Agency, the socialist prosecutor's office, and the public funds prosecutor's office of these matters. But all these organs examined the association's accounts and work carefully and showed the soundness of the financial and administrative position. The central audit agency completed its examination in March 1986. The public funds prosecutor's office completed its investigations in November 1988. Then, investigations were discontinued. As for the reason for the attempt to storm the association via the use of force, violence, and bullets, it had to do with the upcoming general elections. They wanted to use the results of the prosecutor's office

investigations as a propaganda weapon against the present board and head. When they failed, they turned to violence against the most important forum for freedom of expression and dialogue.

['Abd-al-'Al] It has been reported that you could have avoided bloodshed and gotten events under control before they got worse had you stepped down or submitted your resignation.

[Al-Khawajah] The general assembly did not convene or decide on my resignation, nor did it ask me to resign. This is why I expressed my protest at what was happening at the Lawyers Association. I did so because 400 lawyers stormed the association's building, destroying doors and firing shots, and then entered the head's room to assault him. I left the building to preserve the safety of those who were inside—which I believe was a sound action.

['Abd-al-'Al] You said that the Wafd Party was behind the dispute at the association.

[Al-Khawajah] That is not so. Anyone saying that should read carefully what I have said in this regard. What happened at the Lawyers Association has caused everyone to talk about and analyze the situation according to their inclinations.

['Abd-al-'Al] Will you run for leadership again?

[Al-Khawajah] Yes, I will.

['Abd-al-'Al] Do you expect to win?

[Al-Khawajah] This is for the lawyers themselves to decide.

['Abd-al-'Al] Do you expect new clashes during the elections?

[Al-Khawajah] I pray to God that will not happen. The lawyers condemn what happened and will preserve legitimacy and the law.

Columnist Optimistic Over Shevardnadze's Cairo Visit

JN2102202289 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
20 Feb 89 p 12

["From the Heart" column by Muhsin Muhammad]

[Excerpts] Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's visit to Cairo today turns over a new leaf in Egyptian-Soviet relations following a long period of stalemate, suspended visits, and exchanged accusations. Actually, credit for the establishment of new relations between Cairo and Moscow goes to President Husni Mubarak and his policy. [passage omitted]

There were painful periods in contemporary Egyptian and Arab history when Egypt was defeated in 1956 and 1967. Detente between the East and West then emerged and U.S.- Soviet relations improved. Egypt could not defeat Israel and some blamed Moscow for not supplying Egypt with weapons while others charged that the Soviet weapons were ineffective.

Regardless of the reasons which led to the consolidation and later lukewarmness of the Egyptian-Soviet relations, all this is now past history. The Soviet policy has completely changed in Gorbachev's era as indicated in the agreements concluded by the Soviet leader with the United States for the elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe and for reciprocal inspection. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan came a few hours before Shevardnadze's arrival. This was preceded by the Soviet withdrawal from Angola, the beginning of a real open-door policy in the Soviet Union, the relinquishment of Brezhnev's principle, and the abandonment of support for the communist parties or imposition of the communist theory on other states.

Egypt, which adopts a balanced policy in its foreign relations despite the circumstances and the special relationship linking it to the United States, is eager to bolster its relations with the Soviet Union, which adopted an important initiative regarding the settlement of Egyptian debts. It wants these relations to be boosted and to prosper. Egypt hopes the Soviet Union will continue to support the Palestine question and help make the Soviet-backed Arab states adopt a stand in support of the Palestine question and the PLO in particular.

We hope that the visit, which begins today, will not simply be a reply to Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister Dr 'Isamat 'Abd al-Majid's visit to Moscow. We are confident that the two countries hope that the political and economic relations between Moscow and Cairo will return to their most prosperous times, especially since the Egyptian and Soviet leaders began their terms with a real open-door policy in international politics.

Opposition Paper Severely Criticizes Al-Minya Security Actions

45040156a Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 20 Dec 88 p 8

[Article by 'Imad Mahjub: "The Security Deterrence Policy Is Leading the Country to Disaster"]

[Text] Everyone will certainly pause to consider these events.

The government has not been not able to impose "class" bread on the citizens of al-Minya now that the masses have organized a campaign, led by the Islamic Society, that has curbed all attempts to produce it for more than 2 months; protest marches have taken place more than 22 times in succession. On the other hand, the security agencies have continued their arrests and intensified their grip on the city. Their armored vehicles have

occupied the squares and main streets and their informers have occupied the mosques of the Islamic Society from within, as forces from outside have surrounded them.

The policy of dialogue in which the senior officials in the government had taken part has been suspended and the scope of the iron grip policy the Minister Zaki Badr was pursuing has been expanded. Hundreds of members of the society have been arrested, hundreds have been pursued and their homes broken into, and the forces have smashed their contents and taken hostages.

AL-SHA'B has been anxious to meet with the parties connected to these events. It has appeared that a number of officials considered that adopting balanced, compromise Islamic solutions and positions would have the effect of containing the crisis, which is extending to the relationship between Moslems and Copts.

The governor of al-Minya, Major General 'Abd-al-Tawwab Rashwan, made great efforts in preparing the atmosphere and providing justification for the dialogue. This has been translated into a decree forbidding commerce in alcohol and suspending the renewal of permits for liquor stores, not to speak of the issuance of a bulletin listing tables of school quotas, giving a collective opportunity for the noon prayer in all schools. The governor, last year, also supported some Islamic Group service activities. The events nonetheless grew in scope, and it was worth our while listening to him. He said:

There Is No Crisis

"Through purposeful, constructive dialogue, we can cope with extremism, and, if it comes to assume the form of crime, legal measures are taken prior to it. However, if there is activity and it might lead to crime, the expectation is that it will be a crime in the future.

"It would be more successful if that activity not start where we might come to a crime, and that is what is actually happening, without naming any tendencies or plans."

[Question] On this basis could we declare the failure of dialogue and advancement of the security solution to the problem in al-Minya?

[Answer] A dialogue with those whom it would benefit and those whose activities do not amount to crime. However, if the activities of any of them reach the point of crime, measures are taken prior to that, and that is how we are proceeding.

[Question] Your excellency the major general, are breaking into mosques and arbitrary arrests part of the legal measures?

[Answer] No break-in of mosques has occurred, and whoever told you so is a liar.

[Question] Thursday, the day before yesterday, during the distribution of a statement by Islamic youth on the occasion of the passage of a year since the [Palestinian] uprising in the Islamic Legal Society Mosque, I myself witnessed officers and informers breaking into the mosque in their shoes to arrest a young boy after they had committed aggression by hitting people who were praying.

[Answer] This is not a break-in. A break-in means armored vehicles and armored cars entering the mosque and this of course has not happened. As to the entrance by the force, that might happen sometimes to arrest a criminal.

[Question] What do you call it?

[Answer] A mistake we do not condone.

[Question] This mistake has happened in the al-Rahman Mosque more than 165 times in a year!

[Answer] I do not believe that the figure is correct.

[Question] Your excellency the governor, there is a real crisis and people are talking about it everywhere. Security forces in the streets, armored vehicles in the squares and arrests night and day. What is your comment?

[Answer] There is no crisis. We as security personnel take measures which will limit crime before it occurs. These measures are necessary and we must not constitute a reaction; rather I myself must constitute the action.

Guards are necessary around locations subject to crime, whether a felonious crime (such as theft) or a political crime (aggression against mosques or churches). These measures are necessary and whoever does not take them is incompetent.

Mistakes on Both Sides

We moved over to Shaykh Ahmad Ibrahim Hindi, the al-Minya director general of religious endowments, to ask him if there was a real problem or crisis because of the Islamic Society's activity.

[Answer] Yes, there is a problem, the basis of which is that the Islamic Society is present on the stage and has its thinking and activity, which cause some excesses which we can dispense with, for instance some people taking over mosques, threatening imams and accusing them of moral depravity and godlessness and accusing religious scholars of incompetence in their mission by going along with the ruler.

He added, "They claim to apply God's law, while they are the ones who detract from Islam and its teachings before the world, through childish acts, throwing stones and firecrackers at churches."

[Question] If there is a crisis, how can it be remedied, in your view?

[Answer] People's guardians must cope with acts of aggression which arise in society, and just as preventing the intrusion of fine points prevents the intrusion of general things, it is necessary to ban flamboyant women (flamboyantly dressed, naked women) because all divine religions reject women's display of their alluring features.

It is necessary immediately to eliminate the phenomenon of depraved movies, houses of dissolution, and negative features which appear on the surface, before which the law stands in perplexity, such as the plunder and embezzlement of government funds. We have not heard of a deterrent sentence being handed down against any of the people committing these.

We also urge the government to carry out a review of the plays, movies, and serials that are published and broadcast in the media, the least that can be said of which is that they violate the principles of all divine laws.

Dr Jamil Sayfayn: Our Ties Are Strong

Dr Jamil Sayfayn (former member of the People's Assembly), rapporteur of the committee of health in the National Party in al-Minya: The spirit of brotherhood is still the framework for relations between Moslems and Copts, and groups of Moslem youths have made their appearance. I know many of them personally and strong ties bind me to some of them. Although some of them go to excess in their ideas, ultimately we, Moslems and Copts, welcome the orientation toward God, which entails the solution of all problems and whose teachings contain the curative remedy for every wound.

Damaging Expressions

Some young people propound excellent values, such as prohibiting alcohol and provocative dress for women, and we all encourage this, but their style in advocating these virtues is severe. If they were to advocate good things, that would relate the most to people and have the greatest response. However, obstructing certain passers by or committing aggression against places of worship, and some publications which contain expressions which damage and hurt the feelings of Copts and portray them with descriptions which they do not meet, for instance it being said that churches are run for licentiousness—these matters most certainly impose bad effects on people's spirits.

Concerning the remedy to the problem, Dr Jamil Sayfayn said that severity will not stanch the revolution of thought, and the solution to the problems we are experiencing will be through dialogue.

Concerning security break-ins into mosques, he said, "We condemn Israel, which acts flagrantly with our sacred possessions in Jerusalem and the occupied Arab territories, and I do not believe that any Egyptian, whatever his religion, would agree that the houses of God, the mosques, should be defiled, and I do not believe that the agency of the police would agree to stoop to such depths."

Muhyi-al-Din Ahmad: The Security [Force] Is the Cause of the Crisis

Concerning these conditions in al-Minya, Muhyi-al-din Ahmad 'Isa, member of the People's Assembly (alliance), said:

"The young people of the Islamic Group in al-Minya are sinned against by the government. They have lost confidence in the political leadership now that aberrant conduct, plunder, pillaging, and corruption have gotten out of control within its ranks, in spite of the circumstances they are going through and the country is going through, the crushing economic crises and the injustice to which they are prey in the prisons and penitentiaries—all this in the absence of a righteous Islamic movement because of the liquidation and the struggle against it by security. Young people do not find people who will guide them and set them right, while security has declared open season on young people's blood and honor and on subjecting them to deprivation in prison and the spirit of violence, vengeance and loathing has arisen within their souls."

[Question] What about the situation regarding the Copts?

Muhyi-al-Din Ahmad 'Isa said, "We reject any approach against the unity in which Moslems and Copts lived for thousands of years with affection and love between them. As to what is happening now, that is a result of a complex picture which I have referred to, in addition to the security break-in of mosques and the prohibition of religious rituals in them, while these young people look at the churches in front of them and their anger rises within them in an attempt to put pressure on the government."

[Question] The director of religious endowments in al-Minya accuses the brothers [Islamic Brotherhood members] and the Islamic Society of taking over the religious endowment mosques and forcibly engaging in activity within them. What is your reply?

[Answer] These mosques were built before the events of September 1981 through the efforts of the brothers or the Islamic Society and through private donations, and the religious endowment [department] annexed these mosques to their department during the arrests in 1981. After some Islamic leaders got out of prison in 1984, we met the minister of religious endowments and officials and reached agreement with them on returning the

mosques to the Islamic youths, where they could engage in their activity among the people. This situation went on for 3 years, until the new onslaught occurred last year.

Service Projects

At the beginning we had a tour and meetings with a sampling of the masses of al-Minya, asking them about the Islamic Group, class bread, security, government policies, the Moslems and the Copts, all these important subjects, in simple, brief words.

Muhammad 'Ata Hasan (a driver), from the village of Tala, 3 km from al-Minya: "The Islamic Group is performing all good works for the sake of the poor people."

[Question] How is that?

[Answer] I haven't seen them beating anyone, but I have seen the security [forces] running after them and chasing them. I saw a break-in by security into the al-Rahman mosque, especially when I used my car (to transport passengers) five times in the arrest raids which are taking place at night (and I hope the minister will tell them to have mercy on the people and not take their cars by force for their raids or their private errands).

Mustafa Kamal 'Ali (a worker with sanitary drainage): "I am living in a housing shelter and I don't know about politics. I just saw the Sunni group making shelters for people who don't have homes. The last holiday, they brought me some meat and robes to distribute among the poor people of the district. For this reason I learned in the paper that I am not in agreement with bread for 5 piasters. I have three children and buy a day's bread for 60 piasters. That is, how much are 18 pounds per month when bread sells for 5 piasters?"

I said, "It then goes for 45 pounds."

He said, "How so, when my salary is 57.5 pounds? Where will I get it?"

Muhammad Sayyid 'Abduh, a government employee in the al-Minya City Council: "The Islamic Group offered free treatment services to the poor and aid in the form of books, class accessories, meat on religious occasions, and clothes in the form of donations from people with money, because the people here are very tired out. As to their persecution by the security, that is injustice and hostility, and I as a citizen request through AL-SHA'B newspaper that the cordon around the al-Rahman mosque be lifted and the campaign of arrests be stopped. We also ask that class bread not be applied, because the price of everything (goods and services) will rise if the price of bread, the difference in life, rises because of the cordon."

My Friends Are Muslims

Jamal Hasan (a government worker) in the al-Minya telephone exchange: "My salary is 50 pounds—and I do not have a chance to work in the afternoon. I have four children and the rise in the price of bread is damaging to us. Concerning the Islamic Group, it forbids what is evil and gives sinners warnings once, twice and three times. As to security, it carries out a 'nighttime' terror operation, grabs innocent people and keeps them imprisoned for months.

"What I do not like about the Islamic Group is that some of the young people or infiltrators confront the Copts through it, but the most important thing is the group's assistance to some males and females who have gone astray to repent and start an honorable life by giving them some money to sell fruit and vegetables."

Makram Jad al-Makram Tanyus (a worker): "The people, the students, the government employees and everyone is participating in what the Islamic Group is doing to confront class bread and I am behind them and with them. As to the relationship between Muslims and Copts, we as Christians are not targets. There is no pressure on us. Rather, the Islamic Group's pressure is on the government or security.

"What security is doing to the group consists of undesirable acts. They do not have to put pressure on them this way, because breaking into mosques by means of the security or trespassing against churches is something loathsome to us and undesirable to both. It saddens and pains me to go into a church under the protection of the automatic weapons the soldiers are brandishing, and what is happening to the mosques pains me."

Fathi Fu'ad Ibrahim (a student): "Security cordons off the al-Rahman mosque (Tuesday and Friday), and provokes panic in the district, especially when it goes through houses with a fine tooth comb looking for young Muslims and they destroy houses and what is in them. The people have responded to the group and participated in defending it and have responded to its marches and its ideas. Security must leave the group free to act in its mosque on Tuesday and Friday, as long as they are philanthropic activities."

Mabruk Rajab Ibrahim (a government employee): "It is security which is fabricating the crises between Muslims and Copts and escalating them, and the people must be well aware of this and unify their efforts in confronting the onslaught of the upcoming famine under the name of 'class,' or the rise in the price of bread."

We saw very many examples besides these in all the sections, articulated with the same spirit and suffering. We saw Lady Fatimah Badr Habashi, an old, infirm woman who was seeking shelter on the sidewalk; the group, in agreement with the south al-Minya District, set up a wood house for her where she could take shelter

with some rugs, providing her the food and treatment she required. There are more than 10 cases like her, and other cases where it offers financial aid.

We have heard the opinion of the governor, the security men, the people in charge of the religious endowments and some Christian brethren. We have learned the view of ordinary citizens, and now we enter into a confrontation with the main party under indictment in these events, the Islamic Group.

A Very Dangerous Journey and Confrontation With the Group

For 4 hours I moved back and forth among places, mosques and houses, many kilometers which brought us out of the city limits in the midst of great efforts and guard service on the part of the young people in the group.

[Question] How is your situation coming along now, aside from the arrests and acts of persecution that I have heard about?

[Answer] They deprived us of the wherewithal for service activity and the security forces broke into the clinic which offers its services free of charge and smashed what was inside it.

[Question] Why has there been an interest on your part in the issue of the rise in the price of bread, and what have you done about it?

[Answer] We are in the closest contact with people's concerns and hopes. We know that they cannot tolerate a rise in the price of bread to 5 piasters.

[Question] In a previous meeting, Shaykh 'Ali 'Abd-al-Fattah, commander of the group, asserted to me that aggression against Copts is a mistake which the society is not thinking of committing although they were involved in the matter insofar as the prohibition of evil was concerned, whether a Moslem or a Christian commits it, and that there is no aggression against Copts as long as they do not attack the Muslims. The commander of the group affirmed his concern for coexistence and relations between Muslims and Copts, as our religion and our glorious prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon us, have ordered us. What has changed in this point of view?

[Answer] For our part, this view has not changed, but consider these points:

Conditions in al-Minya University have become stabilized as far as prohibiting intermingling between young men and girls, modesty and respect for the teachings of Islam are concerned. At the beginning of this year, security wanted to provoke the group and tried to compel one of the activity families to violate these conditions through a mixed excursion. When it failed,

security invented a new family to make the excursion, headed by liberated Christian female students in a manner which is not in keeping even with the values and traditions of Upper Egypt. The young people in the group stopped them and quietly asked them to go back to their homes.

[Question] What is the connection between this and the aggression against the Church of the Virgin last month, or the beating and wounding of a Christian?

There is increased new church activity.

[Answer] My brother, I imagine that you are falling prey to erroneous information. If there are Copts who have gone astray, there conversely are persons connected to the Muslims who have gone astray. Moreover, we are not hostile to the increase in prayers in the churches. Religious Copts are certainly better than atheistic ones.

After some effort and waiting, I met with Shaykh 'Ali al-Dinari, the imam and preacher in the al-Rahman mosque, one of the leaders of the group (wanted for arrest). The meeting was warm in spite of the anxiety and movement. The person I interviewed was calm and wise. I informed him of some of my conclusions and paused to consider the relationship with the Copts, and how that is faring.

He said, "The strange thing is that the newspapers have been concerned and have been carrying out a dialogue with the Islamic Group only after the events with the Copts, which we reject, however minor these events might be. This gives public opinion the impression that the group has a policy which is hostile to the Copts, and this is not true at all. They fail to remember that the Islamic Group has social and reform activity with which the Copts might become involved too."

[Question] It is wonderful that this notion is appearing in your talk about activity, and that it is bringing Muslims and Copts together, but how has the situation deteriorated to this extent with such speed?

[Answer] The matter is not in our hand at all. We have accepted a dialogue with officials. Indeed, we have called for it. (This has been for a year.) His eminence the mufti has participated in it and the governor has attended it. It got to the point where the governor arose and led the prayer. The dialogue could have continued, but suddenly the policy of the iron grip took hold and stopped everything. The security forces surrounded the mosques and prevented the Tuesday meeting (a weekly group); more than 300 young people were arrested. Then the mosque was broken into more than 165 times at least in a year. This is a disaster and a crime the Tatars did not commit.

After the announcement of "class bread" and the issuance of the group's bulletin, a large number of brethren were arrested and the cordon around the mosque was tightened. After the referendum was brought out and

5,000 copies of it were printed, and it still exists, the security forces and saboteurs surrounded the mail boxes in order to prevent the letters from reaching the governor!

Shaykh 'Ali al-Dinari answered, "The group has been kept from every activity and security is persecuting its members in an ongoing manner. In the recent period more than 100 brethren have been arrested and the acts of persecution and breaking into homes have involved 350 others. They smashed their furniture and homes and terrorized their people. These are acts which foretell rebellion against things on everyone's part and the resumption of disturbances. As far as calm goes, that is contingent on the securing of the mosques and the grant of permission for speeches and clubs in the mosques and philanthropic projects.

Columnist Questions Western Support of Rushdie
JN2502205689 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic
23 Feb 89 p 2

[Article by Hamid 'Izz-al-Din: "This Salman!"]

[Text] Any fool can win the international fame which has been won by this Salman Rushdie, the British author of Indian origin who wrote the book "The Satanic Verses," if he simply writes a book ridiculing everything and the things cherished as sacred by more than 1 billion people—nay, by even more than only 1 million people—if he ridicules religious beliefs and manages to have his book published.

We reject the principle of holding dialogue through the use of pistols. We also reject killing in response to the opinions of others, regardless of the nature of these opinions, and a mistake in this regard was made by the Iranian regime when it earmarked millions of dollars for anyone who might kill this Rushdie. Likewise, we do not find any logical justification for the European and U.S. outburst of support in defense of Salman Rushdie, even if this defense is viewed as defense of the freedom of thought and expression.

This opinion of ours is given as the statements issued by most European states, the EC Council of Foreign Ministers, and Washington to assail, criticize, and condemn the Iranian stand, which created something out of nothing, have failed to refer even through insinuation to the sin committed by Salman through the publication of his trivialities against Islam and Prophet Muhammad, the prophet of Islam.

The most profound meanings of freedom dictate that a sense of responsibility must prevail, and that others' feelings and beliefs must not be harmed in a manner displaying lack of logic, objectivity, or conscience. This is exactly what Salman Rushdie, this ignoramus who has become a priority issue in the debates of the EC Council of Foreign Ministers, has done. In response to the threat

issued against this Salman, states have withdrawn their ambassadors from the state that issued the threat, and another state severed ties with that state.

The question urgently posed is the following: Would the European states and the United States take the same stand if the person threatened was an Arab writer who assailed a European state? Would the same stand emerge if the target assailed by Salman was something other than Islam? If the answer is in the affirmative, then where were the European states when tens of journalists were being assassinated, killed, and silenced and when their newspapers were being closed in many of the world's states? Or is this Salman something else?

Columnist Raps Moshe Arens' Ideology
JN2402154189 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
22 Feb 89 pp 1, 16

[Untitled article in "Diary" column by Ahmad Baha' al-Din]

[Text] We know well that Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, who is visiting Cairo to meet with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, is an "ideologist" minister and "hawk of hawks" in the Israeli Government. We also know well that he believes in the need to adhere to "the historic land of Israel" and opposes any attempt to abandon an inch of the occupied territories. As we know from our study of Israel's political thought, the "historic land of Israel" includes "Transjordan" and "Sinai," as stated in their leader, Menahem Begin's, recent writings.

Arens should know that we are aware of these facts. As he is an intelligent man, he should think well about several issues, although they conflict with his ideology.

He must know that Israel's existence now or in 1,000 years is based on peace or "acceptance" in the region, not war and force.

He must know that Israel's unilateral peace with Egypt will always be exposed to collapse and vulnerable to the pressure of events as long as it remains unilateral. It will not live on a unilateral basis regardless of the two sides' intentions.

He must know that the few kilometers of land that Israel believes will guarantee its safety and peace are no longer valid and that the human factor has completely overwhelmed the geographical factor.

He must think with us about Israel's history. It is Israel that participated in planning and carrying out the 1956 war, and it is Israel that planned and started the 1967 war, not Egypt, as they allege. They forged a statement that they saw Egyptian forces approaching the borders and were forced to respond. This is baseless. When

Moshe Dayan was later asked which side started the June war, he said: "This issue has become academic." Minister Arens should know we are aware of these facts.

He must think about Tabah as an example. Israel knew from the beginning that Tabah was ours. Therefore, why all these differences, arbitrations, and rulings? What is the political or psychological wisdom of this behavior?

Can this behavior lead to "acceptance," which is their only way to peace?

Let them use the "big stick policy" against the Palestinians and the Arabs, let them win round after round, let them live in a camp encircled by barbed wire for 100 or 1,000 years. And then what?

Minister Arens must change some of his ideologies, not only his political tactics.

Supply Ministry Withdraws Goods, Studies Price Increases

45000118 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 7 Feb 89 p 1

[Report by 'Ali al-Qammash]

[Text] The Ministry of Supply has begun to implement a plan, based on a request from the policies committee, to withdraw supply goods from the markets and cooperatives for 2 months to be able to meet consumption needs during the coming month of Ramadan.

All rations of butter, chicken, flour, and eggs to the group cooperatives will be halted, except for meats imported by investment companies.

Also, the ministry is looking into making some adjustments at the supply centers in the coastal divisions and districts, increasing prices on some basic goods such as flour, rice, and sugar.

Columnist Decries Opposition Behavior at Assembly

JN2602183889 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic
24 Feb 89 p 1

["Age of the Eighties" article by Sa'id Sunbul]

[Text] It does not help the cause of democracy for polemics to deteriorate into invective, abuse, and an exchange of blows! Democracy would thus become a liability and its adversaries would find justifications to stifle it!

Last Monday, the Egyptian masses were stunned to see a deputy of the Wafd Party physically attack the interior minister to silence him and keep him from responding to members who had put queries to him in a previous session of the house.

The general public was astounded to see this sorry spectacle, with a good many saying, in effect: If such is the state of democracy, we may well do without it!

Last Monday's incident at the People's Assembly is at once regrettable and saddening, and that such unfortunate antics are not uncommon in parliamentary chambers does not make it any less unsavory!

What happened was an affront to and disfigurement of democracy, which protects opposition as much as it does the government and assures the opposition's right to free expression as much as it does the government's.

The attack by member Raslan against the interior minister has boomeranged on the opposition, with the minister spared any harm.

The opposition had grilled the interior minister for 3 hours, leveling at him most terrible accusations, seeking to portray him as a sanguinary man bullying Egypt and ordering people apprehended and killed without trial!

They were discussing him as though they were talking about the sixties, when some people disappeared without a trace and no one dared inquire about their whereabouts!

In a matter of 3 seconds, the Wafd Party member forfeited all his charges. The deputy in question had risen from his seat and proceeded to manhandle the minister and stop him from continuing his address.

Egyptians saw the attempted assault on their television screens. Quite spontaneously, they asked: Would that deputy have dared attack the interior minister had he been a genuine terrorist who ordered people killed without trial?

The assault on the interior minister has served to debunk all the charges leveled by the opposition, illustrating that we are now in the age of the eighties rather than of the sixties and pre-sixties.

Columnist—Badr Incident 'Outcome of Realities'

JN2702200389 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
24 Feb 89 p 17

[“Diary” column by Ahmad Baha’-al-Din]

[Text] These days should be sad for all of us because what we see in the political arena is extremely agonizing. Nevertheless, what happened in the People's Assembly's famous session was not new. However, it “revealed” something which had existed before on the streets and inside the institutions, something whose occurrence inside the parliament has only revealed it to everyone!

How could a responsible minister in the state discuss, inside the parliament, the houses, and families of a ranking opposition leader? What do these matters have

to do, no matter how irrelevant they may be, with political argument and with the minutes of the parliament session? Why should all opposition representatives not become furious? If the minister in charge of security can watch me inside my house with sound and photo surveillance then he should be trusted to keep my personal secrets more than anyone else because he is watching me for the public interest and not to become acquainted with my underclothes!

How can a prominent opposition leader carry out currency transactions on the black market? Defending himself through newspapers, how could this leader say that the exchange of various types of currencies was permitted, that trading with currency in Saudi Arabia is free, and that he does not pay attention to the enforced law? Does he not know that currency laws differ from one country to another according to the country's circumstances and to the public interest regardless of the country's religion? Likewise, does he not know that there are 20 Islamic states which impose restrictions on currency dealings? Moreover, does Egypt have the oil of Saudi Arabia? And why was he not referred to the prosecutor general?

Nevertheless, the matter, as I said, is not surprising. It is the outcome of realities which had existed before, realities which did not receive sufficient attention at their very beginning! These realities include the sectarian violence in the towns and villages of Upper Egypt which reached Cairo, whether or not it was also sectarian violence, as well as the exchange of killings and assassinations on Cairo streets and the attack launched by an armed group of lawyers to seize the bar association. What is this huge number of armed terrorism cases and constitutional appeals against the state laws presented to courts? Likewise, what is this huge number of financial corruption cases being investigated by the prosecutor general's office or the socialist prosecutor? All of this is the outcome of erroneous policies against which we have long cautioned. These policies have resulted in this tense atmosphere and will lead to further aggravation. Where to, where to?

ISRAEL

IDF Chief Interviewed on Uprising, Forecast

44230039 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew
9 Dec 88 pp 5-6

[Interview with IDF Chief of Staff Lt Gen Dan Shomron by Avi Ben-Yahu, date and place not given]

[Text] [‘AL HAMISHMAR] Chief of Staff Shomron, what and whom are the soldiers facing today in the territories?

[Shomron] First of all, one must remember that we are struggling with a type of problem very different from a purely military one. We are facing a problem that, fundamentally, is one of national consciousness for the

citizens, a national consciousness that exists in their minds. And there is no way that, by a quick military action, you can drive this idea out of their minds. Therefore, every way of dealing with this in advance is a matter of continually gaining experience and an understanding of the rules of the game and a knowledge of what is not going to work. Only when these things are clear will conduct in the territories change. It is not possible through military force to have an influence on their aspirations; force can prevent violence or a civilian revolt, but nothing more than that.

[AL HAMISHMAR] How is the IDF's role in the territories defined today?

[Shomron] We cannot permit the inhabitants of the territories who are engaging in violence to dictate to the government and the political level moves that are contrary to their interests. We must fulfill this role within the bounds of the law. I have already said more than once that the law, as I see it, is not a technical concept. The law is a moral and ethical code that the state has established for itself so that it can decide how it wants to appear in its own eyes and the eyes of others, and the Army, as an arm of the state, must operate according to these limits. In fact, there are opposing interests in the use of military force. For the purpose of attaining the immediate objective, force is necessary, but we restrain our use of it so that we do not go beyond the bounds of the law. This is not a simple matter, and the proof of that is found in what we call "irregularities." And I say that these really are irregularities, given the great numbers of soldiers, the need to carry out the task and the restrictions we place upon ourselves to act within the law. Sometimes, I am not sure that this problem is understood, that people grasp the degree to which the Army needs to grapple with a problem so complicated and so delicate while the issue of the territories stands at the center of the sharpest political debate in the state of Israel.

[AL HAMISHMAR] There are those calling for putting an end to the intifadah [uprising] at once, and there are those criticizing the Army for the severity of its measures.

[Shomron] By the nature of things, there are those in the spectrum of political views that say that the Army needs to be more aggressive. Of course, they do not say what the legal implications are. And there is also the other side that says the Army is behaving like an occupation force and is very aggressive towards the inhabitants, who are trying to discover the precise limits of the law. Within the Army you can find the entire spectrum of political views—in the regular Army and, of course, in the reserves. The strength of the Army lies in the fact that it operates within the broad common denominator of the nation, what we call the consensus. I have heard that some say that the Army is unable to solve the problem, that it requires a political solution. The Army has never said such a thing.

[AL HAMISHMAR] Senior officers have said that there is no military solution.

[Shomron] There is no problem that has only a military solution. Military forces are an important component but not the only one. The Army operates in a way that is not conditional upon a political solution. In its sphere, the IDF operates to prevent the inhabitants from applying force and engaging in violence that would compel the political level to make a decision.

[AL HAMISHMAR] Nonetheless, how well would you say the Army has handled the assignment you have defined? Can it stop the intifadah?

[Shomron] I am not able to speak about putting an end to it in the sense that they will suddenly no longer want an independent state. What it is possible to do by applying military force, aided by other services, is to bring about a situation that will prevent large demonstrations, severance from the civil administration and establishment of something resembling independence, and will reduce to a minimum attacks upon the IDF and Israeli civilians. But as there are 1 and 1/2 million inhabitants, it is impossible to prevent each and every throwing of a bottle or a stone in this place or that. We cannot put a complete stop to that but, even so, we are not satisfied with the current situation.

We are in a process that is happening all the time, of a reduction, even in isolated incidents, but you must keep in mind that even an isolated incident can be life threatening, without reflecting on the general level of activity in the territories.

Today, after a year, we see that we have prevented a civil revolt that they wanted to realize even in the earliest stages. We see that they failed to stop people from going to work in Israel, that there are no large-scale demonstrations, and that they did not cut themselves off from the civil administration. Although their hopes have not died, the level of activity is low, and it is necessary to remember that even before the intifadah, they threw stones and Molotov cocktails and occasionally used live ammunition, and soldiers and civilians were murdered. All that did not begin with the intifadah.

What is special about the uprising is that the general public, not just individuals, took to the streets and tried to use force to influence the decisions of the State of Israel.

[AL HAMISHMAR] Does the other side, that is, the Palestinians, see this the same way?

[Shomron] From that point of view, they have come to a sort of crossroads. 'Arafat just now is trying to set in motion a political process, and one must remember that there are factions among the Palestinians that oppose

this, but the PLO is trying to get a political process going. Here, the IDF is not able to be a factor. The political process is a matter that only the political level can deal with.

We will have this influence, in that it will be impossible in the territories to hold demonstrations, apply force, or engage in attacks in order to have an affect on the decisions our politicians will make. This the Army can and will do.

The fact that we have come to a level of activity as we have today is tied to the collective memory of the inhabitants of the territories that it is not possible to operate against the IDF. They understand that continuation of the activity against us means great harm for them economically and socially. Look, in Judaea and Samaria, we have opened the lower grades of the schools and we will go on to higher grades if there is quiet. They understand that they themselves will be the main victims and so such a thing as a "deluxe intifadah" as they have wanted is impossible to realize. That is how we have come to the current situation and will come to a more favorable situation in the future.

[AL HAMISHMAR] Are there other lessons from this past year?

[Shomron] I want to get to a number of additional points that are worth keeping in mind after a year of rebellion. I look at other armies that have faced similar situations, that faced a dilemma and the need to prevent the application of pressure by civilians motivated by national aspirations to influence the governments of their countries; they usually broke the law in the first stage and the armies deteriorated, almost to a situation of gangs, not only with respect to the law, but also according to military norms. In the end, they did not achieve the goal for which they had used force. We recently saw this pattern in Algeria, and we have had some people proposing similar tactics. It became clear that, after a number of days of applying force without restraints, the political level there accepted dictates and the principal task of their Army was not achieved.

Therefore, I say that the course that the IDF has taken this year has, in my opinion, succeeded in the limits of both the military and the law, even though they will always wave the exceptional irregularities in my face. It is necessary to remember that the state of Israel has drivers who break the speed limit and thieves but, in general, this is a state of law, and so it is in the Army. There are deviations, but the orders are clear and obeying the law is a central feature of IDF operations. When I look at the alternative the Army had and at the accumulated experience of other armies, I can say that it is difficult to expect better results. I think that it is not possible to achieve more under these conditions.

[AL HAMISHMAR] At the end of a year, have you noticed a decline in norms of behavior, have the predictions of the psychologists come true, is the problem of men refusing to serve causing any trouble for the Army?

[Shomron] The refusals to serve did not take us by surprise. It is a matter of a few isolated dozens of men, most of them reservists already aligned with political groups. These are isolated instances and not a phenomenon, and I am not worried. I may be worried by every instance, but not by the phenomenon.

As for its influence on the Army, when I look at the investigations of the psychologists, which report ever increasing satisfaction in the Army, and when I go over the applications for permanent service, I see an increase. If you examine the motivation of those called up, there is a higher level. If you look at all of this—and this is not to say that I am happy that part of the Army is in the territories—then I am not able to say that any injury is appearing in the Army as they predicted, some out of malice and some out of concern.

[AL HAMISHMAR] The psychologists protested because of the "increasingly extreme violence" as a result of "the policy of the club;" they warned of a deterioration of norms.

[Shomron] There is no doubt that in the first period—when the inhabitants of the territories did not have any experience in confronting the IDF and they tried to operate against us with a great deal of violence, and when we did not have all the means and tactics developed in the last year as it went on—we were obliged to react with force in order as it went on—we were obliged to react with force in order to crush the violence.

The officers and soldiers erred in the beginning in those incidents in which, after a demonstration, it was necessary to stop the violence. At the same time, it was necessary to continue to treat the inhabitants as citizens with rights which prohibit striking them or their property. It was necessary to pass sharply from applying force, which was legitimate and in accordance with the law, to a situation in which they are innocent citizens not to be assaulted—even though you know that some of them earlier took part in the violence. This transition is very difficult, and has the potential for irregularities.

[AL HAMISHMAR] Are you still using clubs?

[Shomron] Yes. But much less, for the simple reason that there are no more large demonstrations to break up and because we have other equipment, such as plastic bullets, that from long range can take out the instigator himself and break up the demonstration during its hostilities.

[AL HAMISHMAR] Some have spoken of a decline in the IDF's ability to deter.

[Shomron] Fear of the IDF exists all the time. Those things that were previously done—coming up at close range, throwing a stone, fleeing and returning at night—today, with the means at our disposal, are more difficult to do. Soldiers in small units are better able to break up a violent demonstration as it starts. Recognizing this, the inhabitants of the territories have more fear of our action. They understand today that it is dangerous to engage the Army, and also because the Army uses force, and that causes pain. We catch and imprison the agitators and demonstrators and they face legal charges. Likewise, it has become clear to them that they cannot get along without the civil administration. A small part, the extremists, will continue to act in any situation. Even in the hypothetical situation in which we reach a political solution, that solution will not be acceptable to some of them. Some of them want all of the state of Israel and the religious among them simply do not recognize the path of negotiations. Anyone who thinks that a political settlement will bring a complete stop to violent actions in the territories is mistaken. The extremist element will always exist.

[AL HAMISHMAR] How has it happened that until now we have not succeeded in locating a new leadership in the territories with whom to come to terms?

[Shomron] I do not believe that, when all is said and done, there will be such leaders; at this stage, I still do not see them. Likewise, the PLO, which speaks of growing moderate and says it is the sole address for Palestinian representation, has developed its own compromise and, to satisfy its different factions, speaks in ambiguous and murky language. It speaks of [UN Resolution] 242 and attaches additional restrictions. It does not speak of recognizing Israel or stopping terror.

[AL HAMISHMAR] Still and all, don't you see a growing moderation in the PLO?

[Shomron] What they are saying is a contradiction in terms and, therefore, I do not know what they mean. According to our understanding, the PLO speaks out of one side of its mouth for the United States and Europe and out of the other for its extremist factions in order to maintain its unity. It is difficult for me to know what they really are saying. Meanwhile, this is not a basis on which it is possible to speak of anything concrete.

In my opinion, the basic conditions for negotiations and a dialogue with people in the territories will be realized when they recognize the state of Israel and desist from terror. Except upon these two utterly clear conditions, there truly is no one to talk with even in the territories. I assume that, as part of the existing process, they are trying the political route while they are attempting to go around the state of Israel and not negotiate with it, but to pressure it through the western world. When it becomes clear to them that it is impossible to do that and that it

is necessary to speak with Israel, that will be the stage at which we will be able to find a leadership in the territories with which negotiations are possible.

[AL HAMISHMAR] How is the IDF organizing itself for the second year of the intifadah?

[Shomron] In light of experience and success, I assume that we will be able to achieve the same results with a smaller force. In the next year, there will be a large, permanent force of the regular Army in the territories, fewer replacements but units that will specialize in the problems of the territories. Along with that, we will increase the border patrol. We also have special units that know how to operate in the territories and in more sophisticated actions. Combining all this with the techniques already developed and which we are continuing to develop, we will be able to reduce our forces and bring down the level of activity still further. Reservists will serve about 45 days, about half of them in training and half in the territories.

[AL HAMISHMAR] And what about the financial cost?

[Shomron] I do not want to specify any figures, but it will be lower than it was the first year. It is necessary to remember that up till now, our investment has been in infrastructure, and this expense will drop in the next year. Nonetheless, the money will spend is nothing to sneer at.

[AL HAMISHMAR] The public has the impression that the intifadah has absolutely disrupted the IDF's agenda. Are you succeeding in going forward on projects that you have wanted?

[Shomron] I must say that we have carried out every exercise and all the training that we established for ourselves at all levels, and maybe even more than planned. All the weapons systems that we had decided to introduce, including the most modern ones, have been introduced. Definitely, I say that some of the units have been affected in their preparation as a result of the activities in the territories, but the effect is not significant at this stage and we are making arrangements so that there will be no such loss in the future. Thus, I do not see any harm to the Army. We are meeting all the plans we made. Despite that, I will never say that I am satisfied with what we are doing to face future threats.

[AL HAMISHMAR] You will soon bring before the government for approval a multi-year working plan; what does it deal with?

[Shomron] We have finished a working plan that already has been approved by the defense minister. Regardless of the budget to be set, under the plan we will invest heavily in personnel, in promoting responsibility and initiative in all ranks, and also in armaments, while making a large investment in and exploiting the advanced technology of the defense industry.

The chief of staff bears a heavy responsibility. Every military force depends upon my approval, but I believe that the sense of responsibility and initiative must go down to the various ranks. It is clear that the commander at every level must enable those under him to exercise their initiative and to supervise. That is the first component of an army's strength.

We invest in armaments, and by integrating them with good soldiers and officers, we will achieve the objective for which we are striving. If we fail to deter, and if war breaks out, we will conclude it quickly and at the lowest possible cost.

Changes in 'Ansar 3' Prison Noted

44230045a Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 4, 5 Jan 89

[Article by Tamar Peleg-Sarik, attorney with the Israeli Civil Rights Association: "Qetziot Prison After the Decision of the High Court of Justice"]

[Text] [4 Jan 89 p 7]

On 1 September 1988, the president of the High Court of Justice [HCJ], Me'ir Shamgar, and HCJ Justices Menahem Alon and Gabri'el Bar paid a visit to the Qetziot prison (Ansar 3). The visit was related to a plea to HCJ by Ansar 3 administrative prisoners. Some 2 months after the visit, on 8 November 1988, a verdict was returned in which a whole chapter was devoted to conditions at Qetziot prison.

In the verdict, the HCJ president wrote: "The discussion of prison conditions calls for a preliminary clarification that at the same time is its point of departure: an administrative detainee is a detainee who has not been convicted of a crime and is not serving a sentence. He is imprisoned under the decision of a military-administrative authority as a special emergency measure... The difference between a prisoner who is serving out a prison sentence and a person who was imprisoned, as we said, in order to preclude security risks, lies in the status of the administrative prisoner and the imprisonment conditions resulting therefrom... The purpose of the fourth treaty (the Geneva Treaty) was that administrative prisoners...should be ensured, as much as possible, conditions similar to those reserved for prisoners of war. This thesis also means that we must adopt here a framework of behavior different from that applied to a person who was convicted in trial and is serving a sentence."

On 23 November 1988 the inmates of Qetziot jail (Ansar 3) sent a letter to the HCJ president. A copy of that letter came into my hands; here is the Hebrew translation of that letter:

"To his Honor, the president of the HCJ:

"Having carefully read a copy of your thorough and clear verdict concerning Ansar 3 (Qetziot), we found it necessary to write this letter to you to bring a few relevant

points to your attention. We will not here concern ourselves with the legality of Ansar 3 and the whole issue of administrative detention as a means of collective punishment. We leave that to the politicians and jurists. We will focus on the progressively deteriorating conditions at this detention camp.

"In this connection, we very much appreciate the fact that you took the trouble to visit Ansar 3 in August to ascertain first hand the situation prevailing here and to meet with several detainees. We felt that your findings reflected a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the living conditions and the treatment of the detainees, and we welcome your request for speedy improvements. However, we feel that so far nothing has changed for the better; the opposite may, in fact, be the case.

"Winter has come, but the majority of the detainees have not been issued winter clothes. We do not have vitally needed hot water. The detainees are asked to roll up the tent sides at 0530, in freezing cold, and to leave the tents open until evening. Most of the medicines needed are not available. Detainees suffering from bleeding ulcers are advised to drink water; others, suffering from skin ailments, are told that the sun will cure them.

"So far, the detainees are not permitted to write more than one letter every 2 weeks, and the delivery of letters from home is as delayed as in the past. Many detainees received orders extending their detention and have also been deprived of seeing their families for 1 whole year. We believe that the authorities' refusal to allow the Red Cross to regulate family visits is a serious problem, and it also confirms our belief that Ansar 3 was meant for punitive purposes, isolation, and demoralization.

"Newspaper delivery is not regular and some issues are not delivered at all. The radio, for which we have been waiting a long time, is still not working, and the canteen idea has not been implemented. Collective punishments, humiliations, and provocations are customary, especially in Bloc A. These practices harbor the threat of renewed bloody riots like the one that occurred on 16 August 1988.

"In concluding, we would very much appreciate monitoring of the implementation of your recommendations for improvements. Similarly, we would welcome visits from you or from any commission that you may appoint to verify these issues."

On my way to Qetziot prison on 13 December 1988, the day on which Yasir 'Arafat gave his speech at the United Nations in Geneva, I suddenly realized with apprehension that once again, as on 14 November—the week of the PLO convention in Algiers—I might find the prison gates locked to attorneys. But when I got there, the gates were open to me. On that visit I received the clear

impression that the HCJ decision was bearing fruit. The prison authorities were wrestling with the problems and had every intention of implementing the recommendations as best possible.

At the request of the Civil Rights Association [CRA], the decision was circulated among prisons, where it evoked great interest. The detainees are discussing it and are coming to their own conclusions. On 29 November 1988 a hunger strike was held in two Qetziot blocs. "We went on strike for the implementation of the decisions of the justices," said two detainees, "of everything that Court President Shamgar meant when he spoke about the special status of administrative detainees not convicted of a crime."

The prison authorities are slowly recognizing the fact that administrative detainees have a right to special treatment and status. The results of that are beginning to make themselves felt, and one must consider the situation as a whole.

The tents are not so crowded anymore: instead of 28 there are now 21-23 men in a tent, but the cot is still all the living space the detainee has. During the day the tent sides have to be rolled up, and the cold wind blows through. As soon as it gets dark the tent is closed down, and then there is no lighting inside.

The detainees have absolutely nothing to do. The prison management does not see itself responsible for keeping them employed. In the wake of one man's brilliant idea, many detainees began to carve and polish chalk and granite stones into figurines and to etch shapes and words into them. The soldiers were ordered to confiscate the figurines. "Why?" I asked the prison commander. "You should be glad they have something to do." "Do you know what they write and draw?!" Colonel Tzemah cried, "I do not want them to draw maps of Israel and to write underneath 'Palestine'." "But they make and write all sorts of things, not just maps like that," I pointed out. This time I did not choose to go into a basic discussion about the right of expression. "Then they write all sorts of nationalistic things, who knows what, the soldiers cannot read Arabic. I gave order to confiscate the figures and we are keeping them." And that was that.

After the HCJ recommendations, Col Tzemah made inquiries about buying Arabic books cheaply. I did not get an answer to my question as to why detainees born in 1967 and later were separated from the rest. This separation, in fact, voids the official policy of permitting "detainees who are related... to be kept together." Being together with the adults allowed the young detainees to study various subjects, Hebrew among others. By the end of 6 months of imprisonment, a detainee who could hardly speak Hebrew when he was detained, could express himself, read, and write quite well.

How long will it be before the prison authorities understand that the prisoners have a right to learn Hebrew, English, history, biology, and other subjects, and that their studies are not detrimental to either local security or prison discipline?

[Text] [5 Jan 89 p 7]

The HCJ decision concerning the situation at Qetziot prison (Ansar 3) brought about a few improvements in the prisoners' living conditions. In some areas, however, there has been almost no change.

The prisoners still have only one set of clothes. Underwear they received from attorneys and from the Red Cross. The Red Cross also provided sweaters. The IDF supplied down jackets and sleeping bags. It took some struggle to leave them several blankets each, which are necessary in the local climate. At night temperatures drop to almost the freezing point.

The detainees receive mail, but it takes 14-20 days. The HCJ has criticized that. The mail is probably delayed because of censorship due to a shortage of personnel. Newspapers, too, are distributed 3-5 days late. The detainees do not have watches, which they have to leave, together with other personal effects, in "consignment."

The food continues to be a problem. The HCJ justices did not give sufficient attention to the seriousness of the problem. According to regulations, administrative prisoners are entitled to the same food as the wardens. In reality, however, the menu looks like this: breakfast—egg or broad beans, margarine, seven to ten olives, and one teaspoon of jelly every 2 days; lunch—rice, soup, one slice of canned meat or cod fish, and one banana or tangerine; dinner is the same as breakfast. Each detainee receives one whole loaf of bread for the three meals. The men fill their growling bellies with bread. There is no question of hunger, but the food is not satisfactory; its nutritional value is low, and there is no canteen for supplementing what is missing.

Nevertheless, there are new things at Qetziot. On my last visit there I was greeted by the voice of an Arabic language Qol Yisrael speaker. The detainees are allotted 1 hour of news at noon and 1 hour of 'Umm Kalthum songs toward evening.

The impact of the HCJ verdict has been gradual but unmistakable. That was the opinion of several detainees I met during my last visit to the jail. They all believe that a clear order came down from the high echelon to behave politely and to stop the humiliations and provocations. Nevertheless, the differences between the various prison commanders have not disappeared, and there certainly are differences in their styles. But the general style has become more moderate. For example, I was told that the

commander who used to open any contact with the prisoners with the words, "Remember that as far as I am concerned you are nothing here," now says, "You must obey me as if I were God."

There has also been a drop in unlawful punishment in the wake of the verdict. When the prison was first opened, in March-April, prisoners were brought from Gaza to Qetziot blindfolded and handcuffed. They were ordered to sit with their heads down and not to move. They were frequently beaten on the bus. The reception procedure at the prison was often not only humiliating, but it also involved physical violence.

By the end of September, before the verdict, a great upheaval broke out among the Gaza detainees when one prisoner, a journalist from the Gaza Strip, was publicly punished for going out to the latrine early in the morning—he was ordered to remain standing for hours in the prison square. The soldier who gave the order forbade him to take off his sweater although, with the sun coming up, the heat became unbearable. When the detainee took off his sweater contrary to the order, the soldier even tried to put it back on him by force and also tried to handcuff him. Finally, the detainee was brought before the deputy commander of the prison and punished again, this time being given 14 days of solitary confinement. During this period he was allowed no cigarettes, newspapers, books, or walks, and was forced to relieve himself in a bucket in his hot and stuffy cabin. I sent a detailed complaint about the incident to the district attorney of the Southern Command. In his reply, Colonel Moyel recognized most of my claims concerning the unlawful nature of the above treatment and punishment.

Another detainee, Ratib Jabrin, No 4710, was also punished. He, too, violated the ban on going out at night to the latrines, which are, of course, outside the tent. He was also sent to solitary and was beaten by the soldier who was taking him there. The detainees complained about the soldier's behavior, but the latter was left in his job on that day and they are convinced that he was not punished.

As we said, punishments have abated in the wake of the HCJ decision. An incident occurred at the beginning of December that verifies that. Dr Mahmud Abu Rubb, a lecturer in economics at the al-Najjah University, was jogging to limber up his body. An officer ordered him to stop. Dr Abu Rubb complied, but observed that "in worse places than this" prisoners were allowed physical exercise. He was given 3 days solitary confinement as punishment.

The punishment was given by the commanding officer of the bloc (the incident was related by a fellow detainee) and this time the punishment was in keeping with the HCJ decision: the only punishment that may be given to an administrative prisoner is up to 14 days in solitary confinement.

I believe that detainees at Qetziot are no longer made to remain standing for hours. Nor are they punished collectively any longer by being made to sit outside in the cold or in the heat for long periods of time. At roll call they are no longer made to sit in an uncomfortable and humiliating position with their hands at the back and their heads down. I remember an incident that happened before my very eyes on 7 September 1988. At noon, while I was waiting with other attorneys to reopen discussions on appeals, "Zelda" vehicles carrying armed and helmeted soldiers came into the compound. A tense silence reigned in the camp, but nothing happened. Later we found out that the detainees were refusing to give up a gain they had achieved, according to them, the previous week on the eve of the high court justices' visit, namely not to sit in the above position during roll call.

What was left in use from the collective punishment is depriving people of cigarettes.

Marked shortcomings still exist concerning meetings between detainees and lawyers. On my last visit there only one team of soldiers was available to bring and return prisoners. The lawyers had to wait a long time for their clients and the meetings were very short and proceeded to the accompaniment of the soldiers' impatient "Aren't you done yet" remarks.

The lawyers of Qetziot prisoners are not spared hardships, either. They meet with their clients in a booth that was erected last summer and is by now open to wind and rain. They fare equally badly when they come to represent their clients at appeals. They have to wait their turn outside, in front of the court building, without a cover over their heads or a bench to sit on. So far, no place has been arranged where they can meet with the prisoner before the proceedings.

LEBANON

Arab Meeting in Tunis Reported

44040237 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
11 Feb 89 pp 14-18

[Article by 'Abd-al-Karim Abu-al-Nasr: "Lebanese Peace Conference Under Arab Auspices; What Happened in Closed Rooms in Tunis"]

[Text] The Tunis talks between the Arab Six-Member Ministerial Committee and Lebanese leaders Salim al-Huss, the acting prime minister, Husayn al-Husayni, the Chamber of Deputies speaker, and General Michel 'Awn, the military cabinet head, formed the first phase of a broad "Arab peace process" which will last several weeks, which will be implemented in phases and which seeks to help rescue Lebanon and to create the right climate for electing a new president, forming a national unity cabinet and introducing political and constitutional reforms into the Lebanese system.

What has not been published about these Tunis talks is that there are significant issues on which al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn agree. This has been demonstrated in the closed meetings held between the three leaders and the Arab committee.

This "Arab peace process" is ongoing and it calls for contacting nearly 60 Lebanese notables from the various sects, factions and tendencies before a "peace plan" is drafted to solve Lebanon's crisis. These contacts will not take the form of a "broad Arab survey" of the opinions of the various Lebanese factions but will actually take the form of an "inter-Lebanese dialogue conference," the first of its kind, size and nature, to be held in the coming period under Arab auspices.

Those who in the wake of the Tunis talks rushed to announce failure of the Arab committee's efforts have either been hasty in their judgement, have not really learned the truth of what has taken place or have an interest in failure of the committee's efforts. Dr Salim al-Huss knew what he has talking about when he announced at a press conference he held in Beirut last Saturday that the Arab committee's activities and meetings in Tunis were "very positive, fruitful and constructive and are a step in the right direction." At a meeting in Paris with a number of Lebanese notables, Husayn al-Husayni also expressed his satisfaction with and optimism over the committee's mission.

AL-MUSTAQBAL has obtained new information, from the Arab committee sources and from high-level Lebanese sources in particular, that reveals the true nature of what took place in the closed meetings in Tunis and that also reveals the Arab committee's plan for the coming phase.

Before the committee headed for Tunis, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, the committee chairman and Kuwait's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, had a clear and specific visualization of the committee's role and objectives. In addition to Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, the committee includes the foreign ministers of Jordan, Algeria, Tunisia, the UAE and Sudan and Chadli Klibi, the Arab League secretary general. Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad's visualization of the committee's role is summed up in the following:

1. The committee's main objective is to secure a proper climate for electing a president of the republic and forming a national unity cabinet that works to introduce reforms into the Lebanese system. The committee is prepared to take part in the presidential election process by dispatching Arab observers to Beirut.

2. The Tunis talks are just a step which will be followed by other steps, including contacts with the various Lebanese sides.

3. After contacting the various Lebanese sides, if the Arab committee fails to develop an "acceptable solution formula," the Arab efforts to assist Lebanon will not be ended. Rather, the committee will refer the Lebanese dossier to an Arab summit so that the Arab leaders may themselves tackle the Lebanon issue.

Before the official closed meetings with the Arab committee members were started, al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn told Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, the committee chairman, the following:

If the Tunis talks lead to an Arab-Lebanese agreement on a unified working paper acceptable to the three Lebanese officials, this should not be the end of the road because such an agreement is not enough. Rather, the Arab committee should contact the various Lebanese sides to consult with them on the contents of the working paper before it is approved finally. The Tunis talks must not give any party the impression that they are intended to achieve an agreement to be forced upon the Lebanese parties and on the Lebanese circles concerned with Lebanon's affair.

If the Tunis talks fail to agree on a unified working paper, and this was the more likely possibility from the outset, then this also should not be the end of the road. Proceeding on the basis of the outcome of the Tunis meetings, the Arab committee should continue its efforts and endeavors with the various Lebanese sides to develop an acceptable agreement formula that helps lead Lebanon out of its present ordeal.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad's response was that the Tunis meetings, regardless of their outcome, are the initial phase of the Arab committee's endeavors and movements and that the committee has drawn up a list of the names of official and nonofficial, religious, political and "military" Lebanese figures to meet with or contact in Kuwait, Tunis and other Arab capitals for consultations on how to establish common denominators acceptable to all the Lebanese and to develop a formula for solving the crisis. Shaykh al-Sabah also said that absolutely no judgement can be passed on the committee's efforts before the committee completes its mission which is expected to last till the end of next March.

Moreover, the Arab committee was aware, even before the meetings began in Tunis, that no "magic solution" can be found for Lebanon's crisis which has lasted more than 14 years. The committee was also aware that there are deep disagreements between the Lebanese. It is determined not to disregard or overlook these disagreements or to consider them as nonexistent and not to seek a "superficial" reconciliation on the basis of "let us forget the past and let us turn over a new page, as if nothing has happened." Rather, the committee has been determined from the outset to examine these disagreements deeply in an effort to develop a "solution formula" based on "common denominators" acceptable to the various sides.

Before initiating its meetings with al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn, the Arab committee had two main working papers: The first drawn up by the Arab League and the second by Kuwait. A special "drafting committee," including 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Bu'ayjan, Kuwait's ex-ambassador in Beirut; Ambassador Hammadi al-Sayd, the head of the Arab League mission in Paris; and al-Munji al-Faqih, a prominent official of the Arab League General Secretariat, was entrusted with drafting a preliminary working paper derived from the contents of the Kuwaiti paper and the Arab League paper and including 6 fundamental principles. The Arab committee presented this paper to the three Lebanese officials. As a result, a number of modifications and changes were introduced into the paper's contents. When the Tunis meetings ended, what materialized was a four-page working paper containing a number of proposals and options connected with the presidential election, with the reform, with the national unity cabinet, with Israel's withdrawal, with the Lebanese-Syrian relations, with clinging to Lebanon's unity and with rejecting all forms of partition. A prominent member of the Arab committee remarked that al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn have acknowledged that they are largely, though not solely, responsible for what has happened to their country and that, consequently, all the Lebanese must shoulder a large part of the responsibility for rescuing their country and making the hard decisions needed in this connection.

Fourteen Points of Agreement in Tunis

The Tunis meetings lasted 3 days (from 30 January through 1 February 1989) and were held at two levels at the Hilton Hotel:

The first level was the closed meetings between the Arab committee members and each of al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn. Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, Marwan al-Qasim, Jordan's foreign minister, Boualem Bessaïeh, Algeria's foreign minister, Rashid 'Abdullah al-Nu'aymi, the UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, Abdelhamid Cheikh, Tunisia's foreign minister, Dr Hasan al-Turabi, Sudan's foreign minister, and Chadli Klibi took part in the committee's activities.

The second level was the closed meetings held between Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad and each of al-Husayni, al-Huss and 'Awn separately. Klibi attended a significant part of these meetings in which things were said and ideas and options not raised in the expanded meetings were raised.

At his meeting with a number of Lebanese notables in Paris, Husayn al-Husayni clarified a part of what had taken place in Tunis, saying: "The Arabs generally have suffered 'amnesia' insofar as Lebanon is concerned since Israel's invasion of our country in 1982. Since then, the Arabs generally have not been concerned with the details of Lebanon's situation and have not observed the major developments and changes undergone by the Lebanese

society in these years. Therefore, one of our main tasks was to familiarize the Arab committee with the real conditions in Lebanon and with what has happened throughout these years."

What have the Tunis meetings accomplished and what have they failed to accomplish?

It is a declared fact that the Arab committee failed to arrange a joint meeting with al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn because the two Muslim leaders do not acknowledge the military cabinet as legitimate. Moreover, the committee failed to persuade the three Lebanese officials to sign the Arab unified working paper because, on the one hand, al-Huss and al-Husayni refused to sign a document signed by General 'Awn and because, on the other hand, there are differences between the three men on a number of points contained in the paper.

But what has not been declared or publicized is that al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn agreed on a large number of issues and points of which the Arab committee took cognizance and which it recorded in its confidential minutes. We will reveal in the following the main points and issues on which al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn agreed during the Tunis meetings:

1. Acknowledgement of the need to introduce changes into the Lebanese system and, consequently, to introduce fundamental reforms concerning the issue of participation in the government and equality between the Lebanese sects and factions, of developing the Lebanese "structure" and amending the constitution and of abolishing political sectarianism, provided that this is done through the legitimate Lebanese institutions within the framework of respecting the particular characteristics of the Lebanese society and respecting the special characteristics of the Lebanese sects. It was agreed that it is necessary to begin making the changes as of the beginning of the next president's administration.
2. Agreement that the Arab committee should not undertake to introduce the political and constitutional reforms or to interfere in the details of this process but that it should, through its contacts with the various Lebanese parties, encourage these parties to reach an understanding and define general principles for reform to be observed by the next president and the new unified cabinet. The committee should stress the need for determining these principles within a purely inter-Lebanese framework.
3. Agreement on the need to promptly revive Lebanon's constitutional and legitimate institutions so as to safeguard Lebanon as a unified entity and an independent homeland, as well as agreement in opinion that this should be accomplished by electing a president of the republic and a speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and forming a national unity cabinet in the near future.

4. Determination to cling to Lebanon's democratic and parliamentary system.

5. Agreement on the need to hold the Lebanese presidential election at Mansur Palace under the sole protection of the Lebanese legitimate forces and in the presence of military observers belonging to the countries participating in the six-member committee.

6. Agreement on the need that the next president should embody national concord, i.e. he should be acceptable to all the Lebanese factions, not imposed on them, and should work to develop the Lebanese system and to safeguard Lebanon as an independent entity within the Arab family.

7. Agreement on the need to form a national unity or national concord cabinet after the presidential election and agreement that this cabinet should pledge in its ministerial statement to work to accomplish the political and constitutional reforms.

8. Agreement on the need for the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies to play a fundamental role in approving the political and constitutional reforms.

9. Agreement on the need to accomplish withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all Lebanese territories in implementation of the UN resolutions, especially Security Council Resolution 425.

10. Agreement on the need to exert efforts to enable the next Lebanese government to exercise the legitimate government's sovereignty over all of Lebanon's territories.

11. Agreement on the need that the relations between Lebanon and Syria should be determined within the framework of safeguarding Lebanon's independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and of preserving the particular characteristics of Lebanon's status, as well as agreement on the need to establish between Lebanon and Syria firm relations whose nature is determined by talks between the two countries.

12. Agreement that the next Lebanese cabinet should hold talks with the Syrian Government on the future of the two countries' relations.

13. Agreement on the need to reject any form of partition, declared or undeclared, actual or official and to reject any formula, whether calling for federalism or for cantons, that threatens Lebanon's unity and future, as well as agreement on avoiding any steps that help entrench the existing partition.

14. Adherence to an Arab solution to Lebanon's crisis and, consequently, agreement on the need for the various Lebanese parties to fully support the Arab committee so that it may succeed in its mission. Agreement, while awaiting conclusion of the committee's activities, to

refrain from taking any steps or measures likely to intensify the climate or to undermine the structure of Lebanon's public institutions.

These are the points of agreement which surfaced between al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn during the Tunis talks.

Disagreement Points

On the other hand, the Tunis meetings recorded the presence of a number of disagreement points between al-Huss and al-Husayni on the one hand and 'Awn on the other. The following are the most significant of these points:

1. General reform principles: Al-Huss and al-Husayni demand the simultaneous approval of these principles and election of the president of the republic so that the Chamber of Deputies speaker may be elected, the Chamber council may be completed, the reform principles may be approved and the president of the republic may be elected in a single session of the Chamber of Deputies. 'Awn opposes this official and obligatory simultaneity even though he agrees that the next president of the republic must be elected on the basis of the reform principles.

2. Presidential election: 'Awn demands withdrawal of the Syrian forces from Beirut and from the airport before this election is held. This demand is opposed by al-Huss and al-Husayni who support designating a neutral security site in Beirut, controlled by the legitimate Lebanese forces and free of any other armed presence, where the election is held in the presence of Arab observers.

3. Disagreement has developed over the circle which must draw up the general reform principles. Al-Huss and al-Husayni agree that a Lebanese parliamentary committee should undertake this task whereas 'Awn proposes that the national unity cabinet undertake the task and then refer the outcome of its work to the Chamber of Deputies.

4. Disagreements have surfaced over the relations between Lebanon and Syria. Al-Huss and al-Husayni have refused to view the Syrian forces' presence in Lebanon as a "real problem" and have stressed that the Syrian forces' withdrawal from Lebanon must be examined and debated within the framework of the mutual understanding between the two countries in a manner which achieves both Lebanon's and Syria's security. Al-Huss has said: "There is nothing to stop the Syrian forces' withdrawal from Lebanon other than the need to replace the Syrian Army by a unified Lebanese army whose rehabilitation requires political agreement and concord among the Lebanese." Al-Huss and al-Husayni stressed the need for the talks between the Lebanese and Syrian Governments to deal with the issue of "establishing special and distinguished relations between the two countries on the basis of neighborhood and joint

interests and the basis of acknowledging the importance of the Syrian role in Lebanon." On the other hand, 'Awn considers the presence of the Syrian forces in Lebanon a "problem" and demands that the solution plan contain a clear reference to the withdrawal of these forces within the framework of a specific timetable. 'Awn acknowledges the need for establishing friendly and fraternal relations between Lebanon and Syria "on the basis that Lebanon cannot be ruled against Syria's wishes." However, 'Awn does not find it necessary to talk about "special and distinguished relations between the two countries."

These are the fundamental disagreement points between al-Huss and al-Husayni on the one hand and 'Awn on the other. They are points on which "compromises" or "conciliatory formulae" can be developed when matters reach the phase of "implementing the solution" after the Arab committee completes its contacts.

Arab Committee's Movement Plan

What are the fundamental convictions and opinions formed by the Arab committee as a result of the Tunis talks? What is the committee's working plan for the coming phase?

According to what well-informed Arab sources have told AL-MUSTAQBAL, the Arab ministerial committee has formed the following convictions and opinions:

The Tunis talks with al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn have provided an Arab committee with an extremely important opportunity, the first of its kind, to draw a clear picture of the real agreement and disagreement points between the Lebanese factions. This makes it easier to develop "common denominators" and "settlement formulae" at the right time. Al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn have expressed clear, frank and strong belief in the importance of the committee's work.

The Arab committee is convinced that Lebanon can be rebuilt only on the bases of fundamental reforms in the Lebanese system. The committee believes that the Lebanese should debate this issue among themselves without any external interventions or pressures.

The committee believes that the priority should be given to electing a new president of the republic and forming a national unity cabinet with a clear "commitment" to achieving reform, provided that the details of the reform are debated in a well-studied and profound manner after the cabinet is formed.

The committee believes that Lebanon must remain united, independent and sovereign. Consequently, it strongly opposes any kind of partition, regardless whether it takes the form of cantons, of federalism or of the actually existing partition, and it will stand against whoever tries to achieve these partitionist goals.

The Arab committee supports the holding of "fraternal talks" between the Lebanese and Syrian Governments at the right time after the presidential elections to deal with the various issues concerning the two countries, including the future of the Syrian military presence in Lebanon and the nature of the future Lebanese-Syrian relations. In this regard, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad has expressed the belief that the "Syrian forces came to Lebanon on an Arab resolution. The Syrian brothers have no wish to stay in Lebanon when this country's condition stabilizes."

The Arab committee believes that the "Arab solution" to Lebanon's problem serves the interest of Lebanon, of Syria and of the entire Arab group which is concerned with putting an end to the race to "partition" or dismember an Arab country or to divide its various parts among other countries.

The Arab committee believes that the Arabs shoulder a responsibility toward Lebanon at present and in the phase of rebuilding and reconstruction. But no Arab aid for Lebanon can be discussed before the concord and peace procession begins.

The Arab committee will not impose any solution on the Lebanese and it does not wish to interfere in Lebanon's domestic affairs. It refuses to play the role of the court before which the Lebanese people's representatives make their case. The committee is not seeking a magical solution or a hasty superficial solution for the crisis. Rather, it is acting on the basis that it is a body qualified to hear the various viewpoints and to profoundly discuss the various issues with the Lebanese and Arab parties directly concerned with Lebanon's situation and then to try to seek common denominators that help solve the problem. The committee is not working and will not work for the interest of one sect at another sect's expense, for one faction against another or for one circle's interest at the expense of another.

What is the Arab committee's plan in the coming phase? The plan contains the following way stations:

First, familiarize the leaders of several Arab countries, as well as of foreign governments concerned with Lebanon's situation, with the outcome of the Tunis talks and with what actually took place in those meetings. Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad's visit to Damascus and his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad fall within this framework.

Second, two lists containing the names of nearly 60 notables have been drawn up. The Arab committee plans to meet with or to contact and consult with these notables in the next few weeks. The first list contains 22 notables, including the names of the leaders of the main political organizations and parties, of Muslim and Christian spiritual leaders, of the ex-presidents and of a number of ex-premiers, in addition to prominent and influential notables such as Raymond Iddih and Sa'ib Salam. The second list includes the names of varied

Lebanese figures whose opinions, suggestions and visualizations can be put to use. Rounds of meetings will be held between the committee and a number of these notables in Kuwait at a later time this month. Other meetings will be held with other figures at other places. In all these meetings and contacts, both the issues and points on which agreement and disagreement surfaced in Tunis will be discussed with the aim of drafting an Arab working paper or peace plan that takes into consideration the observations and opinions of the various Lebanese factions. These meetings will be tantamount to an "inter-Lebanese dialogue conference" held under Arab auspices in a manner unprecedented in the Lebanese crisis' history.

Third, the committee plans to meet anew, either in Kuwait or in Tunis, with al-Huss, al-Husayni and 'Awn, perhaps upon completing its meetings and contacts with the various Lebanese factions and notables.

Fourth, the committee hopes to complete its work by 20 March 1989 and to draw up a draft solution or an Arab working paper to be presented to the Arab foreign ministers conference which will be held in Tunis on 27 March 1989.

Fifth, if at the conclusion of its activities the committee finds that it cannot draw up a unified Arab peace plan acceptable to all the parties and constituting a mainstay for holding the presidential election and forming a national unity cabinet, it will then refer the Lebanese dossier, with a number of recommendations and proposals, to an ordinary or special Arab summit. The Arab will leaders themselves then tackle the Lebanese problem.

Sixth, in this case, it is not unlikely that the Arab leaders themselves will hold contacts with the Lebanese parties to develop a solution to the problem.

This is the Arab committee's movement plan for the coming phase.

It is evident from all this that the Arab peace process is more important than some people wish to imply and that it is an ongoing process which will not come to a halt as soon as disagreements or obstacles surface. What happened in Tunis is simply an "initial preparatory step."

Effects of Political Situation on Economy Discussed

National Banks Remain Neutral

44040157 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
23 Dec 88 p 45

[Text] Symptoms of an imminent explosion of the conflict over the Lebanese Central Bank are numerous. The conflict became public when General Michel 'Awn

declared that "many security, military, and financial harassments" have forced him to issue an order closing the Museum-al-Barbir crossing point between the two Beirut sectors.

Observers have paused at "financial harassment" because it is new in the series of Lebanese harassments, whereas the rest of the harassments are a daily activity which one side exercises against the other, east against west and vice versa.

Therefore, financial harassment was the last straw for the general. His response was to bring up the question of the fate of the Central Bank of Lebanon for discussion, together with the question of the condition of the Lebanese people, and even the entire financial situation which Dr Edmund Na'im, governor of the Central Bank, asserts is balanced. However, the General has begun to see it differently.

What has happened?

Among the "beginnings of trouble" that have led to adopting a stand toward the Central Bank and perhaps its governor, were two major incidents:

First: General Michel 'Awn submitted an application to the Central Bank of Lebanon to withdraw \$3.5 million from the "secret expenditures" budget. Prime Minister al-Huss rejected this request and instructed Dr Na'im not to spend one single piaster from the secret expenditure funds for any purpose whatsoever. This incident annoyed the General. He accepted it but did not forget it.

The second incident concerned a bid to supply the country with 80,000 tons of wheat as part of the annual plan that was already agreed upon. The Grain and Sugar Beet Bureau had already announced the bid on the basis of ministerial decision No.265 of 1987 signed by the then president of the republic, Amin al-Jumayyil, Prime Minister al-Huss, and the ministers concerned. The quantity fixed for the bid was the balance of 380,000 tons allocated for 1988. Therefore, the quantity was fixed earlier and all that remained was how to buy it and the question of who was to authorize the purchase. Nevertheless, the announcement of the bid by the Grain and Sugar Beet Bureau did not pass peacefully. 'Isam Abu Jamrah, Economics Minister in General 'Awn's cabinet, hastened to exercise his authority as the minister concerned, considering Prime Minister al-Huss's cabinet simply a "political grouping", as it is labelled in East Beirut. Abu Jamrah's action has brought about another bid the date of which was established as 10 November 1988 while the date of the Bureau's bid was established as 27 November 1988.

When documents of the two bids were received in the Central Bank, Dr Na'im, the bank's governor, decided that the Bank should take the matter into its own hands. He instructed one of the senior bank officials to supervise the importing operation and the bids by inviting offers.

In fact, the Bank granted the necessary credit and assumed responsibility for the matter in order to avoid any political division or clash over the citizens' living and subsistence requirements.

Thereupon, according to a semi-official source in the Wheat and Sugar Beet Bureau, it transpired that Minister Abu Jamrah's action was incompatible with a previous, still valid cabinet decision on the bid. Cancelling this decision would require a new decision by the government and, if cancelled, it would divide the Bureau into two bureaus, one in East Beirut and another in West Beirut. Meanwhile, importing the wheat was to be done in the name of the Economics Ministry and the wheat was to be stored in silos and depots in East Beirut, as was customarily and still is being done.

It was learned in this regard that the bid was, for the first time, won by a merchant from East Beirut for importing 60,000 tons of hard American wheat and another merchant in West Beirut for importing 20,000 tons of soft European wheat. Previously, imports were restricted exclusively to East Beirut merchants.

Furthermore, it appears the decision to import wheat in this manner, that is, to restrict invitation of bids exclusively to the Central Bank, has aroused fears. It is feared that the Bank will assume control of importing other vital needs, including fuel and foodstuffs. This would make the Bank a government above the two governments. This is rejected in advance because the Bank is under the jurisdiction of government appointees, despite the fact that Dr Na'im asserts that he is subject only to "public interest", which is defined by law and custom, and that he favors nobody.

A source close to the Bank governor said that Minister Junblat is also angry with the Bank for more than one reason. One of the reasons for his anger is that Dr Na'im had personally assumed the power to control the Intra Investment Company and control of Roger Tamraz's business and rescinded the decision to charge Majid Junblat, the second governor, with taking over such control.

Minister Junblatt's anger with the Central Bank governor was such that he threatened to seize the bank if it paid as much as one single piaster to General 'Awn.

Despite the fact that Minister Walid Junblat said that he was dismayed by the Central Bank governor and his measures, the governor continued with his actions and his sources leaked the news of Junblatt's dismay to demonstrate that the governor "favors nobody at the expense of the unified country."

The question that is being asked in Beirut is: Will the matter stop here?

Knowledgeable sources believe that the Central Bank of Lebanon remains a target which more than one politician will try to win to its side in any open political or economic battle. It is not unlikely that the recent incident was one of many attempts to draw strength from the Central Bank and the financial influence it represents. There are people in West Beirut who demand that 35 percent of the gold reserves be transferred to Lebanese banks in West Beirut and that the \$1 billion deposited in American and European banks be transferred to Arab banks. Meanwhile, East Beirut sources are so concerned with the question of the bank, the money, and the gold reserves and the need to ensure their safety that U.S. mideast envoy Richard Murphy discussed the issue with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and that Murphy has been able to "neutralize" the bank and its cash and gold reserves in relation to any conflict.

What happened that has once again upset things and threatens the disappearance of the Bank's "neutrality"?

A political source said that what happened was an "eastern" move aimed to embarrass West Beirut the situation of which might tend toward stability if the plan to disarm Beirut and the suburbs succeeded. If this plan is carried out, East Beirut and its suburbs will be embarrassed. This embarrassment might cause trouble between the army and the militias. Therefore, there was a plan to foil this step, particularly since Brigadier General Sami al-Khatib, the person likely to reap the fruits of the plan to disarm Beirut, is a military person who is not favored in East Beirut.

It was for this reason that internal conflict over influence has been stirred up once again and tension returned to both the eastern and western parts of the capital.

But the same political source believes that neither the western or eastern sector will be allowed to do so. Beirut has to be patient, do what serves its interests, and wait for the coming days which might bear the signs of an imminent easing up of the situation.

This is the story that has led to closing the crossing point; its beginnings lay in other problems and areas. Regardless of whether the crossing point will be opened or not, the political problem remains until further notice, unless the rocket that hit the Central Bank's third floor was a harbinger of tense days to come.

Pound Declines, Port Loses Importance

44040157 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
23 Dec 23 88 p 46

[Text] When the decision was taken to close the crossing points between the two Beirut sectors, especially the Museum-al-Barbir point, many were apprehensive of the effects of this closure on the economic situation, particularly since this crossing is the only vital artery linking the capital's two sectors. It ensures the continuity of food, commodities, and money supplies to both sectors.

Apprehensions were heightened because the timing of the decision coincided with an escalation in the exchange of sharp attacks and open accusations between the two Beirut sectors. This has also affected the Lebanese pound rate which dropped 3.11 percent against the dollar, making the dollar equivalent to 515 pounds as compared to about 500 pounds before the decision.

As a result, the pound rate of exchange also dropped against the various major European currencies, though with rates ranging from 5.1 to 7.2 percent. It is to be noted that before the decision the dollar was fluctuating and seemed to show signs of a new setback. It reached a maximum of 550 Lebanese pounds and a minimum of 485 pounds.

An economic source explained the fluctuation of the dollar rate of exchange up to the third week of last month as being the result the pound coming under further negative pressure resulting from the anomalous political situation evident in the "abnormality" of the government situation. This became evident in the series of the conflicting and opposing decisions, the latest scene of which was in the Central Bank. The Central Bank governor, Edmund Na'im, was accused of failing to respond to the "'Awnite" [General 'Awn] government's decisions and demands while responding to the "Hussite" [Salim al-Huss] government's decisions and demands, something that the governor denied and which later led to the well-known series of setbacks with regard to the crossing points.

The same source said that the present unstable political situation has led to a drop in the Lebanese pound rate of exchange following the increasing demand for foreign currencies. Yet the political crisis somewhat eased following the Maronite Patriarch's return from the Vatican and the feeling of satisfaction the media and the politicians have propagated with regard to the possibility of reaching a plan for solving the crisis. But the subsequent failure of the solution or, at least, the lack of its clarity has pushed the economy back to its usual whirlpool and the pound has once again weakened.

Any comparison of the foreign currencies rate of exchange between the closure of 31 November 1988 and the closure of 30 October 1988 shows the percentage of the sharp drop in the Lebanese pound rate of exchange between the two dates.

Throughout the period in question and since the beginning of this month the Central Bank of Lebanon sought to curb attempts to undermine the relative stability in the currency market. It has been remarkably able to curb speculations and to keep them within reasonable limits. It has prevented speculators from strongly exploiting the fluctuation of the political situation between stability and instability as it used to happen in the past and to send the pound tumbling down. But the closure of the

crossing points before the announcement about reaching a solution has generated a greater demand for the dollar and weakened the pound even further.

It is difficult to separate this political situation from the nature of developments affecting the national currency and any objective dealing with methods of expenditure and saving. This is particularly true with regard to the collection of basic taxes and dues, foremost of which is customs tariffs, the main source of which is Beirut harbor, have dropped considerably, thereby causing a deficit in the revenue of the most important Lebanese economic resource, the natural access for imports to the Middle East and the Gulf countries and these countries' outlet to the Mediterranean sea.

The Beirut harbor company administration has sent a memo to Colonel 'Isam Abu Jamrah, acting Minister of Power and Electric Resources, explaining the situation of this important economic utility and how it is directly affected by the political situation. It pointed out that during the past 14 years the harbor suffered a series of setbacks as a result of its geographical position. These setbacks have led to:

1. Irregularity in the traffic of ships bound for Beirut harbor, a drop in the size of such ships, a rise in insurance rates against war risks, and long waiting times during "tense periods" before unloading.
2. Drop in goods transit traffic through the harbor because of changes in the security situation and the closure of international borders.
3. Damages resulting from plundering, looting, and smuggling affecting the depots and goods.
4. New and illegitimate harbors emerging that took over a large part of the import traffic.

The total sum of these factors has led to a severe drop in goods traffic, decreasing from 408,000 tons in 1974 to 150,800 tons in 1988. Difficult times were experienced between those years; traffic ranged between nought in 1976 and fluctuating since 1988.

The immediate results of the security situation were evident in the damages done to open and closed depots, the administrative buildings, supply depots, mobile machinery, floating marine equipment, roads and railroads network, and means of dock protection.

No appropriate administrative measures were taken to deal with these negative factors. The administration retained all its manpower despite the fact that most of it has become redundant. It was also forced to pay the wages in full plus cost of living allowances. This has caused the company to suffer a deficit of 470,000 pounds in 1975 which continued to rise until it reached 104,650,000 pounds in 1987, with the aggregate total reaching 1.9 billion pounds for all the lean years. This

has prompted the government to give the Beirut harbor company loans and grants from the treasury since 1977, when the grant was 20 million pounds and up to 1988 when it reached 695 million pounds.

The Beirut harbor company's memo comes to the conclusion that the harbor, when the situation returns to normal and it resumes its traditional business activity, will be able to regain its normal customs and harbor revenues in accordance with current tariffs, achieve a financial balance, refurbish its equipment, and carry out development and expansion projects in accordance with programs set for them.

MOROCCO

Gas Pipeline Extension Requires Technical Preparation

45190042a Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE
in French 13 Jan 89 p 11

[Article by M.H., including his interview with French pipeline expert Guy Delatour; date and place of interview not given]

[Text] Regardless of the ups and downs that have occurred, the Algerian-Moroccan-European gas pipeline will soon be a reality. This means that Moroccan firms must begin preparing now, particularly with a view to taking charge of the distribution of natural gas in Morocco.

The noticeable improvement that has occurred in Moroccan-Algerian relations despite a few disagreeable "false notes" has revived interest in a project which should have been undertaken a long time ago and which would have been if the regrettable events familiar to us all had not occurred. That project is the Algerian-European gas pipeline, which must necessarily pass through Morocco and from which our country can obviously draw the greatest benefit.

As can Algeria, for that matter.

Algeria has invested a maximum amount in developing the gigantic Arzew complex, which is reaching the saturation point as far as exports of that type of liquified gas from Hassi R'Mel are concerned. But cost prices are very high, and while that was acceptable as long as the price of petroleum (on which the price of gas is based) was at its highest levels, the situation is very different today, and the cost price of liquefied gas represents a very heavy burden for Algeria.

Algeria therefore has no choice but to find new ways of doing things by returning to the traditional solution of the gas pipeline that will open up huge markets in

Europe. An undersea pipeline between Arzew and Alicante is certainly feasible, but a solution of that kind involves considerable risk and expense, and it is important to make the length of the submerged pipeline as short as possible.

Crossing Morocco to the Strait of Gibraltar is practically an obligation, and in the climate of cooperation taking shape between the two countries, that solution is quite obviously imperative. Laying the large (40-inch) gas pipeline on Moroccan soil will admittedly be the subject of negotiations with Algiers. That is a separate question, but it also gives Morocco the opportunity to benefit from an attractive and relatively inexpensive source of energy—provided, of course, that a distribution network is built from a station established somewhere between the Algerian frontier and Tangiers.

Morocco will buy the gas from Algeria, but it will have to handle the distribution itself by building an entire network of secondary gas lines to the big cities and industrial zones, and it is not futile to hope that natural gas will replace butane and propane in the near future.

Expert's Point of View

An enormous investment will certainly be required, but the results will be worth it. The essential thing, we repeat, is that Moroccan firms be in a position to build that network, and doing so requires a level of technical know-how and experience that is not easy to find. Europe has only two experts of international stature in the laying of pipelines. And according to competent circles, the number one expert is Guy Delatour. That eminent specialist is very familiar with Morocco, where he has relatives. He shared some of his ideas with us during an interview:

[LA VIE ECONOMIQUE] "So, Mr Delatour, you have solid experience...."

[Delatour] "I participated in all the major pipeline projects in the Sahara from 1958 until Algeria became independent. From 1961 until 1965, I represented France in connection with all the projects for oil pipelines, gas pipelines, and terminals. After that, I laid all the pipelines in Tunisia and participated in construction of the storage facilities. I also participated in major construction projects in the Near East and Europe, and I returned to Algeria to witness, unfortunately, the most resounding failure of a European company which had tried to take charge of laying pipelines without obtaining the necessary technicians. No one is perfect or irreplaceable, but in a field as tricky as this, competence is priceless."

Tricky Procedure

[LA VIE ECONOMIQUE] "Why is it so tricky to lay a gas pipeline?"

[Delatour] "Because many operations are involved, and the timing must absolutely precise.

"Time is very expensive, and you will get an idea of the organization required if you consider that each length of pipe must be practically custom-made to fit the pipeline route. The route must always be as short as possible, but it cannot always follow a straight line. The pipes are always buried, and in crossing rivers and streams, the work must obviously be started during low water. That being said, the pipes must match the general profile that has been established, and that is why each pipe has its own specifications. And when the work is progressing at the rate of several kilometers per day, as sometimes happens, perfect coordination is required. But the difficulties do not stop there. The trickiest part of the work is the welding of the pipes, a job that may be done at the rate of up to 7 kilometers per day.

"Welders in this field are true artists, considering the 10 or so beads needed for completing one weld with special techniques and welding rods. The whole thing is 100-percent X-rayed, and the pipes are subjected to strength tests exceeding the specifications set for them in actual use. The laying of a gas or oil pipeline is a huge circus gravitating around the worksite to ensure the progress of the welding, requiring a right-of-way at least 22 meters wide (for 40-inch pipe), and progressing, as I said, from a minimum of 700 meters per day up to several kilometers."

[LA VIE ECONOMIQUE] "If I understand correctly, the laying of a gas pipeline requires a level of technical know-how and experience that does not exist in Morocco at the moment."

[Delatour] "I have worked previously in this country, which I like very much, since I was involved in laying the Nouaceur-Ben Guerir pipeline and then in breaking it up and laying it again from Kechoula to Youssoufia in 1967, and I would be happy to put my well-known competence at the service of a Moroccan project. Studies for such a project should be started quickly, because time is short. I will even say that Morocco should do everything in its power to see that this project gets under way as soon as possible. For one thing, that will put a tighter seal on cooperation in the Maghreb, and for another, it will establish new ties between the Maghreb and Europe. But I stress the importance that the laying of this pipeline will have for Morocco itself, provided, I repeat, that Morocco is in a position to lay the networks of pipelines and branch lines on its own rather than entrusting the project to foreign companies, whose assistance will be very expensive."

That is a particularly interesting suggestion, and it must be hoped that our large domestic companies, which could undertake preliminary studies without delay, will take note of it.

Mining Sector Notes Improvements, Remaining Problems

45190042b Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE
in French 13 Jan 89 p 6

[Text] Despite the favorable results it can boast of thanks to the higher price of phosphates, the Moroccan mining industry has been going through a difficult period for several years.

International economic conditions in 1987 remained very difficult overall, and the situation grew even worse for most mineral substances.

The international crisis in raw materials, which unfortunately has persisted since the start of this decade, is slowing the development of this sector, whose share of both our country's GNP and its foreign trade has deteriorated steadily despite efforts by our companies, and particularly the OCP [Moroccan Phosphates Office], to improve prices.

That situation has been mentioned many times by industry professionals, notably in the annual reports of the AIMM (Association of Moroccan Mining Industries). And it should be pointed out that most of the producing countries, being aware of the role played by the mining industry and the structural nature of the crisis, have adopted measures to support their extractive industries. Those measures have been financial (low-interest loans), fiscal (various tax exemptions), or monetary (devaluations), with each country taking the steps dictated by its own means and necessities.

In Morocco, however, despite our country's considerable advantages in this area, the mining industry has stagnated or even regressed, notably as a result of sometimes insufficient competitiveness. That is why the industry has called for a set of measures designed to put new life back into the sector.

Rise in Factor Cost

For example, increases in factor costs are continuing to seriously handicap the mining industry. This applies to the cost of electric energy, transportation, and handling charges in the ports. The industry feels that those increases are becoming unbearable at a time when the price of petroleum is declining on the international market, as is the dollar rate. There no longer seems to be any justification for those increases, which are hampering all industrialization in the country as well as any possibility of an economic takeoff. It is felt that transportation, which is in the hands of the ONT [National Transportation Office], is too expensive and that industrialists should be allowed to haul their own products or use the private sector.

Production of Concentrates

Substance	Quantity Metric Tons	1986	Quantity Metric Tons	1987
		Estimated Pithead Value (1,000's of dirhams)		Estimated Pithead Value (1,000's of dirhams)
Phosphates	21,380,000	3,816,000	21,207,700	4,400,000
Lead*	105,688	252,760	104,464	335,200
Copper*	54,700	138,420	41,011	95,970
Zinc*	31,797	31,217	19,547	18,150
Chemical manganese*	36,734	41,700	42,500	44,500
Antimony	1,391	3,990	1,058	2,840
Auriferous-				
Argentiferous copper	4,290	43,860	4,118	44,530
Iron	195,600	16,625	229,378	19,300
Fluorine	83,000	62,700	78,500	55,900
Barites	179,880	20,400	126,800	17,500
Salt	118,640	13,170	141,172	9,880
Fuller's earth	35,100	2,670	46,271	8,460
Bentonite	3,834	2,930	2,948	2,020
Ghassul	3,975	2,970	4,981	3,730
Mineral water (m ³)	62,030	101,540	72,010	113,100
Cobalt			2,460	16,950
Strontium			1,962	650
Chromite			503	240
Total	22,296,659	4,550,952	22,127,383	5,188,920
* Incl. silver content (kg)	47,000		53,000	

In its annual report for fiscal 1987, the AIMM asks that mining firms be given the benefit of an energy price similar to those charged by countries that are the main producers of mineral raw materials and that exporting firms be authorized to import the process materials needed for their activity under the drawback system.

The association also makes two other demands:

1. Revision of Article II of the mining regulations to include commercial substances among materials subject to permits strikes us as urgent, all the more since those substances are currently taking the lead over traditional mineral substances all over the world. The fact is that

exploitation of those substances—such as certain clays and marble—is not under the supervision of the Ministry of Energy and Mines. Anyone can apply for authorization to exploit those quarries. Such authorizations are granted for 3 years, but are not necessarily renewed.

That encourages neither investment nor rational exploitation, which, after all, can only be assured by professionals who are completely familiar with the necessary methods.

2. The possibility of allowing firms to set aside a tax-free reserve during periods of high prices for use in those periods—unfortunately too frequent—when the prices of our products collapse.

Production of By-Products and Metals

Substance	Quantity (metric tons)	1986	Quantity (metric tons)	1987
		Estimated Pithead Value (1,000's of dirhams)		Estimated Pithead Value (1,000's of dirhams)
Phosphate by-products:				
P2O5	1,656,000		1,888,000	
MAP	148,000		262,000	
NPK	188,000	4,500,000	205,800	5,000,000
ASP	102,000		138,600	
TSP	575,280		493,300	
DAP	-		4,900	
Total	2,669,280	4,500,000	2,992,600	5,000,000

Production of By-Products and Metals

	Quantity (metric tons)	1986 Estimated Pithead Value (1,000's of dirhams)	Quantity (metric tons)	1987 Estimated Pithead Value (1,000's of dirhams)
Metals and by-products:				
Soft lead	53,740		62,497	
Silver metal (kg)	41,866		39,760	
Silver first smelt (kg)	53,390		73,209	
Copper matte	1,349	320,000	2,441	450,000
Sodium antimonate	927		467	
Small shot	13		2	
Total	56,124	320,000	65,520	450,000
Grand total	2,725,404	4,820,000	3,058,120	5,450,000
Source: AIMM				

Improved Economic Situation

We note, however, that while those demands remain topical, the economic situation in 1988 underwent definite improvement allowing us to think that the industry may see the end of the tunnel in the near future.

International prices recovered thanks to a revival of consumption. Domestically, a number of demands made by the industry have been met or are in the process of being satisfied. We note the following:

1. Implementation of the new Mining Investment Code.

The code was kept from taking effect for 2 years by the absence of an implementing decree. That decree should be published very shortly.

2. The depletion allowance (PRG). The 1989 Finance Law authorizes the PRG and exempts it from the IBP [expansion unknown] and the IS [expansion unknown]. The industry had been expecting this measure since 1983.

3. Elimination of the ad valorem export duty: a big step has been taken by reducing the rate of that duty to 0.5 percent on all mineral substances. But the industry is hoping that the duty will be completely eliminated.

4. Making the results of studies by the Directorate of Geology and the BRPM [Mineral Prospecting and Investment Office] available to mine operators. The first steps toward implementing that decision have been taken through various meetings between mine operators belonging to the association and officials of the BRPM.

5. A re-examination of the situation with respect to mining resources.

In connection with that last-named decision, several mining permits have been made available for reassignment.

OMAN

International Airport Runways Improved

44040134 Muscat AL-WATAN in Arabic 8 Nov 88 p 3

[By 'Abd-al-Sattar Khalif]

[Excerpts] In fulfillment of the vital role it performs, the Ministry [of Communications] has recently concluded numerous agreements, most of them in the roads sector. The latter is one of the most important and vital service sectors because it links the remotest parts of the country to each other with a highly advanced, developed modern network, so that services can reach every Omani in the territory of the sultanate.

The ministry's current contracts with numerous companies have a value of over 18.5 million Omani riyals. These contracts are for many important and vital projects. In addition, the ministry has a program and ambitious plan to exert greater and greater efforts in the various areas of its many-sided work.

Equipment Modernization

Al-Sib International and Salalah Airports have been the scene of an equipment modernization operation that included all areas. The current year will see efforts to extend radar service coverage for monitoring of the area, with the goal of reaching complete coverage of the entire Muscat Aviation Information Region. Plans and programs for training and qualifying Omani personnel are an important goal to which the General Department of Civil Aviation and Meteorological Observation attributes extreme importance. This will be done to raise the level of Omani employees capable of carrying out the functions and positions relating to civil aviation and meteorological observation.

As for the scope of developments, at al-Sib International Airport the operational capability of the Muscat area monitoring center has been improved by installation of a long-range VHF communications station in Sur.

High-quality wireless VHF communications coverage now extends to include all parts of the expanded Muscat Aviation Information Region.

The runway network at al-Sib International Airport has been improved by the installation of surface lighting equipment at the points where runways C, D, and E intersect with main runway A. This has resulted in a cost savings by reducing the number of lights liable to breakage by Boeing-747 jumbo jets when they make a sharp turn toward the main runway.

In accordance with modifications introduced by the International Civil Aviation Organization to the requirements for international operation, new procedures for automatic approach and holding paths have been established and announced for al-Sib International and Salalah Airports.

In addition, a group of (altered equipment) and extended programs has been purchased for the Marconi radar apparatus, to provide improved monitoring service of the radar area in the northern part of the Muscat Aviation Information Region.

The year 1988 is witnessing other efforts to extend radar service coverage for monitoring of the area, with the goal of reaching complete coverage of the full Muscat Aviation Information Region. Such complete radar coverage is considered vital for the continued safe, orderly, and rapid flow of the constantly increasing numbers of international air flights through the Muscat Aviation Information Region.

(Altered Equipment)

The two-letter code system used internationally to designate airliner flights was changed to a three-letter system. In preparation for implementation of this change, new programs were purchased (altered equipment) for use in the flight information display system. New tapes were prepared for the message forwarding system. Plans were made to increase the size of the labels (information slides) shown on the Lux-16 radar screens and to train all communications center workers in using and working with the new system. As a result of these well-planned and effective measures taken in advance, the transition between the two systems was marked by smoothness and flexibility. In addition, a new information circuit was opened within the permanent flight information network from Muscat (al-Sib) to Aden, as well as another circuit from Muscat to Singapore. The two voice and teletype communication receiving circuits with Bombay have been amalgamated into one circuit.

A departures monitoring system has been installed in the airport building. It was designed to program by computer all stages of passenger handling from initial baggage weigh-in to boarding and to send teletype messages about the passenger and baggage to the destination airports at the time of takeoff. [passage omitted]

Another long-range VHF communications apparatus has been installed at Sur to improve communications coverage in the area. The site of the nondirectional wireless tower has been linked to the main 3.3-kilovolt electrical network. Examinations and tests have been conducted on the surface installations of the approach and departure threshold lighting systems of Runway 8. [passage omitted]

Other major training exercises are being carried out with a number of other special government agencies and organizations. By defining responsibilities and laying out procedures, these joint exercises play a prominent role in preparation and readiness for airliner and other disasters. These long-term continuous projects include an information and training exchange between the Fire Department and the following organizations: Omani Airlines, the Royal Yacht Squadron, the Sultan of Oman's Air Force, Royal Airlines, the Armed Forces Hospital, and other government agencies. [passage omitted]

The Department of Meteorological Observation has been active in processing, listing, and archiving weather reports and providing them to numerous users within and outside the sultanate. Many individuals and organizations involved in various weather-sensitive activities have asked to be supplied with collections of these reports. Such organizations include airlines, contractors, farmers, civil and electrical engineers, naval and fishing experts, land use planners, insurance agents, medical institutions, and research institutes. All of their requests have been answered during the year.

Under the weather project known internationally as INFOCLIMA, collections of weather reports have been sent to Geneva, where the international reference catalogue of weather reports from around the world is being prepared.

On 18 May 1987, the weather report management system known as the "(Kilkum) Program" devised at the National Weather Report Center in the state [as in source] of Ashville in the United States under sponsorship of the International Organization for Meteorological Observation was introduced into the IBM-PC AN [as in source] computer programs. Subsequently, a training program was held by a National Weather Report Center expert who came to the sultanate under a training program sponsored by the UN development program in the sultanate and the International Organization for Meteorological Observation.

Beginning in January 1987, a regular official monthly weather summary began to be issued. At the present time, the reports issued cover 13 observation stations. Other stations are expected to be added in the near future. In a related matter, work is under way to collect reports for the issuance of an annual weather summary.

In July, the new model of (altered equipment) to operate the central station for receiving information from the automatic stations was successfully installed. This has led to a noticeable improvement in the immediate reports obtained from the automatic observation stations. [passage omitted]

In November, the building of a weather radar on Masi-rah [Island] was completed. The radar apparatus was installed in November and December and began operating in February 1988. It should be mentioned that this radar has particular importance as a means of early warning in observing and following the course and strength of the hurricanes and tropical storms that frequently affect the eastern and southern areas of the sultanate, causing damage to life and property.

Plans and programs to train and qualify Omani personnel are among the important goals to which the General Department of Civil Aviation and Meteorological Observation attributes extreme importance in order to raise the level of Omani employees able to carry out functions and fill positions in civil aviation and meteorological observation. Seventy-four students are studying at department expense in universities and specialized institutes outside the sultanate. Their fields of specialization are as follows: of 15 students studying in the United States, 2 are studying electrical engineering, 2 mechanical engineering, 4 electronic engineering, 5 aviation engineering, 1 computers, and 1 aviation management.

Fifty-nine students are studying at the Gulf States College of Civil Aviation in Doha—20 in the field of electronic apparatus maintenance, 28 in the field of air surveillance, and 11 are doing preparatory studies.

Three students from the College of Civil Aviation in Doha have transferred to studies in the field of air surveillance in Britain at the expense of the UN development project. Ten Omani employees from various departments and divisions have gone through local training courses, each in his field of specialization. [passage omitted]

SUDAN

'Umar Nur al-Da'im Interviewed

PM2802164889 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 27 Feb 89 p 3

[Interview with 'Umar Nur al-Da'im, Sudanese finance minister and "prominent" Ummah Party leader, by Talhah Jibril in Rabat—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] So what is your explanation of the defense minister's resignation?

[Al-Da'im] The defense minister's resignation is normal and needs not have prompted all this uproar. The defense minister submitted his resignation because he believed he could not reach an understanding with certain parties within the cabinet. On that basis his resignation was accepted.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] But some reports linked the defense minister's resignation to the situation in the South of the country.

[Al-Da'im] The resignation has nothing to do with the war in the South or conditions within the Sudanese Army. All that happened was that the defense minister had an opinion regarding the cabinet's formation, and in view of that he submitted his resignation over 2 weeks ago. Then the prime minister asked him to reconsider his position so that the resignation would not be misinterpreted, since it coincided with the fall of Nasir to Garang's forces. But the defense minister insisted on his position because he felt he could not cooperate with certain parties within the government, since disputes had occurred between him and certain [National] Islamic Front ministers. This was the main reason for his resignation. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It is reported that the Sudanese Army is at present suffering problems in terms of weapons and equipment. This is untrue, because the weapons needed to tackle the rebel movement are available to the Sudanese Army and even the Air Force, which is more expensive. Besides, the United States and the Soviet Union used very advanced weapons in Vietnam and Afghanistan, but achieved nothing. The matter is not confined to weapons alone. Despite all that is being said, the Sudanese Army's position is better than that of neighboring armies. Chad, Uganda, and Kenya—all neighboring states—do not even pay officers and troops their salaries.

One of the disasters inflicted by the military regime that ruled Sudan for two periods totalling 22 years is that it did nothing to develop the Army. We have now drawn up a complete plan for developing and modernizing the Sudanese Army. I believe that there should be no fears about the fall of certain towns, because even if Juba (the largest town in the South) does fall, we are ready to recapture it. The problem is that the Sudanese people, a peaceful people, were wrong to believe that the other forces are peaceful as well. This matter must be reconsidered, and we must fight fiercely.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] So who is responsible for the present situation?

[Al-Da'im] The people responsible for the present situation are those who are unleashing tendentious propaganda campaigns and lies outside Sudan.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Who are they?

[Al-Da'im] Israel, world churches, and some of the Western states that helped the rebels and sabotaged South Sudan. They are now weeping over those made homeless by the war and famine. No less than 2 million southerners have emigrated to the North—proof that our country is safe. Had it not been so, the war victims would have sought refuge in Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It been reported that the question of modernizing and arming the Sudanese Army has been hampered by some Sudanese foreign policy principles.

[Al-Da'im] This is erroneous and inaccurate. Our problem has nothing to do with our foreign policy; it is to do with the lack of financial resources.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It is said that the resigned defense minister made a tour of Arab states to obtain weapons, but the results were negative because of Sudan's foreign policies.

[Al-Da'im] This is untrue. We have clear plans in this field. In the past some Arab states provided us with aid in this field. As for those who adopt a neutral position, we cannot expect anything from them, whether or not we have the financial resources to purchase arms. We have succeeded with our armaments plans, however, and our problems are confined solely to finance.

With regard to our foreign policy, I believe we have a clear and well-defined policy. We are not subservient to any state in the world and have our own decisions. We pursue a policy of good-neighborliness with our neighboring states, and our relations are excellent, East and West. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] The Army officers talked about the presence of armed militias and demanded that they be disbanded. How true is this?

[Al-Da'im] There are no armed militias in the North. Such talk is unfounded.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] You are quoted as saying that the Ummah Party has the capability to engage in armed fighting.

[Al-Da'im] If the situation requires that we fight, we are prepared to fight. We fought against the Al-Numayri regime. But this does not mean that we have organized armed militias. I believe that any citizen, man or woman, should have the ability to use weapons.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is your opinion of reports of Al-Numayri's plan to return to power?

[Al-Da'im] That is a delusion of the past and fable that has ended. Al-Numayri is probably deluding himself that some foreign powers will help him to return to Sudan. But such assumptions are obsolete.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] There is an urgent question about the reasons for the Sudanese Government's rejection of the peace initiative between the Democratic Unionist Party and Garang.

[Al-Da'im] That initiative has become a crime, because it has divided the Sudanese people. Political forces are supposed to agree first on any initiative before it is adopted. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is your opinion of the tone used by some people in the North, who have called for the South's separation in order to resolve the problem?

[Al-Da'im] The reason for that tone is that some southerners now believe that since Sudan achieved independence the situation in the South has become a threat to stability in the country. Some circles in the North believe that certain southerners such as Garang and others are spiteful elements not motivated by objective considerations and exploited by foreign powers. Some of them received training in Israel, and this is no longer a secret. Some are currently being trained in Cuba. So these are now exposed to exploitation by any quarter wishing to undermine stability in Sudan. So the tendency urging the separation of the South is now a true one that has emerged as a result of bitterness. A tendency has now become crystallized in the North and begun to express itself openly and to raise the idea of separating the South as a solution to the problem. I believe that their reasons are objective. [passage omitted]

Official Meets Saudi Envoy on 'Harmful' Media Reports

*EA0103074889 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic
1700 GMT 28 Feb 89*

[Text] Dr Bashir Umar Fadlallah, culture and information minister and official spokesman of the Sudanese Government, today met the Saudi ambassador to Sudan, Dr Abd-al-Muhsin al-Sudayri, and said the government does not approve of reports being published by the Khartoum news agency, harmful to Saudi Arabia. He promised to deal with the matter in line with the government's commitment to Arab League resolutions providing for the protection of other league member heads of state from libel. He said the matter would be dealt with in accordance with the special Sudanese-Saudi relations.

Nation's Rising Unemployment Analyzed, Described

45040151 Khartoum AL-AYYAM in Arabic
19 Dec 88 p 5

[Article by 'Awad Abu Talib: "Unemployment Is Increasing Every Year—Why? The Result Is an Obvious Decline in Production"]

[Text] The work force is the dynamo which moves any productive process. The work force means all persons who actually contribute their physical or intellectual efforts to any activity which is linked to the production of goods and services.

A person following the actual conditions of the work force in the Sudan will observe that there has been a waste in this force, which represents an important human resource, and this to a large extent affects various productive sectors.

Graduates account for a substantial share of this force and unemployment among graduates represents an important problem and issue whose severity has increased in recent years. A number of factors have combined and resulted in the exacerbation of this problem, most important of which is the lack of reconciliation of higher education policies with employment policies. This problem has its bad economic, social, and political dimensions. Through this review we will try to deal with the economic effects of the problem of unemployment, describing its effect on production and its effect on the shortage of domestic income and the consequent results. We will then review the causes which have led to the aggravation of this problem through a review of the theories of some economists in this area.

How Unemployment Affects Production

Unemployment is considered one of the most important factors leading to a drop in the volume of national product, since a lack of work means a drop in production. In attempting a further explanation, it is worth our while to differentiate between voluntary and disguised unemployment. Disguised unemployment means a work force in excess of the requirements of production, where the productivity of part of the work force drops to zero. With a reorganization of production activities, it is possible to dispense with part of the work force without having this affect production levels.

It is to be noted that most institutions of the government suffer from such disguised unemployment, especially in lower positions. However, even the government has now started suffering from this problem at the level of higher and university education, and appointments have started to take place without a review of the actual needs of the labor market. This has its great effect on production, since the absorption of three people, for instance, to perform a job which requires only one person leads to a deficiency in productivity, in view of the reliance by

each person on the other in performing his duty, especially if we take into account the total absence of surveillance in all public sector organizations and the absence of stock-taking, in view of the lack of administrative stability, party spoils and the absence of independence in the civil service in the desired form, in addition to laxity from the apex to the base, which has become the distinctive character of most government organizations.

The Effect of Unemployment on Incomes and Its Results

It is well known that the basic goal of economic development is to increase the level of the welfare of individuals, and it will be feasible for economic development to realize this only by increasing national income with equitable distribution thereof. For this to take place it is necessary to solve the problem of unemployment, because deficient absorption and scanty incomes have their ill effect. Perhaps the greatest effect the problem of unemployment imposes is the migration of intelligent and competent persons abroad in search of better job opportunities and an improved standard of living, especially when we take into account the high wages in wealthy countries. This migration creates further economic ill effects in the form of a change in the consumption pattern, the possession of finished and electrical luxury and consumer goods, and the consequences of the traditional methods of saving, such as hoarding of gold and commodities of high value.

Perhaps the drain of young people the Sudanese countryside has been witnessing reflects the great effect on production, especially in the agricultural sector.

Economists' Views on Unemployment

A number of research works and studies which have been carried out have dealt with the problem of unemployment in the Sudan. The most recent of these was a study prepared in June 1987 by Dr Muhammad Adham 'Ali, a researcher in the Council of Economic and Social Research. He discussed this problem from a scientific viewpoint and tried to arrive at solutions to it. Therefore, a review of this study is of importance at this time specifically, especially in view of the apposite nature of the decree of the new minister of administrative service and reform, which has suspended all appointments. He issued his decree which called for all graduates to sit for a written examination in order to obtain positions. Dr Muhammad Adham, in his study on the orientations of students in higher education and the problems of employment in the Sudan, reviewed the historic dimensions of this problem and stated that the employment of graduates of higher education in productive sectors has to a large extent been affected by the deterioration in the economic environment in all areas, especially the industrial sector. He attributed that to the scarcity of capital and equipment, and problems of energy and shipment in addition to the paucity of feasibility studies on many projects, which have led to a drop in the rates of capacity

actually employed. This has had an effect on this employment with respect to public sector organizations. As for the private sector, it has continued to play a marginal role in the employment of graduates. He reviewed the reason why the civil service selection committee was established in 1974, that is, the attainment of competence in public service through the optimum employment of personnel in accordance with specific foundations. He also reviewed the theoretical and applied areas of specialization and the ratios of appointment in them on the basis of the committee's records for 1987. This table shows some areas of specialization and the rates of appointment with respect to the faculties of applied studies.

Table One: The Number of Male and Female Graduates in the Committee's Lists of Graduates of Faculties of Applied Studies

Specialization	Number of Registered Graduates	Number of Graduates Absorbed	Percent
Science	1,291	430	33
Agriculture	1,771	524	29.6
Pharmacy	230	48	20.9
Engineering	1,721	839	48.8

What is to be noted from the table is the generally low rate of absorption, even in the faculties of applied studies. Dr Adham attributed that to the suspension of automatic appointment with respect to graduates in applied studies since 1980, with the result that employment has come to be limited to vacant positions.

Concerning graduates of faculties of theoretical study, the rate of appointment is lower, as is apparent from the table below.

Table Two: Theoretical Areas of Specialization and Rates of Appointment, February 1987

Specialization	Supply	Demand	Remaining	Rate of Appointment
Accounting	1,101	119	982	10.8
Economics	322	79	352	24.5
English Language	49	28	21	57
Press and Media	31	2	29	6.5

Dr Adham attributed the reasons for the slow rate of employment to the lack of correspondence between the number of persons graduating in the educational system and the lack of coordination among the various employment entities and the lack of authorization for the creation of new positions in the budget, in addition to the mediocre participation by the private sector in creating positions. Moreover, the major effect of the policies for financing university education has to large extent contributed to the aggravation of the problem,

since an obstruction in the labor market has resulted from an interest and increase in demand for academic education, and this has stripped the cost of labor for projects of its economic significance.

Dr Adham considers that the basic reason for the waste of human resources lies in its being oriented to a large extent toward academic education in spite of the scarcity of opportunities in the area of education, while technical and vocational education have a low place which is not in keeping with the needs of development.

Summary

The study researcher Dr Adham Muhammad 'Ali carried out is a serious attempt to deal with this issue. He considers that people carrying out work force planning should concern themselves with the issue of the allocation of educational resources as well as being concerned with studying incentives which will drive students toward choosing the areas of study the country needs by directing the students' preferences toward the desired areas of specialization through publicity, adopting the system of quantitative differentiation in study stipends and disbursements, and, of necessity, devoting attention to technical education in the secondary stage as a springboard toward university education. It is necessary to break the bottlenecks which stand in the way of technical education and limit its progress, such as the scarcity of resources, the deficiency in curricula, the deficit of teachers, and the paucity of opportunities for training them.

We might add that there is no way to resolve this problem by decrees from above, but that it is necessary to take a more comprehensive view and devote attention to radical reform in order to tie educational policies to employment policies and devote attention to the theories and research works which researchers and scholars present, in an attempt to benefit from education—a form of investment with a high yield in belief of most economists.

Labor Leaders Surveyed on Current Economic Issues

Popular Unrest Increases

45040184 Khartoum AL-USBU'in Arabic
29 Dec 88 pp 4-5

[Article: "AL-USBU" Follows Political Position in Street; No to Lebanonization of Sudan; Citizen Says: We Seek To Topple Government Because It Has Failed To Solve Our Problems; Union Grouping Member: National Reconciliation Government Is Way Out of Crisis; Pharmacists Union Secretary: Alternative Is To End War That Has Drained People's Wealth; Unionist Says: No to Prices, no to Strike, no to Sabotage; University Student: Issue Is not Issue of Unionist Party's Departure From Government But of Overcoming Crisis; South Sudan Political Grouping Deputy Chairman: Government Has Failed To Solve Economic Problems and To Establish Peace; Lawyers Union Chairman: Unionists' Withdrawal Is Master Blow; We Demand

Government Resignation, Formation of Interim Government and General Elections; Islamic Front Member: Unionist Party Has Disavowed Responsibility; Government Should Resign Because Responsibility Is Collective"]

[Excerpts] AL-USBU' has remained at the center of the developments since the situation erupted and has followed this situation with reports, surveys and comment. Within the framework of this field movement, AL-USBU' has conducted this survey on the DUP [Democratic Unionist Party] withdrawal from the government and on this withdrawal's political ramifications to the exploding crisis.

At the outset, AL-USBU' interviewed 'Akashah 'Abd-al-Rahman, the chairman of the General Union of Private Sector Company Workers, to explore his opinion on the DUP's withdrawal. He has said:

We are not much concerned with the DUP's withdrawal. What concerns us first and foremost is an honorable life for the Sudanese people. Any increase in sugar prices, even if it is only to raise the price of a pound of sugar to 55 piasters, is rejected. We, as a union, will carry on with the strike until these decisions are reconsidered. Any price increase is rejected. [Passage omitted]

Late Withdrawal

Sa'id Ahmad Mahdi, the chairman of the Real Estate and Industrial Bank Workers Union and member of the General Union of Banks, has said: The DUP should have withdrawn earlier. The peace initiative launched by Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani did not emanate from void but was unanimously approved by the national peace-loving forces that are not tied to colonialism. The initiative was accepted by the ordinary Sudanese but was rejected by the [Islamic] Front and al-Ummah Party [which alleged that] it posed danger to the country's unity. Without peace, there can be no dignity and no stability. This situation helps the proliferation of corruption as a result of the pressures of life. It is unreasonable for one to earn 300 pounds in wages and to have to spend 90 pounds out of the sum on sugar alone. How can one cover the other expenses? If we compare wages to the market prices, then it means that one has to steal and it means the proliferation of the black market, of theft and of middlemen.

Call for Civil Disobedience

Muhammad Fadlallah al-Basha, secretary of the Civil Aviation Workers' Unionist Committee and member of the Executive Bureau of the General Union of the Ministry of Defense, has said:

The DUP's withdrawal is a contradiction in terms because all the cabinet ministers approved the price increase. I believe that the withdrawal has come too late. [Passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Baqi 'Abd-al-Majid, a member of the Central Committee of the General Union of Public Sector Food Workers, has said:

I don't like the withdrawal. Anyone who shoulders a responsibility must shoulder its consequences. This time is inconvenient for the withdrawal. We want peace but we don't want it to violate the bounds of God's restrictions. We reject the increased prices, especially of sugar. These increases could have been made in the form of indirect taxes. We denounce the prime minister's retreat from his initial decision to raise the minimum wage as of 1 July 1988. There is no difference between the public sector and the private sector because the market is one and the same. [Passage omitted]

Sudan Following in Lebanon's Footsteps

Mubarak 'Awad al-Karim Hamzah, the Engineers Union treasurer, has said:

The DUP should not have withdrawn because we are concerned with Sudan's, not with the parties', interest. Dr Husayn Abu-Salih was chairman of the committee which approved the resolutions. Therefore, he should not have withdrawn. Sudan is currently in a devil's palm and is being subjected to pressures by various ethnic groups and foreign governments. This same situation developed in Lebanon and the Lebanese people continue to be displaced and to live without dignity or stability. We do not agree to see this happen in Sudan. We must cling to Sudan's interest and there should be no sectarianism, partisanship or tribalism.

The current living conditions are so bad that the Sudanese workers feel desperate and tormented. The worker needs nearly 100 pounds a day to meet his daily needs. [passage omitted]

DUP's Stance Is Patriotic

Nasr-al-Din Kuku Kinnah, secretary of the General Union of Hotels and Tourism Workers, has said:

The DUP's withdrawal from the government is a tantamount to a patriotic stance that reflects the party's displeasure with the frustrations caused by these harsh resolutions. It is the party which launched the peace initiative. They must (reconsider) and tackle these resolutions. Raising the prices slights the Sudanese citizen's intellect. Therefore, a firm position must be taken, even if it means cancelling the increase in wages and reducing prices. [Passage omitted]

Demonstrations Are Natural Reaction

'Awad 'Uthman Dirar, member of the General Federation's Central Committee and foreign relations secretary of the General Union of Irrigation Workers, has said:

The DUP's withdrawal is a normal consequence of the Constituent Assembly's failure to respond to the peace

initiative. We urge the Sudanese parties to sit around one table and to work solely for the interest of Sudan and of its people. Increasing sugar prices by 500 percent is unwise. The strikes and demonstrations are a natural reaction to this increase.

'Abd-al-Qadir Sayyid Ahmad, member of the former Central Committee of the General Federation of Sudanese Labor Unions and a member of the current Central Committee of the Southern Region's Federation, has said:

The Sudanese people have been burnt so badly by the ongoing war in the south that they can smell the odor of its tribulations. When Sudanese people (saw) the peace initiative agreed by the DUP and the [southern] movement, they felt optimistic and staged a tumultuous demonstration whose cheers rose sky high. The war costs Sudan 5 million pounds daily. The war should be rejected and the Sudanese people's essential needs should be subsidized. The initiative is incompatible with the increased prices and there are no serious efforts to implement this initiative. [Passage omitted]

April Uprising Stolen From Us

'Abdullah Mahjub 'Ali, secretary of the Agricultural Bank Labor Union and treasurer of the General Union of Bank Workers, has said:

This government is a failure in every sense of the word. It can accomplish nothing for the people and it must go. I support another civil disobedience—uprising—because the first uprising has been stolen from us. The hardship should have been removed, not intensified. The government is unworthy of controlling the educated Sudanese people's affairs.

As for the DUP's withdrawal, it came at the right time. The people received the initiative with a positive response and the concord government received it with barricades. At the same time, commodity prices were increased. The withdrawal concerns the government because it means its condemnation from within.

Where Are People's Rights?

Hasan (Halyu) Ishaq, chairman of the union of the Public Roads and Bridges Authority's Guards, Messengers and Office Boys, has said that he supports the withdrawal. I support government participation in any capital and I also support strikes. (No employee getting a limited salary has been consulted on the minimum wage increase, which was initially 28 pounds and which has now been raised to 60 pounds. The workers' rights, allowances and promotions for years of service are frozen and there is no health insurance or medical care for an employee working under [hard] conditions. The worker has nothing. All his earnings go to the market and his salary does not cover the essentials). [passage omitted]

Muhammad 'Aqid Muhammad 'Ali, deputy secretary of the General Union of the Ministry of Defense Workers:

[Words omitted as pbulsihed] rejected by everybody. We cannot be surprised by the right hand raising the prices insanely and by the left hand taking everything away. The strikes are a natural consequence of the country's situation.

The time was not right for the withdrawal. They [DUP] should have withdrawn when the the Constituent Assembly, (urged by the prime minister), refused to its their peace initiative. Its initial silence meant support for this resolution. Therefore, we do not absolve it. [passage omitted]

Where Are Uprising's Charters?

Muhammad Najm 'Abd-al-Nur, a free entrepreneur: The government must be toppled in this phase because it has failed to tackle the people's problems. I demand that the government resign and I support the civil disobedience, the formation of a DUP government and adoption of the uprising's charters. The withdrawal is a serious practical step. This is an honorable position which adopts the peace initiative. Peace is the only way out of the current economic crisis.

Unionist Leaderships' Meeting With al-Mirghani

We interviewed 'Abdullah al-Hasan, the Lawyers Union chairman, who said:

Three days ago, we and the unionist leaderships which participated in the uprising, including lawyers, doctors, engineers and teachers, met with Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani. We also had with us the general secretary of the Businessmen's Union. It was our opinion that the conditions we are undergoing dictate that the DUP should be present in the government and should refrain from responding to the intrigues of the two allies, namely al-Ummah Party and the Islamic Front, because it holds the issue of Sudan's peace in its hands.

DUP's Withdrawal Is Master Blow

Explaining the consequences of the government's raising of prices, 'Abdullah al-Hasan went on to add that the government demolished the uprising masses' last hope of seeing the economic hardship lifted. Consequently, the masses marched forth to the street to denounce the government and its leaderships. At this point, the DUP announced its withdrawal from the government. It is my opinion that this step on the DUP's part is a strategic tactic and an effective political step. This withdrawal is founded on two elements: The DUP's rejection of the economic pressures and its rejection of the position the two other parties took toward the peace initiative in the Constituent Assembly.

Unionist Grouping Supports DUP

Regarding the DUP's call for the formation of a national salvation government and regarding the Unionist Grouping's position on the slogans the DUP raised in its most recent statement, 'Abdullah al-Hasan said that the DUP is a part of the national front which comprises the democratic forces, the unions and the federations. It is a front defending peace and democracy.

Unionist Grouping Demands Government Resignation

Clarifying the Unionist Grouping's position vis-a-vis the current political situation and the Sudanese street's eruption as a result of the latest economic measures, al-Hasan said: We in the Unionist Grouping demand that the government resign, that an interim government be formed and that general elections be held.

No to Islamic Front

Expressing the Unionist Grouping's opinion on the [Islamic] Front's participation in a national government, al-Hasan said: The Islamic Front has no place in such a government because the front's participation in the [current] government has destroyed whatever remained of the uprising's principles. The front's positions have entirely opposed the Sudanese people's hopes and aspirations. The Islamic Front insisted on controlling the Ministry of Justice and has, consequently, monstrosly attacked the judiciary's independence by shelving the cases concerning banks. It also raised al-Turabi's plan as an alternative to the [democratic] front plan. This is in addition to the Islamic Front's shelving of the case against Sharif al-Tuhami and to the latest laws which have broken the camel's back. Consequently, the Sudanese masses set forth to denounce the Islamic Front, its leaders and its cabinet ministers. Those rejected by the people have no place in a national government. [Passage omitted]

Nothing But Political Maneuver

Nadiyah Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Ghani, an employee:

The DUP's withdrawal from the government is nothing but a political maneuver intended to save the party's face in the wake of the national government's refusal to support the peace initiative it had adopted. The withdrawal has followed continued threats of withdrawal from the government since the first coalition. The DUP's departure may not have much impact. The biggest proof is the concord government's failure to provide the essentials of life to the citizen and the offhanded policies embraced by the government, such as increasing the prices of sugar and of important goods. What is important now is to first stop increasing the prices. [Passage omitted]

Al-Tahir Bakri, member of the Unionist Grouping and secretary of the General Union of the Ministry of Defense Workers:

The current economic crisis reflects the regime's crisis and its failure to solve the country's political problems—a failure which has reflected negatively on the country's economy. I believe that the solution to the country's problems is embodied in rescuing the economy through the national economic conference's resolutions and by adopting the Sudanese peace initiative. I believe that the DUP's withdrawal and its proposal for the formation of a national salvation committee representing all the modern forces can provide the outlet from this crisis.

We have also interviewed (Harry Paolo Lovali), deputy chairman of South Sudan's Political Grouping, who has talked to us about the latest resolutions, saying:

These increases are not well-studied. Through them, the government takes more than it gives, considering that the wage increase costs 2 million pounds whereas the revenue generated by the sugar price hike alone amounts to 3.5 million pounds. We get this figure if we multiply the 500,000 tons of sugar [consumed] by the 2.5 percent sugar price hike. Moreover, the sugar price increase will automatically lead to raising the prices of numerous commodities connected with sugar. Other prices will also automatically rise as a result of the increased tax on imports and on local products which will be saddled with [increased] production costs. The wage increase has nothing to do with this increase in prices.

The government has failed to solve the security problems and to establish peace. The economic problems are tied to politics.

As for the DUP's withdrawal, he said: This does not concern us. However, we do stress that the government has failed and that it must resign. An interim government must be formed and preparations must be made for new elections. From the outset, this government had no unified programs and no clear policies. It has muddled through and we have reaped nothing but lots of talk.

Ahmad Mahjub Hajj Nur, member of the Islamic Front's Executive Command, has said:

The DUP's withdrawal from the government does not solve the problem. Rather, it is tantamount to disavowal of responsibility, which the DUP is wont to do whenever things get tense. If the people have become certain that the current government has failed to solve the masses' problems, then it must resign. The responsibility is collective and all must shoulder it, but not through individual withdrawals and by blaming a certain faction.

Samir Abu-Samrah, a well-known information man, has said that the DUP's withdrawal from the government has confirmed that this party stands with the masses. He also said that this government must go, unregretted.

Recommended Economic Measures

45040184 Khartoum AL-USBU' in Arabic 1 Jan 89 p 3

[Article by Zayn-al-'Abidin Ahmad Muhammad and Shadiyah 'Arabi: "What Follows Decision to Cancel Increases and Taxes"]

[Excerpts] We Are More Concerned With Democracy

Dr Ma'mun Muhammad Husayn, the Unionist Grouping deputy chairman: [Passage omitted] The way to overcome the wage-increase crisis and, in fact, the economic crisis is summed up in one fundamental item, namely end the ongoing war that is draining all of the countries resources, as well as the foreign aid, and that is obstructing development activity in all parts of the country. The country has no way out other than establishing peace in accordance with the Sudanese peace initiative agreed by al-Mirghani and John Garang.

People Must Produce

Dr 'Abd-al-Rahman Abu-al-Kull, the Doctors Union chairman:

It is our opinion that the burden that will emanate from rescinding the latest decisions to increase the prices and to implement the wage increases can be countered by what will be made available to the government through the Sudanese peace initiative. What is being spent on the war in the southern part of the country will constitute a big asset that can bolster the government economically. We reject any alternatives calling for levying direct or indirect taxes or revenues on the people because the people have suffered enough. The government must look at the people with compassion so that they may find the honorable life they were denied throughout the administration of al-Numayri, the murderer. The citizen must then turn to production in the unions, the factories and free enterprise so as to develop the country and enhance productivity. The citizens must also let their conscience be their ultimate judge and overseer. The labor unions and federations must become as eager to task their members who fail to adhere to enhanced productivity as they are eager to enhance their living conditions. The unions' role must not be confined to demands and strikes but must include improved productivity and services.

As to the slogans calling for toppling the government, he said: Why should a government be toppled if it is committed to the requirements of an honorable life for the citizens? [Passage omitted]

Cancellation of Increases Is Positive Step

'Abd-al-Kabir Adam, Professionals and Technicians Union chairman: I view the government's response to the unions' and masses' wish as a positive step and as a direct reason for ending the strike. This response also represents a victory for the unionist movement and

confirms that this movement can achieve its aspirations through complete unity. We are invited to a meeting to be held on Monday—a meeting which the prime minister has called the social conference. Proper alternatives to direct and indirect taxes on workers will be presented.

I believe that destroying the democratic regime cannot be one of our objectives. The federation has decided to stand against any axes seeking to destroy democracy through a military coup. Our position will be to declare a political strike to safeguard democracy. This constitutes a commitment to the charter to defending democracy.

Despite the government's response to the ordinary citizen and its decision to cancel the increases and taxes, the government statement has noted that there are alternatives to the taxes levied in the previous decisions. We believe that alternatives are necessary. This is why the federation has decided to present what it believes to be suitable alternatives for discussion and debate with the other federations.

We Support Masses' Causes

'Awad 'Ata Muhammad, the Khartoum University Student Federation's acting secretary general: [Passage omitted] We call for rationalizing government spending by reducing the cabinet ministries to the smallest number possible, by steering clear off luxury spending and by reducing the constitutional jobs as much as possible. We are aware that the Sudanese economy is experiencing a real crisis. This crisis can be overcome by crystallizing the opinions of all the leaders, unions and of the Constituent Assembly. We are in the process of inviting all the political leaders and the unions to get together and draft a clear visualization to overcome Sudan's and the Sudanese economy's current crisis.

The current situation is a democratic one created through the people's constitutional and legal institutions. Therefore, we see no justification for the slogans calling for toppling the government. If there is any need for such toppling, then it must be done through the people's representatives in the Constituent Assembly. I wish to stress that the masses' causes are nonnegotiable, regardless of the current situation. Our federation, as leader of the student movement, shoulders a historic role which it must perform remotely from one-upmanship. We urge all the political leaders and the unions to put the country's interest above partisan and self interests. [Passage omitted]

There Should Be No Capitulation

'Umar Qumayhah, Blue Nile Company:

The [price] increases have been illtimed because they came shortly after the wage increases and made the government look like a party that gives with one hand and takes away with the other. This price increase

affected local products, thus reflecting a flaw in either production or distribution. The price increases have also given the impression that the government does not understand the people's problems. When cigarette prices are increased, people will stop smoking and, consequently, government revenues will decrease. The [popular] demands were made in the light of a prolonged study. The government then decided on this illogical increase in prices.

The government must not capitulate to compromises as long as it cannot find the resources to cover the cost of these [wage] increases. It would have behooved it to let the unions participate in finding a solution in the first place. However, the unions will now support the government with full conviction.

The DUP is a centrist party and it has gained in popularity with its peace initiative. But there is no credibility between al-Sadiq and the movement and this has obstructed the peace efforts. We hope that the coming elections will be held on the basis of ability and not on a partisan basis so that we may enhance the democratic procession.

We support the unions' stance vis-a-vis the government and we thank the prime minister for including the unions in the effort to find the ideal formula for overcoming the crisis.

Bright Face of Democracy

Ibrahim 'Abdullah, Merchant, South Khartoum: Making a decision and then backing down on it means the entrenchment of democracy. The government responded to the masses' demand when the masses proved their position is solid. The government deals with the unions with civility. This is a bright aspect of democracy.

Strikes are a must for achieving demands and our strikes have achieved their objective.

We regret al-Sadiq's statements that the labor demands are political or partisan demands. They are in fact intended to improve conditions that must be improved.

Agreement in opinion is essential to safeguarding democracy. If it is proven that the government has failed, then it must be toppled.

Coming Year To Be Good Year

Sharaf-al-Din Ahmad Idris, a former unionist: If the DUP continues to support the government, then it is certain that democracy will continue. We must not forget the strength of the unions and of the Unionist Grouping. It is obvious that it is a considerable strength.

The concord government has not faced strong opposition. This is why decisions were made and passed automatically. The DUP's withdrawal at this particular

time is a master blow. There is a strong opposition now. We stress that the coming year, which represents the remaining life of the current democracy, will be a good year because the government will take the opposition into consideration and will study its decisions carefully. If the government fails to provide the essentials the citizen needs, then it is more honorable for it to resign. This government consisted of three parties and no decision it made was opposed by the ordinary Sudanese. But now this ordinary Sudanese has to be taken into account because he is the party who brought the government to power and he is the party who will correct it if it errs.

We hope that democracy will continue and we hope the DUP will be entrenched as a weighty and mass-supported opposition. [Passage omitted]

Reports Discuss Causes, Significance of Sugar Crisis

Refinery Shutdowns Reduce Supply

45040136a Khartoum AL-ASHIQQA' in Arabic
8 Nov 88 pp 10-12

[Article by Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahim]

[Text] The serial continues, shortage upon shortage. First there was bread, then there was oil, then soap, meat, milk, then bread once again. Before the citizen would awaken from these successive blows which caused his heart to bleed, another one would come along, more extreme and violent than the last.

However, the shortage this time is connected to a commodity of major importance for all the people, above and beyond the set scientific facts, which are that sugar is absolutely the cheapest carbohydrate people use. If we view it from the standpoint of food value and thermal energy, sugar has special importance in every Sudanese home and every Sudanese family.

Sugar has acquired such importance since it has become the most important source of food and acquisition of energy now that fruit and vegetables have become non-existent and their prices have risen sky-high, and people have turned toward sugar as a basic, important commodity to compensate for their lack of other foodstuffs.

Supporting this statement is the rise in the trend toward sugar consumption among citizens. The average per capita consumption in the Sudan was 11.1 kg per annum in 1956, and this figure has leapt to 19 kg per annum.

Indeed, the average per capita consumption rates in some regions of the Sudan, such as Khartoum and the Central and Northern Regions, exceed most continental and international levels, without exception.

What Is the Reason?

Mr Abu Fatimah 'Abdallah, minister of state in the Ministry of Industry, pointed out that the reasons for the current shortage the country is witnessing in sugar can be ascribed to the shortage in the productive capacity of the mills last season, which came to 25 percent. He attributed the aggravation of the current shortage to the depletion of the entire reserve as far as sugar is concerned and the laxity which manifested itself in distribution channels.

Mr 'Abd-al-Wahhab Ahmad Hamzah, the economic affairs commissioner in the national capital district, said that the scarcity of sugar nowadays results from the great gap caused by the shutdowns in operating mills, the failure to provide quantities sufficient for the capital's needs, since the capital has not received its share, and the shortage of imported quantities, which have not met actual needs, in addition to the problem of shipment, which the General Sugar Trade Organization supervises, causing the shortage of sugar.

Repercussions of the Shortage

In spite of what officials have said about the reasons for the scarcity of sugar, the repercussions of the shortage on the citizen and the market have been great. Citizen Muhammad Sati 'Abd-al-Karim (a mechanic in the industrial area) stated frankly, concerning the effect of the lack of sugar on him and on his family, "Sugar is considered a basic item as far as any family goes, and the lack of sugar means the addition of further suffering to our sufferings in other areas.

"When the sugar shortage got out of hand, we were compelled to buy sugar on the black market at 7 pounds a pound after we had exerted great effort in persuading the seller and many middlemen had intervened. Here I can wonder about the secret in the disappearance of the sugar from the official markets and its abundance in large quantities on the black market, and how these people managed to obtain these quantities in spite of what the authorities allege, that they are tightening surveillance of the markets.

"It is true we cannot live without sugar because of the absence of foodstuffs in the market. From this podium I am requesting the official bodies to intervene quickly to solve this shortage."

Have Mercy on Us!

Citizen Fawziyah Bashir, a housewife who lives in West al-Jarif, uttered a resounding cry for help and pointed out that they were surprised at the absence of sugar from the cooperative societies and the markets as well and that the absence of sugar meant harm to children, because sugar was the only foodstuff they relied on—if it is lacking this means their loss of the energy that enables them to stand in bread lines or run after transportation,

due to the scarcity of other food alternatives, and fruit or other things do not exist so that it would be possible to make up for our loss of a commodity basic to our lives like sugar.

Impropriety in Distribution

While this is the testimony of the people suffering the pains, the testimony of Mr Muhammad Salih Wada'ah, secretary of the local cooperative federation of the region between the two Niles, bore many facts related to sugar. When we asked him about the reasons for the scarcity of sugar and its disappearance from the markets, he said: "Although I have been and still am an official in the cooperative area for a period of more than 10 years, no such shortage occurred previously and we had not imagined the absence of sugar in the capital for a period of more than 2 weeks, although we know that toward the end of the year a scarcity would occur in the sugar commodity, and this kind of scarcity would be covered by imports.

"However, it appears that what happened this year has changed this policy, and in my opinion, because of the disasters which have occurred the Ministry of Commerce has given reserve sugar authorizations and these quantities have been distributed to ward off the effects of the disasters, which in turn have caused the deficit in the reserves of this commodity.

"However, the most important reason for the scarcity of sugar and the aggravation of the shortage are the channels of distribution, since the overlap in channels of distribution constitutes a main reason for the lack of sugar. The most valid example of this is that individuals share in more than one cooperative society; an individual shares for example in a society at the jobsite and at the same time shares in a society in the area of residence, and consequently this sort of person acquires more than one share which it would have been possible to give to another person who was in greater need of it. If there were a single channel from which a person obtained his share this sort of scarcity would not have occurred.

"There is another important side to this question, which is that a person obtaining more than his needs proceeds to sell it to someone else at high prices, and that leads to the appearance of the black market and the emergence of other practices which harm us all.

"It remains finally for us to point out that the Ministry of Commerce must determine its needs in full so that such shortages do not occur and if any deficiencies appear in any commodity it must hasten to round them out by importing, so that what happened this year does not happen."

Cards Are the Solution

Mr Bashir al-Wasilah of the Daym al-Basatab Society in East Jabal Awliyah' said that the reason for the current

sugar shortage is the failure to import adequate amounts to cover the deficit. The government in past years would prepare a reserve before the shortage occurred. This year the government has not performed its duty and moved to meet the shortage by confronting the people's needs only after all the quantities of sugar were used up in the first place.

"Second and more importantly, there is a lack of equity in sugar distribution as a natural result of the disruption in the distribution channels and overlap in the distribution of the commodity, since there is more than one channel through which the consumer can obtain sugar.

"In my opinion, if the distribution channels are not consolidated, there will be absolutely no abundance at all, and the sole solution to this problem is ration cards, because they are characterized by accuracy and there will be no problem regarding sugar if such cards are given to the council or the cooperatives, so that anyone will be able to obtain his rights in full without infringing on the rights of other persons."

Also confirming this approach was Mr Ahmad al-Rifa'i, chairman of the Grade Three, Quarter 6 Extension cooperative. He also pointed out that the reasons for the lack of sugar may be ascribed to the authorizations which were issued to some regions to let out quantities of sugar to ward off the effects of the disasters. He wondered where the quantities of reserve sugar which were always set out to cope with this kind of shortage went.

Leave the Matter to Us

In his justification for the causes of the sugar scarcity, Mr 'Abd-al-Wahhab Hamzah pointed out "The problem of shipment, which the General Sugar Trade Organization supervises, is a basic reason for the exacerbation of the shortage, and we have presented this matter to Mr 'Abdallah Muhammad Adam, deputy director general of the organization, who said:

"The organization's responsibility in fact is to ship quantities of sugar from the mills or Port Sudan, if there is any quantity which requires shipping. However, the fact is that there have been no quantities of sugar awaiting shipment recently, and the organization has not shipped them. Consequently, the talk about the organization's failure to perform shipping activities is devoid of truth, because the quantities produced locally in the 1987-88 season have been consumed."

"The causes of the shortage in my view are the low production, and the mills have not been able to cover consumption. Consequently a gap has occurred, and this means that it has been necessary to import quantities of sugar from abroad to cover the gap. As to the question why they were imported at the right time [as published], this is the responsibility of other bodies.

"Here I can point out that the government is serious on the subject of importing a sugar quota and there are contracts to import 25,000 tons which the effort is currently being made to provide. There is a ship from Western Europe transporting 4,025 whose arrival is expected this week. In the concern to provide the capital's needs, the business of shipping 1,000 tons of sugar from Kusti and 3,000 tons from Port Sudan is taking place at present and it is expected they will arrive at any moment.

"However, the matter must not stop here. Rather, the matter must be left totally to the organization as an agency responsible for providing sugar domestically and abroad, with financing from the Ministry of Finance. The organization carries out the operation of storing it, shipping it and distributing it to all regions, and it is better able to carry out the tasks of providing sugar to citizens in areas where they are present."

The Editor

Now that the picture and the reasons for the shortage and means for remedying it have become clear, a number of facts remain which require treatment. The first is that the Ministry of Commerce knew in advance that a shortage would occur in the sugar commodity through the ministry's calculations on production estimates and consumption expectations, but the sugar commodity reserve on 1 July 1988 was about 135,000 tons, adequate for the country's consumption requirements until 1 October 1988, which required meeting consumption during the months of October and November by increasing the strategic reserve by about 120,000 tons. This should have been provided by importing quantities of sugar from outside the country. These were not imported and consequently the shortage occurred.

Second, as regards the price of the sugar commodity, its prices multiplied by 400 percent from 1964 to 1988, and in spite of that this commodity has not been available in the markets, leaving a number of questions about pricing policies.

Finally, it remains to be said that the citizen is harmed by any shortage that occurs in any commodity, first and last, and that temporary palliative solutions are not feasible—rather, it is necessary for us seriously to seek the sources of the disruption so that we can come up with radical solutions to this sort of shortage, so that it does not occur in the future.

Kananah Sugar Smuggled Abroad

45040136b Khartoum AL-RAYAH in Arabic
27 Nov 88 p 1

[Text] The Sudanese magazine AL-A'MAL issued in English stated in its issue of 10 November that in negotiations held recently, in which European countries

expressed their readiness to offer aid to African countries to develop these countries' sugar industry, a neighboring African country had refused offers from the European countries.

The magazine said that the members of the African party to these negotiations refused to defray the costs of developing the sugar industry in their country, pointing out that they had obtained their requirements from the sugar produced in the Kananah mill in the Sudan.

The magazine pointed out that the Kananah mill is not permitted to export sugar to these countries, confirming that these African countries obtain their needs for Sudanese sugar by smuggling and the pursuit of other unlawful methods. AL-RAYAH points out that Dr 'Abd-al-Wahhab 'Uthman declared in the Constituent Assembly last week that smuggling was the biggest problem facing the sugar supply in the country, and Dr 'Ali Hasan Taj-al-Din, following his return from a visit to the Darfur Region recently, declared that large amounts of sugar are being smuggled through this region to Central Africa and Chad.

Islamic Front Accepts Idea of New Government
EA2702213489 Khartoum SUNA in English
0910 GMT 27 Feb 89

[Text] The National Islamic Front [NIF] of Dr Hasan al-Turabi, current foreign minister, agreed on the formation of a new national government based on a clear-cut charter. In a statement released here last Saturday, [25 February] the NIF renewed its commitment to the application of Islamic shari'ah in the country.

The statement, which was released as a response to the memo submitted by the Army to both the cabinet and Council of State, expressed the NIF's satisfaction over the distinguished performance of the Armed Forces and renewed NIF confidence in the Army's capability to preserve security and stability in the country. The statement called for allocating an emergency plan to meet the Army's pressing needs and giving top priority to rehabilitating the Army's basic infrastructure.

Al-Turabi on Southern Situation, Regional Ties
PM2802115889 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 21 Feb 89 p 9

[Interview with Sudanese Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr Hasan al-Turabi by Muhammad Mahjub; place and date not given]

[Excerpts]

['UKAZ] What is the aim of your current visit to the Kingdom?

[Al-Turabi] I have stopped over in the Kingdom en route to Kuwait. I took this opportunity and held a meeting with the foreign minister, His Royal Highness Brother Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, to discuss some of the matters

concerning the two countries and the Islamic world. Later I will leave to attend the the meetings of the Arab League's ministerial committee entrusted with finding a solution to the Lebanese problem.

A round of talks was held with key Lebanese politicians, and we will continue that dialogue by holding another round of talks with key religious leaders. We will try, by determining the cause of the dispute, to produce terms for national reconciliation, God willing. The committee's proceedings are private so that the atmosphere will be suitable for finding a settlement to the conflict in the near future, God willing. I would like to assure the Arab public that there is a possibility of resolving the question. [passage omitted]

['UKAZ] How did Nasir fall, and what preparations has the government made to recapture it?

[Al-Turabi] Nasir is a remote town on Sudan's southeast border. It has experienced what was experienced by some of the other border points through which the rebels bring their supplies. They besieged a number of garrisons and cut off the supply route linking central areas of southern Sudan to these remote areas. So the Sudanese forces had to muster in other centers and abandon Nasir. The government believes that the escalation of military action inspires doubts about John Garang's credibility since, although he pretends to be making tireless efforts to achieve peace, he is actually trying to create a relaxed atmosphere on the Sudanese side by talking about peace while seizing every available opportunity to further his military operations. And that prompts us first and foremost to strengthen our defenses, provide security for Sudanese territory, and protect its citizens. Without such an approach we will be unable to push the rebels to the negotiating table. By this I do not mean that we must eradicate it by the force of arms, but that we must, rather, push them to the negotiating table, that is, away from the battlefield. Within the framework of peace endeavors, rounds of talks are being held between Ethiopia and Sudan. Furthermore, some other parties are trying to mediate. The government is currently preparing a new peace initiative which will embody the positive aspects of previous initiatives. [passage omitted]

['UKAZ] What truth is there in the reports that Torit is now under siege?

[Al-Turabi] Torit is guarded by a military garrison, but it is a remote town close to the Kenyan-Ethiopian borders. It is also close to an area which the rebels seized previously. Supplies reach Torit via Juba, capital of Equatoria province. Military convoys are now sent to Torit regularly to ensure continuous supplies to the military garrison. Many citizens have rushed to the town seeking protection by the Armed Forces against rebel operations in the region.

['UKAZ] Was [State Council] Chairman Ahmad al-Mirghani's visit to Iraq connected with seeking military aid from Iraq?

[Al-Turabi] The visit was not made for that particular objective. But obviously Sudan is exposed to a military threat on its borders, simply because it is one of Islam's and Arabism's inlets. So any support it receives from its brothers constitutes support for common concepts shared with its Arab brothers. [passage omitted]

[UKAZ] In a press statement you expressed Sudan's desire to restore Sudanese-Iranian relations. How true is this?

[Al-Turabi] Obviously, with the end of the Gulf war, endeavors began to normalize relations between the Arab states and Iran. Sudan maintains relations with countries beyond Iran, such as Pakistan, India, China, and Japan, and these are very strong relations. Sudan is also likely to extend its diplomatic representation to other countries in Asia. Sudan will develop its relations in West Africa and East Asia and possibly Latin America, but without burdening Sudan with excessive expenditure. [passage omitted]

Juba Authorities Urge Exposure of Rebel Activities

*EA2302200989 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic
1435 GMT 23 Feb 89*

[Text] The town of Juba, capital of Equatoria Province, was subjected last Monday [20 February] to random shelling by the outlaws, resulting in the deaths of 11 people, including 6 children and 2 women. Twenty-five others were wounded, including a pregnant woman and 7 children. A responsible source at the Armed Forces General Command said in a press statement that 46 houses, or grass huts, were destroyed in the shelling.

The regional governor, Morris Lawiya, has issued a statement in Juba in which he announced that the Armed Forces have taken the necessary measures to deal with the situation. He appealed to citizens to report immediately to the Armed Forces or the regional government any movement of outlaws outside or inside the town. The statement explained that the outlaws who carried out the random shelling had infiltrated the town. Their objective was to inflict losses on civilians and their possessions. This is shown by the fact that the shelling was directed at the residential areas of the town.

Northern Official Calls for Greater Assistance to Region

*45040147 Khartoum AL-RAYAH in Arabic
9 Nov 88 p 5*

[Article by Abu Bakr al-Sadiq Muhammad al-Amin: "Dr Majdhub al-Khalifah, Deputy Governor of the Northern Region: Redevelopment of the Regions Requires Establishment of a Specialized Commission Detached From Government Bureaucracy"]

[Excerpt] I asked Dr Majdhub al-Khalifah, deputy governor of the Northern Region, "What have you offered

the citizens of the Northern Region during the 2 and 1/2 months which have elapsed since your selection for this position?" He answered me quickly and spontaneously, "We have offered ourselves to the region. I started carrying out my mission before taking the oath in Abu Dulu'. Since then I have been either in a car, an airplane, or on foot, and we have been inspecting the damaged areas of the region to the point where we have covered almost all of them. We are still continuing the effort." Indeed, Dr Majdhub al-Khalifah was appointed to his official position during the latest ordeal the Northern Region has gone through, which required that he and a number of leaders in the executive system in the region be, in effect, a "permanent emergency room" to cope with the situation.

This conversation took place in this spirit, beginning after 1500 hours, after all the regional government offices in al-Damir were empty following a field tour by the deputy governor. As the honored reader will observe, he concentrated on the immediate problems the region is suffering from without dealing with the perspective of remote future activity, because the burden of the current circumstances will provide an opportunity to go beyond them to the more distant ones only insofar as he realizes benefits in dealing with the former and guaranteeing that they are not repeated. Now, on to the minutes of the conversation.

Dr Majdhub al-Khalifah talked first about preparations for the winter agricultural season, which has actually started. His excellency was on a tour which included the region extending from Karimah to Wadi Halfa, the region which supplies the Sudan with a number of basic crops such as Egyptian fava beans, wheat, beans, spices, and so forth. The deputy governor of the Northern Region asserted that this season was one that offered much promise, since it was expected that the areas farmed would witness an increase estimated at 40 percent of the former land areas the flood waters and waterways had inundated. Concentration would be made on wheat, because that it is a strategic commodity and importing it cost a lot.

The process of distributing seeds to farmers has now started. This includes wheat, bersim, green beans, fava beans, and vegetable seeds. Distribution takes place in coordination between the regional Ministry of Agriculture and the branches of the Agricultural Bank.

In response to a question from us on the fear of farmers in the Northern Province that the wheat seeds being distributed now are similar to those which were distributed by the Agricultural Bank in the 1987 season, due to which the wheat crop failed that season, Dr Majdhub stated that the seeds planted this time are Sudanese, produced in the Sudan, and suited to the circumstances of the Northern Province.

Concerning the gasoline situation, which often leads to failure in the winter agricultural crop, Dr Majdhub said

"The quantities that now exist are very adequate, but for further assurance we are now working to provide a reserve in the Karimah warehouses, and we will use the maximum capacity of these warehouses for the first time in years. River transport has also been consolidated to contribute gasoline from Karimah to the Dunqula areas. Concerning fertilizer, the Agricultural Bank has provided a quantity of 5,000 tons of urea and phosphate fertilizers, and they are being distributed in the Dunqula-Marwi-Shindi area. However, a need remains for an additional 5,000 tons, to be provided in cooperation with the commodity aid department in the Ministry of Finance and the al-Jazirah Project."

Locusts

May we therefore understand that there is no obstacle threatening the success of the winter agricultural season?

Dr Majdhub continued, "The sole obstacle is the faltering efforts to fight locusts, since the only plane operating in the fight against locusts has broken down because of the problem of oil. The minister of state in the Ministry of Agriculture has promised to provide five airplanes to operate in this area. The regional government, for its part, has allocated the sum of 45,000 pounds for work on the ground. In spite of that, the situation requires quick action. The danger exists and is threatening the farmed areas, especially in the 'Atbarah river areas, the waterways surrounding Shindi, and the al-Dabbah and Dunqula areas."

Following the concerns of the winter season, the conversation moved to the daily cares of the citizens and the issue of the availability of supply materials and market discipline.

The deputy governor of the Northern Region said, "We can say that the supply situation in the Northern Region in general is not bad. The flow of flour and wheat has started from Port Sudan to the region, and the 'Atbarah mills are working in a manner that inspires confidence, following the provision of flour. I was on a visit to those yesterday and we can guarantee that they will keep going. As for sugar, during these 2 days October's share was released at a rate of 50 percent to all areas of the region, and I do not think that there will be a problem with sugar now that the refineries have started production. It is true that there are supply problems in the Halfa and Dunqula regions because of shipment generally, and contacts have been signed with the competent bodies to reduce these difficulties."

Three [as published], Supply Problems

Dr Majdhub continued, "However, I believe that the problem is one of consolidating the channel of distribution and supporting the regional Ministry of Commerce's technical personnel as well as stimulating the cooperative societies and holding their conferences and general assemblies with the objective of expanding channels and opening

membership. In my estimation, there has been a great disruption in the present distribution system in terms of its ability and its transactions, and it is encumbered by doubts on the part of citizens. This, of course, will require effort from the central government.

"For our part, however, we are intending to study the issue of surveillance by the people, which, in my opinion, is a necessary, vital question, and it is possible to round out the control of the markets and distribution channels only through this. We will benefit from the national capital district's experience in this regard."

After that, the discussion moved on to the health situation in the region, especially in the aftermath of the latest floods and rains and the news which told of an epidemic of certain contagious diseases in the form of a plague in a number of areas of the region. These are strange diseases.

The Fevers

"Doctor" Majdhub al-Khalifah stated "The diseases actually exist in the areas of Karimah, 'Atbarah River, and Barbar, but they are ordinary diseases in medical terms. They are embodied in a rise in the rate of incidence of typhoid fever, whose occurrence has been an anticipated matter, especially following the collapse of a large number of health installations and the deterioration which has occurred in environmental health. The regional health department in the north is suffering from a mediocre level of personnel and resources. In spite of that, it has made attempts to spray the areas at risk. There also are volunteer societies which have contributed without limit in an estimable fashion, such as the Islamic Aid Agency, the Islamic Medical Society, and the Society of Doctors. However, the problem is embodied basically in the shortage of insecticides and medicines, and we have informed the central Ministry of Health to allocate emergency insecticides and medicines to cope with the situation.

"In general, the health situation continues to need monitoring and close observation. We are intending to hold a regional health conference for the purpose of discussing health conditions in general in the region, and the emergency situation. [passage omitted]

Military Spokesman Denies Split Among Officers
EA2402193589 Khartoum National Unity Radio
in Arabic 1245 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] The official spokesman of the People's Armed Forces has denied the existence of any disagreement among the commanders and officers who attended the commander in chief's meeting over the memorandum submitted by the Armed Forces to the chairman of the State Council, the prime minister, and the National Defense Council. This is in denial of what was reported by one of the newspapers. The official spokesman

accordingly confirmed that all the participants of the meeting had exchanged opinions and arrived at a unanimous conclusion and complete agreement. The Armed Forces had never been more united than they were today and any attempt to split their ranks was doomed to failure, the spokesman added.

Press Reforms Provoke Strong Media Reaction

Labor Leaders Opposed

45040212 Khartoum AL-AYYAM in Arabic
30 Jan 89 p 4

[Article by 'Umar Ahmad al-Hajj]

[Text]

Sword of Hostility to the Press

Yusuf al-Shanabli, secretary general of the Journalists' Union, said, "The draft law that the minister of information presented to the Council of Ministers for quick approval coincides with what the prime minister announced in his recent statement before the Constituent Assembly regarding the establishment of press regulations. It also agrees with the minister's repeated statements (under the pretext of protecting national security and the country's reputation abroad) that the time has come to issue restrictions on journalism and curb journalists.

"Ever since the minister of information assumed his post in the present government and unsheathed the sword of hostility against the press, we have continued to warn that he was about to promulgate a law repealing constitutionally guaranteed press freedoms, superseding the transitional government's 1406 AH [1985-86] press law, and shelving the proposed press law that journalists have approved and in whose drafting they participated with former Information Minister al-Tom Muhammad al-Tom.

"The expected attack on journalism and journalists cannot be separated from all the steps taken some weeks ago to dismiss and drive out personnel of certified ability in the service apparatus and public companies, replacing them with political and party loyalists. In coming days, this plot will extend to professional and labor union councils, now that the recent strike has shown the government the extent of its isolation. The government has therefore decided to use the weapon of repressive legislation. The new restrictions to be imposed on the press and journalists contain the basic line of attack for the next phase of this plot. They would guarantee that no government actions would be exposed and no government policies criticized by the press. If this law is approved, the Sudan will have fallen completely into the circle of internationally disapproved press restrictions. Press freedoms are the true mirror of the guarantee of fundamental democratic freedoms in any country. The

International Charter of Human Rights and the principles of UNESCO and of international and regional press organizations affirm this and lay down the importance and priority of media and press democracy."

How Was This Law Drafted?

Professor Ishaq Shaddad, secretary of the Lawyers' Union, commented as follows: "Since the law's final features have not yet become clear, one cannot comment on it in detail. However, we are opposed in principle to any tendency to restrict freedoms, particularly freedom of expression. Clearly, the features of the law that have emerged to date indicate that it tends to restrict freedom of opinion and expression. Governments always turn to this when in a state of bankruptcy. It is clear that this government of ours has failed to solve the people's basic problems of food, medicine, and security. It has also failed to solve their main problem, the civil war in the south and the bloody conflicts and armed plundering in Darfur. All that the Sudanese people have left is the freedom to cry out; and this they want to forbid! Numayri's government tried to do it for 16 years and failed. Now, unfortunately, our government that came after the uprising is trying to repeat the same experiment, instead of finding solutions for difficult problems. We reject the tendency to restrict party and union activity on the pretext of establishing new regulations for political parties or any attempt to prohibit their activities. This is an important principle. Our system rests fundamentally on the principle of a plurality of political parties, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom to form parties. If these structures and foundations are disturbed, the foundations of the democratic system itself will collapse."

He added: "About how this law was drafted we know only that qualified bodies such as the Journalists' Union and Lawyers' Union clearly did not participate and were not consulted. This is a wrong and unacceptable method. It is the method of the May regime—drafting laws in isolation from popular and pertinent organizations with a real interest in these laws. This law is clearly an attempt to legislate what the prime minister mentioned in his recent statement before the Constituent Assembly. It is an attempt to rein in the people's revolution and the opposition to all the recent policies. We in turn call on all popular organizations, especially those of the Trade Union and National Grouping, to give special attention to this matter. They should expose it, uncover it, and lay it bare from the outset. They should oppose it as contradicting the foundations of the democratic system and popular uprising."

Press Council or Employees' Council?

Mr Hajju Ya'qub al-Shaykh, president of the [Government] Employees' Union, said, "In its general outlines, the draft press law that the minister of culture and information recently submitted to the Council of Ministers prohibits publication of news about the Council of

Ministers, the Council of State, and other bodies, except with permission from the government's official spokesman. This contradicts the foundations of the democratic system under which we now live, because the people have the right to know what is happening in the various halls of government. Government institutions have the obligation to put the people in possession of the facts. The purpose of this law is to shackle freedom of information and restrict freedom of publication, opinion, and expression.

"The only freedom the Sudanese citizen now has left is freedom of expression. If he loses it, given the suffering he is enduring, then he has lost everything. Government in the country will have turned into a civilian dictatorship. The information media of this civilian dictatorship—radio, television, and press—will enjoy complete freedom. However, the Press and Publications Council to be formed by cabinet decree under the proposed law will be merely a council of employees obeying government orders. Individual ownership of newspapers will also be forbidden. Thus these newspapers will be monopolized by well-to-do circles who will have as much power within these newspapers as their shares. Freedom to publish will become a monopoly of well-to-do government supporters."

United Stand With Journalists' Union

Mr 'Umar Ahmad al-Amin, secretary of the Bank Union, said, "The culture and information minister's decision to present the new draft press law to the Council of Ministers comes as the culmination of this minister's previous attempts to take away freedom of the press. It clearly reflects this government's annoyance with the press and democratic practice and is thus a clear trend toward a civilian dictatorship. It is the beginning of an overt battle against the forces blocking the complete backsliding of this regime. It therefore demands condemnation by all forces of the uprising. They have begun with the press, but are out to bridle all democratic institutions."

He added: "This law must be rejected and resisted. Our people are known for creating all the means of resistance. In the experience of resisting the draft criminal code we have the clearest proof of this."

"We call on all forces of the trade union movement stand united with the Journalists' Union in opposing this action led by the minister of culture and information, who is threatening information institutions with destruction."

Anti-Union Conspiracy

Dr Najm-al-Din, secretary of the Physicians' Union, said: "We are against laws being passed behind the back of the bodies with a real interest. Such a procedure has been repeated many times against the unions, beginning with the Unions Act. The unions were not given a role in

drafting it or even given cognizance of it. This points to the conspiratorial style in which laws are passed for the benefit of particular parties. The matter really calls for wonder and amazement.

"There is a conspiracy against the unions. Recent experience confirms the importance of consulting with the unions and asking their opinion on national issues, given their vanguard role.

"The union's executive office is in the process of submitting a memorandum on these laws in the next few days, demanding that the affected unions be given a share in their drafting."

Plot To Silence Mouths

The head of the Pharmacists' Union, Dr 'Awad-al-Karim Mustafa, said, "The aim of this plot is to silence mouths and besiege the newspapers, the one forum over which the government has no control, now that it controls and dominates radio and television. We are in principle against passage of any law at this time, before settlement of fundamental questions relating to the country's constitution, the national constitutional convention, and questions of peace and the economy. Any other direction is unacceptable because deviational.

"The draft press law recently presented to the Council of Ministers has appeared at a time not in keeping with current priorities among major problems. It appears at a time when the people are preoccupied with worries about basic subsistence. Certainly, the people really affected by the law in question—the journalists—were not given a role. By its passage, if it takes place, a civilian dictatorship will have been officially legalized. As the Pharmacists' Union, we will take a clear stand against this law through the Trade Union Grouping, in which we are members. We will express our viewpoint in the Federation of Professionals and Technicians. We will do all this in coordination with the Journalists' Union."

Call for Journalist-Drafted Code of Honor

Dr Jalal-al-Din al-Tayyib, secretary of the Khartoum University Professor's Union Organization, said, "We believe that press freedom in a liberal democratic system constitutes the basic support of democracy. Any tendency to curb its positive role means the beginning of a retreat from the fundamentals of democracy. There is no doubt that the majority of Sudanese newspapers played a positive role in the national movement and fulfilled their patriotic responsibilities of monitoring, observing, and uncovering what was happening in various agencies of government. They played an active role in mobilizing and shaping society's general tendencies. I say this even though one unfortunately notices that recently some newspapers have turned to opposing persons. Certain tendencies, albeit few, have in fact emerged to deflect the press from performing its overall national role."

He added: "Without my having read the details of the law in question, some basic issues derive from the principle of participation. Journalists ought to have been given a role in drafting the new law, considering the history and traditions of Sudanese journalism and the responsibilities and functions journalism should perform in the period after the uprising. Disregarding journalist participation in drafting the law involved a flagrant violation of the foundations of democracy. As for the ban on publishing the secrets of certain state agencies, except with permission from the official spokesman, we wonder who determines whether something is secret or not. The duty of the press is to inform public opinion of what is happening in the various agencies of government and to monitor them. Through their professional experience, journalists understand with their patriotic sense what is against the national interest. This issue can be regulated by journalists themselves in the form of a professional code regulating professional ethics. Formation of a Press and Publications Council under the supervision of the minister of culture and information involves an attack on press freedom. The minister of culture represents the executive, while the press is an authority of its own, with its own tasks. Supervision of the press by the executive constitutes an inroad upon the rights of the press and limits its freedom. It would be a sword drawn against the press. This authority should be in the hand of the judiciary. The correct procedure is to ask journalists to draft a code of honor defining the ethics of the profession. Journalists must be given a full role to play in any law regulating the press. Press regulation must take place in a context that affirms the independence and freedom of the press and promotes professional ethics and journalism. We fear that approval of this undemocratic law will be the beginning of a series aimed at trade unions and democratic organizations and even at the basic rights of citizens."

Government Press

Hashim Muhammad Ahmad, head of the Engineers' Union, said, "A resolution and law like this means that the press will be 100-percent governmental and that all opposition will be lacking. The purpose is to silence mouths, out of dissatisfaction with hearing the other opinion. It reflects impatience with democracy. Such a press will be a pale thing without any positive role to play. It will become like any newspaper under a dictatorship. This tendency is the extension of a large plot on the horizon—a tendency to openly renounce the charters of the uprising, one after the other. It contains justifications for retreating from them. This trend has indeed already begun. The proofs standing before us on the horizon indicate this. Instead of removing vestiges of the May regime, the government is working to preserve them. There are signs that confirm this. These include the draft press law recently submitted to the Council of Ministers, the laws on civil service and public service, and the fact that Sections 26AB and 24 on arbitrary dismissal were not repealed, even though their repeal in

the context of administrative reform was recommended by meetings of civil service leaders and the committee designated to draft the civil service and public service law. We are afraid that the Council of Ministers has rejected the recommendation and done what it wants. The law on civil service and worker accounting contains sections making it possible to dismiss and fire any worker or employee not upright in his work, or even one who becomes persona non grata, by administrative accounting according to the law.

"The only forum through which we express our issues, problems, and concerns as workers is the press. Any limitation or restriction of its freedom, and we shall not be able to perform our mission properly. We want a clean press. The laws should turn toward creating a press. Silencing should affect those who work against the people. We want laws governing journalistic ethics and methods and remedying the decadence found in some newspapers.

"We ask why the principle of discussion was not applied to the draft press law. Why were previous draft laws concerning the press ignored? Why didn't the executive authority consult the fourth estate and ask for its opinion in drafting a law concerning it? This law must be shelved in order to make room for broad discussion and debate including all the various parties. Then we can arrive at something sound."

NIF Says Reforms Warranted

45040212 Khartoum AL-RAYAH in Arabic
30 Jan 89 p 5

[Article by Yasir Muhammad 'Ali: "Media Guidance a Developmental Necessity"]

[Text] (I wrote this article some time ago, but was unable to submit it for publication until we had heard about the government's attempt to draft a newspapers and publications law. I am not so much defending the government's position here as expressing only my own opinion.)

The Sudan is among the most backward Third World countries and among those that have to the greatest degree purchased the still hidden cultural values that it vaunts. Fearing Sudanese influence on the surrounding region and consequent harm to their own strategic interests, the "haughty" do not want conditions in the Sudan to stabilize; thus the Sudan will not be able to awaken its people's ambitions and create an outlet for its resources.

They therefore constantly try to suggest to us through their agents and information media that we cannot live without their aid, and that if they become angry with us, our entire nation will turn into bread lines.

The media are the most powerful weapon and the one most capable of performing this vicious role of convincing us that we were created to submit to them. History,

however, says that we were masters of the world and shall again have mastery, if we learn the means to obtain it.

The Jews long ago realized the importance of information. By deception and cunning they were able to gain control of all information media. Thus, only through them do news and ideas reach us. News and ideas always bear their scent or something of their flavor, though in small doses we hardly perceive; but when the news deals with an issue about Islam and Muslims, the smell is strong and the taste is bitter.

Under the state of political relaxation achieved by the Sudanese people, with freedom of publication and expression afforded to everybody and his brother, the "haughty" are delighted to intensify their media activity and spread their poison amongst us. The climate is right, and there is no one on guard or to take account.

In this age of ours, information moves on legs of advanced technology. The information media of those who lack such technology have become lame media.

Since we live in the Middle Ages technologically, they feed us dollars in addition to advanced technology, since dollars are more effective and have more influence over some people's minds than technology.

It would be no exaggeration for me to say that newspaper ownership or magazine publication in the Sudan have become very easy for anyone who has money, because the dollar—"Damn George," as one of our colleagues named it during his student days, after the picture of George Washington on it—has become what talks and writes in some of our newspapers, proving the truth of the adage, "Money talks." [in English in source]

Anyone who knows how to lie, invent rumors, and concoct charges (or as the colloquial proverb says, "Sweet tongue, little goodness")—all that people of that kind need do (they always pant after money and fame) is pawn their consciences to any quarter that is offended to see the Sudan Muslim. They are many and have embassies in Khartoum, to the good fortune of that kind of person!

Thus we have been confronted with newspapers that are elegant, well produced, and skillfully printed; for many people buy the most attractive newspaper, just as many people buy the most exciting newspaper. Since newspapers have multiplied to the point of being almost unsalable, one has to turn to various expedients to move the goods. Here is where the great tragedy and crime against citizens and the country lies. It is easy to buy newspapers and journalists and thereby direct the press and public opinion, according to whoever pays most. As we all know, the ones who pay most are those who possess millions of "Damn Georges." Naturally, they are the forces and agents of "haughtiness" in the region. In a word, they are those who are offended to see the Sudan Muslim.

Thus we have been confronted with newspapers adopting attitudes contrary to our national interests and in a style at variance with our values and traditions. Perhaps, Professor Mustafa al-Rafi'i's words give a true picture of what is written in such newspapers. In an article by him in part 3 of his book, "The Pen's Inspiration," entitled "Newspaper Bums," he says: "If God were to change much of what is said in newspapers into something other than letters, it would all fly up in the face of readers as flies." I think the newspapers in al-Rafi'i's time adhered more to ethics and values. I don't know what al-Rafi'i would say, if he read our newspapers today.

So the government must have a role controlling the various information media, because it is they that guide public opinion according to the cultural direction they take.

There must be a definite framework defining the course of media activity in accordance with our cultural direction. This annoys some people, because they want to express what they like (or what their benefactors like), even if it is opposed to the general attitude or harmful to the national interest. As a pretext, they say that we live in a democratic climate and that complete freedom of expression must therefore be granted—just as if we had no ends or goals we were seeking! I marvel that many of these people troubled by the as-yet-unimplemented press and publications law hold ideas and beliefs that have found their way to power in some countries. Of course, the unfortunate people of those countries never chose the holders of these ideas or appointed them as their rulers; most of them came to power by night on the back of revolutionary tanks, while people were asleep. In political lexicon, such a leap is called a military coup. In the lexicons of "comrades," it is called a "popular revolution."

In those revolutionary countries, there is no such thing as a right of expression for those who do not believe in the ideology of the state and the ruling party. Anyone who demands his right to expression is arrested and beaten, until he becomes convinced that the party thinks for him and expresses for him. If he is a troublemaker who demands his right to expression, they take away his right to life. How many hair-raising tragedies have occurred in those revolutionary countries! But there is no space here to mention them.

I find it strange that these revolutionaries here are calling for freedom of the press, which, in their heart of hearts, they do not believe in when they gain control. We have given proof and will clarify it further in the second part of this essay, God willing!

They want the state to give free rein to the press to express the various attitudes of society. Thus, they consider themselves an authentic attitude in the society, not interlopers.

One of the pretexts used by opponents of the press and publications law is that our press must be free to express

what it wants, and that this law imposes on it restrictions that finally may be a form of dictatorship.

But can they guarantee us that under the canopy of press freedom corrupt and decadent ideas will not infiltrate among us, so that people's attention turns to trivial things, instead of building and development? This is happening now, and the situation will certainly develop. The areas of fashion will be news of famous people in the various areas of "creativity." We must remember that the famous "creators" in the world today are people of indulgence, promiscuity, hedonism, and shamelessness. This kind of printed material has come into view in the form of sections or columns in newspapers and magazines. It is still clothed with garments of modesty and shame, but these will certainly disappear as soon as competitors in this field become numerous. Of course, such attitudes completely contradict what we are striving for in accordance with our Islamic attitude. You cannot bring a person a book, turn out the lights, and then tell him that he should read it. Long ago the poet said:

"If you tend your sheep in lion country and fall asleep, the lion will tend them for you!"

Reforms As Unifier

45040212 Khartoum AL-USBU' in Arabic 31 Jan 89 p 3

[Article by Dr Sulayman 'Uthman in "Word of Truth" column: "Why the Uproar About the Minister of Culture and Information?"]

[Text] The minister of culture and information has made many decisions since taking over responsibility for the ministry. Some of these decisions have raised an uproar, thus confirming that the minister's decisions have touched a sensitive spot. Without approving or opposing the minister's policy, the attempt to deal with chronic problems in the ministry is something positive. Whether the minister is right or wrong, he deserves a reward and praise for this.

Ever since the uprising, a call to reform the Culture and Information Ministry's information media and organizations has risen from within the ministry and from the ordinary man in the street. The Information Ministry has seen reform attempts during the administration of every previous minister, in accordance with each one's view of the chronic problems of the information media. The decisions that Professor 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad has made do not exceed the powers exercised by every reform-minded minister in his ministry.

Opposition to the culture and information minister's decisions has in many cases turned to personal aspects far from objectivity. Some people's opposition to Professor 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad's policy has sunk to a low level of defamation and personal insult inappropriate for those who claim to be concerned with national interests. In my opinion, the real worth of the attack on the policy of the minister of culture and information is

no more than an expression of partisanship on the part of the left or of personal interest by some who are harmed by the reform.

People have disagreed with the minister of culture and information about sections of the newspapers and publications law that have leaked out. People have disagreed with him about the manner in which this law was drafted. Thank God that the Council of Ministers General Secretariat has affirmed that the council has made no decision about the newspapers and publications law. But when difference of opinion sinks to the level of innuendo, insult, and defamation practiced by some aggrieved persons on the pages of the party press, such wrong journalistic action by those charged with the practice of journalism necessitates the passage of a just and decisive law to regulate the practice of journalism and preserve the soundness of the democratic system.

The passage of a law as important as the newspapers and publications law requires that the parties connected with journalistic activity participate in discussing it and agree on the fundamental principles guiding journalism to serve the nation's interests and protect freedom of expression and the flow of information. Before the minister of culture and information embarks upon presenting the draft press and publications law to the Council of Ministers and the Constituent Assembly, we call upon him to give working journalists and media specialists a role to play in studying the draft law.

TUNISIA

Increased Responsibilities for Governorates Defined

Regional Councils Proposed

45190034a Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French
8 Jan 89 p 5

[Article by Khaled Boumiza: "A Decentralized, Collegial Government"]

[Text] As a result of decentralization, governorates and governors will soon be endowed with greater decision-making and executive powers, as well as broader prerogatives regarding the development and administration of regional affairs.

It should be recalled that the decision to involve regional authorities in and make them responsible for the task of development was made by the chief of state in 1988. As a result, the governor, president of the municipality, the "Omda" or other regional and local officials, will no longer be mere agents carrying out policies defined at a higher level and not adaptable to the specificities of the region.

It was therefore decided to set up regional councils. The bill is already in the hands of Chamber of Deputies committee members and will probably be passed before the end of the month.

Governorate Elevated to Rank of Public Community

The decision to broaden the prerogatives of the governorate is apparent in the first article of the bill creating the regional councils. The bill would thus elevate the governorate to the rank of a public community. The first effect would be that the governorate would no longer be a mere territorial district of the country. Rather, it would henceforth have civil status and financial autonomy.

According to Article 22 of the bill, like public communities, the governorates would have supplementary budgets. Consequently, all credits once allotted by the government to development programs in the different governorates and to regional programs would henceforth be transferred to the budgets of the governorates managing them. The governorate would also have the right to have public and private property, and the government would transfer to it all elements of public property administered by it in the different regions. One innovation, however, is that power in the governorate would no longer belong solely to the governor, but to a collegial unit. Article 1 of the bill states "that a regional council is entrusted with management of governorate affairs."

The council would be made up of the governor as president but also, and for the first time, deputies elected in the different districts of the governorate as members. The council also includes the presidents of the municipalities and the members of the rural councils.

Meetings of the regional councils may be attended by the heads of the regional directorates and no more than ten prominent persons with experience in the economic, social, cultural or education fields, these to be appointed by the governor.

One detail: Meetings of the regional councils would be public and open to citizens. However, the governor could order that meetings be kept secret. Decisions would be made by a consensus of the council or, in its place, by a majority vote.

Prerogatives for Councils

Aside from having responsibility for all economic, social, and cultural matters in the region, the regional council would be called upon to draft the regional development plan within the general framework of the country's economic and social development plan. It would also rule and hand down opinions on all programs carried out by the government or public enterprises within the boundaries of the governorate. It (the council) would be responsible for carrying out regional projects decided upon by the different ministries.

One substantial prerogative granted to regional councils: issuing apportionment and building permits and drafting urban planning programs. In addition, they would be empowered to rule on the governorate's operating and equipment budget and collect all taxes and duties for the community. Actual preparation of the budget would be the sole prerogative of the governor-president of the regional council. Before its execution, the council is to debate and pass the budget.

Another point of importance: It would be possible to oppose a decision of the regional council through the courts or even institute legal proceedings against the council. However, this would only be possible after sending a letter of explanation to the minister of interior, who oversees the regional councils. The complaint would be admissible two months after such a letter.

Rural Councils

By virtue of Article 49 of the bill, another structure would be created on the local level and outside the municipal districts: the rural council, endowed with an advisory role.

This council would be called upon to give its opinion on all matters of an economic, social or cultural nature concerning the region's present or future.

It would also be empowered to notify regional authorities and therefore, the regional council, of citizens' problems and present their complaints and the solutions proposed. Finally, it should be stated that the bill would impose on all regions the obligation to conform to the new provisions no later than 31 December 1989.

Transfer of Authority Listed

45190034a Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French
19 Jan 89 p 5

[Article by K.B.: "Broad Prerogatives for Governorates"]

[Text] Substantial prerogatives once concentrated in central administrative departments and the ministries will be transferred to the governors.

Part of the budgets will also be transferred to the regions and therefore, to the governor-presidents of the regional councils.

This action cannot fail to have a most beneficial effect on the development effort, which will be strengthened and more apt to move forward thanks to the elimination of administrative procedures.

The decisions affect 13 out of 21 government ministries. Measures concerning the delegation of power, prerogatives or the transfer of ministry credits involve various departments.

Prime Minister

Delegation of prerogatives: Henceforth, regional councils will handle the restoration of mosques and have the necessary latitude to open subscriptions for mosque construction except in the case of foreign aid.

Governors will therefore have complete latitude to authorize the initiation of competition to recruit municipal employees. However, such competition will retain its national nature in the sense that it will be open to all Tunisians, even if they no longer belong to the region.

Credits transferred to the regions: For the Office of Prime Minister, such credits amount to 900,000 dinars under the restoration and protection of mosques (Section I of the budget). For Section II of the budget, the prime minister believes that all new proposals are of a national nature or exclusively concern the central administration and therefore cannot be transferred to the regions.

Social Affairs

The delegation of power or prerogatives concerns: the organization and application of SIVP (Introductory Professional Training Programs) for university and high school graduates; adoption and approval of applications and training programs in regional enterprises; approval of training and employment contracts, as well as supervision of the conditions for application of such contracts; determination of the region's needs in terms of training and employment, while ensuring that these needs are in keeping with the region's development conditions; approval of proposals of the advisory committee to the regional office of the CNSS [National Committee for Social Solidarity] concerning the choice of the exemplary worker and the social advancement prize; and the granting of circumstantial aid to workers of companies in difficulty and the granting of credits and subsidies to companies that launch social projects for their employees.

The approval of the governor is also necessary for the granting of low-income Social Security Fund housing.

The governor will have complete freedom to examine cases of collective dismissals of workers by enterprises in the region.

The governor will also be responsible for reviewing applications for handicapped cards and the actual granting of such cards, which result in certain privileges. He will also draw up the list of needy families benefiting from the national aid program. The governor will consider applications for prostheses for the disabled. In addition, he will henceforth issue authorizations for the opening of day nurseries.

Regarding credits to be transferred to the regions by the Ministry of Social Affairs, they concern: credits pledged

(230,000 dinars) and payment credits (140,000 dinars) for the construction of regional social action centers and the development of rural girls centers in Bouthedey, Bou Salem, Meknassi, and Gafsa.

A total of 720,000 dinars in committed credits and 170,000 dinars in payment credits will be transferred to the regions to build handicapped centers in Gafsa, the center for handicapped persons with no means of support and the model social welfare center.

Transport

Prerogatives delegated to the governors are also important. They concern: the granting of authorizations to haul agricultural goods and merchandise and rural transport authorizations; the granting of authorizations to operate rental vehicles within the governorate and in accordance with criteria determined by the Ministry of Transport; determination of the number and the granting of authorizations to operate taxis within the confines of the governorate; the granting of authorizations to operate driving schools; the granting of driver's licenses and the grey card within the confines of the governorate; review of violations of traffic rules and the making of decisions on whether such matters are to be settled in a friendly manner or submitted to the court. The governor will have complete freedom to set up a regional committee to take up matters relating to suspension of the driver's license. Credits transferred to the regions by the Ministry of Transport involve the construction of overland transport stations for passengers (400,000 dinars in budgetary commitments and 300,000 dinars in payment credits).

Commerce and Industry

Insofar as the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is concerned, it must be noted that governors at the conference emphasized that prerogatives proposed to the delegation should rather be delegated to officials from the regional departments and administrations in question so as to enable governors to turn their attention to other tasks closely related to the region's development action. Nevertheless, governors will have the power to grant: professional cards for merchants dealing in agricultural products; authorizations for wholesale commerce in all organized sectors, such as food products or building materials; authorization for the secondhand goods business; authorization for trade in alcoholic products and determination of the number of such authorizations, while informing the ministry in question; authorization for middlemen, real estate agents and commercial advertising.

The governor will have the same prerogatives as the minister regarding economic supervision and price controls in wholesale trade.

Governors may take all proper measures concerning annual import authorizations on the regional level and

within the general framework of the national import program adopted by the ministry relating to the supplying of manufacturers and merchants.

Regarding transferred credits, they will total 15,000 dinars in pledged and payment credits to equip regional administrations and 60,000 dinars to build other administrations in the regions.

National Education

The following powers will be delegated to the governors: administrative control of private and public institutions of primary and secondary education in the normal schools and education inspectorships; organization of the return to school and academic life in schools and lycees; application of the education policy regarding the opening of the school to its environment; directing the work of the regional scholarship commission; the granting of authorizations to open private schools; and the drafting of programs of school construction, expansion and equipment.

A total of 6.9 million dinars in budgetary commitments and payment credits will be transferred for the construction of schools, clinics and restoration. Another 13.7 million will be transferred to the regions for the construction and restoration of high schools. To this sum must be added 3.87 million in commitments and another 300,000 in payment credits to expand schools and lycees.

Health

The following prerogatives will be granted to the governors: decisions on opening basic health centers and supervision of all activities of basic health organizations; supervision of private pharmacies; the granting of authorizations to open centers for persons practicing paramedical professions, such as nurses, midwives, kinesi therapists and oculists; the granting of authorizations to open private clinics and order the closing of such clinics; application of medicine on the job in terms of proper respect for hygiene, prevention of professional diseases and guaranteed employment; control of the environment and pollution in cooperation with the organizations involved.

Regarding credits under Section II of the Ministry of Health budget to be transferred to the regions, they concern: construction of a hospital in El-Hamma (200,000 dinars pledged and 50,000 in payment credits); expansion of the Pasteur Institute (100,000 dinars in commitments and 50,000 in payment credits); equipment for hospitals (700,000 dinars in committed credits and 400,000 for payment). This is in addition to 2.4 million dinars in budgetary commitments and payment credits for the restoration and modernization of equipment.

Equipment and Housing

Also important in this area are prerogatives delegated by the central administration to governor-presidents of the

regional councils. They concern: the proper distribution of project studies among architects and city planners in order to provide more opportunity to and encourage those settling in the regions; the broadening of the prerogatives of the Regional Market Commission. On this subject, it was decided to retain the ceiling of 1 million dinars for markets that may be under its competency. It was also decided that markets whose credits are allocated to the regions will remain under the competency of the Regional Market Commission. Power will be delegated to the governors to authorize normal land operations even with a foreign share, except for buildings belonging to foreigners or whose ownership predates 1956. The adoption of final apportionment without having to consult the central administration, this with respect to apportionment in regions where there is a development plan. Finally, 6 million dinars in budgetary commitments and 20.7 million in payment credits will be transferred by the Ministry of Equipment and Housing to develop roads, rural trails and build up the road system, in addition to the 770,000 dinars in budgetary commitments and 300,000 dinars in payment credits for the construction of regional directorates in Ben Arous, Jendouba and Sidi Bouzid.

Communications

All prerogatives now enjoyed by the regional directorate of communications will be delegated to the governors, along with the drafting of the program of communications, the PTT [Post, Telephone, and Telecommunications] and their execution.

The governor will therefore have complete latitude in determining priorities regarding the granting of a telephone line. Some 400,000 dinars will be distributed to the regions for post office construction.

Youth and Sports

Only two prerogatives will be granted to regional authorities by the Ministry of Youth and Sports: authorization to operate nursery schools and the power to order their closing; execution of plans to build and protect regional youth training centers, children's centers and rural youth centers.

Credits allocated for playing fields, swimming pools, gymnasiums and sports complexes will be distributed among the regions, in addition to credits allocated by the ministry to youth centers, youth hostels and regional training centers. This represents 6,579,000 dinars in budgetary commitments and 1.28 million in payment credits.

Agriculture

One of the most important prerogatives delegated to the governors by the Ministry of Agriculture concerns the law of November 1983 on the protection of farmland. The regional authority henceforth has complete freedom

to declassify land and change their designation. Governors will also have the power to issue the certificate granting national domains and therefore total management of such land within the area of the governorate, as well as prerogatives to grant authorization to quarry building materials on land previously requiring ministerial authorization.

The Ministry of Agriculture has also transferred over 47 million dinars in budgetary commitments and payment credits to regions for the completion of major projects (well drilling, Matmata project, national park project) and the construction of regional administrations in Tataouine, Ben Arous, and Beja.

Culture and Handicrafts

Regarding the cultural sector, authorization to operate a video club or movie theater will be within the governor's competency.

Ben Ali Addresses Governors

45190034a Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French
18 Jan 89 p 4

["Text" of speech by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to the closing session of the governors' conference, 14 to 17 January]

[Text] At noon yesterday, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali presided over the closing session of the governors' conference held at Carthage Palace from 14 to 17 January.

The text of the chief of state's message is as follows:

In the name of All-Merciful God, I am happy to welcome you here, respected governors, on the occasion of the closing session of your periodic conference, and thank you for the efforts you have made within the framework of the work of this conference. I have reviewed its agenda and followed its outcome with the greatest interest.

On this opportunity, I wish to tell you of my satisfaction with the resolutions and recommendations developed by your conference on extremely important issues. This is all the more true because we are on the threshold of a new year of particular political importance with, on the one hand, the organization of early presidential and legislative elections and, on the other, the necessary boost to be given to the regions through basic administrative reforms to be implemented through decentralization.

Concerning the elections, I would remind you that you represent the president in your region as the prime executors of the government's guidelines and options in all fields. Consequently, I would urge you to do everything necessary to guarantee the success of these elections, ensuring their proper material planning and providing close followup and supervision when our fellow

citizens exercise their voting rights. It goes without saying that the administration must observe the most complete neutrality and transparency in order to guarantee honest elections so that they will faithfully reflect the people's will. After all, the government whose foundations we tirelessly work to consolidate essentially derives its legitimacy and sovereignty from the people.

Spirit of Responsibility

As for regional action, we have now passed on the preliminary statute for regional councils to the Chamber of Deputies, following its consideration by the Cabinet.

Through this new approach of the regional councils, we have tried to strengthen the powers of the governorate, inculcate a spirit of responsibility in those who watch over its fate, and emphasize the role incumbent upon them in their region's development process.

These councils, which will gradually become operational in 1989, will be responsible for the conception, execution, and followup of regional development programs. They will also have complete latitude to express their opinions on the ministries' draft programs for the region and participate in programs of national scope.

In order to execute these plans, we have already begun to reorganize regional directorates of certain ministries, and we hope to pursue that effort in terms of the requirements of action to be waged.

In order to win this formidable wager on the regions and provide them with every possible advantage in the development process, it was necessary to implement the principle of decentralization precisely as the regional councils began to take up their new responsibilities. At the same time, your conference had to study the prerogatives which the ministers must yield to you in order to come to terms with the complexity and slowness of administrative processes, eliminate bureaucracy and delays, stimulate investments and ensure that the average citizen could manage his affairs with the required speed and effectiveness, thereby achieving harmony with the administrative structures that today must be a faithful mirror of the options of the new era. In that connection and to cite but one example, I have learned of certain administrative blockages relating to the requirement that young people produce proof of military deferment. I am announcing today that no such document will be needed in the future.

Reduction in Red Tape, Shortening of Delays

Decentralization implies that any decision involving a given region must come from that very region. It also requires that red tape be reduced and delays shortened. In addition, personnel will be assigned to the governorates who are capable of handling these new tasks and coordinate the financing and execution of projects between the different departments involved.

The revival of regional departments and the creation of such councils are aimed at making the governorate primarily responsible for managing the affairs of its inhabitants, endeavoring to solve their problems and make their economic activities easier. It must also remove obstacles due to bureaucratic procedures and the tendency to hide behind regulations that we are willing to revise, if necessary, to go along with change and make it a tangible reality.

Just as I will count on your concern and determination to carry out these orientations, which are of major importance in the life of the Tunisian Administration, I also wish to remind you that the first duty of a governor is to try to create a healthy sociopolitical climate in the region and establish an atmosphere of agreement and harmony among all citizens at a time when our country is in a phase of crucial change and resolutely trying to establish a state of law and place its institutions on solid foundations.

On this occasion, I would like to tell you once again that a state of law and institutions cannot be an end in itself and that our determination to establish it and protect it has nothing to do with any slogan or tendency to follow a current. On the contrary, it is a need and a fundamental principle, for a state of law is the best framework for the achievement of integral development through the creation of suitable psychological, political, and legal conditions and the participation of all sensitivities and live forces.

Freedom and Credibility of Information

Incoherency, backbiting, sensationalism, one-upmanship, and the tendency to sow doubt in minds—all practices not worthy of us. Moreover, they have nothing to do with the principles of freedom and democracy. We are attached to freedom and the credibility of information. We accept constructive criticism and seek to enlighten ourselves by any responsible opinion.

I also wanted to tell you, as heads of the regions, that it is not acceptable to take advantage of the young and confuse them with slogans. Nor should certain schools and lycees become a theater for any settling of political accounts, sending students out into the streets on the most absurd pretexts. This is not civilized behavior; far from it. I would even say it is a crime against our nation.

"Yes" to responsible democracy and political action emerging from profound reflection, but laxity and anarchy have no place in a state of law and institutions. Thus it is that while calling upon you to watch over the rights of the citizens and help them manage their affairs, I would ask you to face up to any form of abuse.

Now is a time for seriousness and hard work, and our country's situation does not allow us to waste our time on idle gossip and one-upmanship.

Let us therefore leave aside anything that might divert us from meeting the fundamental needs of the citizen, to wit, work, housing, water, and electricity, and let us join our efforts to achieve that objective.

New Airline To Increase Number of Routes
45190034b Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French
19 Jan 89 p 4

[Article by S.B.M.]

[Text] "Behind the times" would scarcely be the phrase to describe him. Lotfi Belhassine, 42 this coming August, living in Paris for 3 decades, has pushed ambition to the point of setting up his own airline company, Air Liberte France, without even seeming to touch it. For over a year, a man worth several million dinars has imbued the firm with "contagious enthusiasm," according to right-hand-man Marcel Roynel.

Based in Orly and Lyon-Satolas, the fleet, which has four new 169-seat McDonnell 83's, serves all of Scandinavia, Moscow, Ankara, Amman, Dakar, Cairo, and the Maghreb, with 64 crew members and 43 hostesses. This air transport company provides businesses with custom-tailored flight service: congresses, seminars, and other similar meetings. The maiden flight was on 26 March. What does it feel like to head such a prestigious business? "It gives me pleasure," he immediately replies with good humor. He who does not move forward moves backwards. In a month, "Liberte will open its route to India." A nice slogan signifying that its "birds" will shuttle back and forth between Paris and New Delhi.

Small steps of progress are not his strong point; he prefers great leaps. To prove it, he will set up another charter company in July, Air Liberte Tunisie, serving a European clientele going to Tunis, Monastir, or Djerba. In the meantime, Lotfi Belhassine, for whom business is not without pleasure, has proposed to French finance figures and a whole army of newsmen an excursion in southern Tunisia. Far from the Paris winter, 169 guests landed in Tozeur at 0900 hours yesterday morning, and suits and ties suddenly mixed in the sun with the blue jeans and shirts seen in photographs.

Present at the airport: Ahmed Smaoui, minister of transportation; Jean Bressot, French ambassador to Tunisia; and many other prominent figures. Together and amidst great fanfare, they will invade the desert, visiting the grandiose sites of Chebika, Tameghza, and the Thelja gorges. The celebration will build to a climax with lunch in the heart of a palm grove, planned down to the last detail. "Lotfi is Tunisian. Consequently, we wanted to be included in this inaugural flight to congratulate him with all our hearts and welcome his friends," the minister explained.

PAKISTAN

Bhutto Said Not To Deserve Credit for SAARC Conference

46560015a Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu
7 Jan 89 p 9

[Analysis by Saeed Asi: "The SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] Conference"]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The SAARC Heads Conference held in Islamabad is being proclaimed as a significant feat of the federal government of the People's Party; though the announcement of holding a conference in Islamabad was made at the conclusion of the previous SAARC conference held in Nepal's city of Kathmandu. Therefore, any administration that had gained power in Pakistan in December would have had acquired the honor of hosting the SAARC Conference. If the deceased Ziaul Haq were alive on this occasion, certainly he alone would have been the head of the government and the state. He would have had adorned the garland of success of the 1988 SAARC Conference on his forehead. The leadership of the country now belongs to Mrs Benazir Bhutto. However, the "garland" of someone else's success cannot be adorned on her. The confusion also lies in this, how could success be attributed to a lady.

If it refers to having better relations with the neighboring country of India, due to the SAARC Conference, then in this regard also many fears and suspicions are raging in the hearts of the people. Among them, the first fundamental criticism which has arisen is as to why the basic issue of Kashmir was ignored by Pakistan on this important occasion. The answer given to this criticism is that the SAARC Conference's agenda had already been set, which did not include the discussion of the Kashmir issue. Then, the second answer was as to why those who referred to the Kashmir issue on the occasion of the SAARC Conference, remained silent on this matter for the last 10 years. Also, during that era, why was this issue not raised during any SAARC conference. As far as the answer to the first criticism is concerned, it does not befit a person who heads the SAARC Conference to argue that nothing outside the set agenda could be presented at the conference. Because, it is an established principle that with the permission of the "Chair" any matter outside the agenda could be presented. Furthermore, if the "Chair" himself intended to present a certain matter, could not it be brought under consideration in the conference? Secondly, if, due to some mistake of the past era, the Kashmir issue could not be included in the SAARC Conference's agenda, the current elected government should have fully realized the significance of this issue. In order to express this sensitivity, the Kashmir issue could have been included in the agenda. With reference to this matter, the response to the second criticism was still more inappropriate for the present elected government. Because, if due to the shortfall of the previous administration, the Kashmir issue was not brought under consideration during any previous SAARC Conferences, that cannot be presented as a justification to exclude the Kashmir

issue from the current SAARC Conference. If we intend to continue the mistakes of the former era as our policies, there will be no difference between the past dictatorship era and the current democratic period. Whereas, it has already been revealed by the facts and proofs that our federal government deliberately ignored the Kashmir issue on the occasion of the SAARC Conference merely because the Indian prime minister had visited Pakistan for the first time in 24 years. The aim was to keep him happy under all circumstances during his stay in Pakistan. That is why even the board with "Kashmir House" written on it has been removed from the road along which Mr Rajiv Gandhi was taken to his residence, so that he might not look at the word Kashmir and thus frown. [Passage omitted]

If the old names continue to disappear like this, then God forbid, some day the word Pakistan, too, could come under the fold of being an old idea. If the current elected democratic government realizes its representative status, then it should not present a clean slate by attributing its own mistakes to the past ones. Rather, it should acquaint the nation with those intentions which it considers to be for the betterment of the country and is thus forming into a part of its program.

On the other hand, the agreement reached between Pakistan and India on the occasion of the SAARC Conference that both countries would not attack each other's nuclear installations, is being described as a tremendous feat of the central government of the People's Party. At first glance this agreement does carry a feeling of protection. However, under the existing circumstances and according to those with whose benediction the People's Party gained the central government, could this agreement be admissible? Whereas, the U.S. has already made it clear to Pakistan that it can receive future aid only if it gives assurance of not being a nuclear power. In the background of the agreement described above, therefore, there exists a confession that Pakistan and India both possess nuclear capability which needs to be safeguarded. We do not object to Pakistan becoming a nuclear power. We should make use of our nuclear capabilities. The issue, however, is the solidarity of the current administration. Will an agreement of this nature with India be also digested by the power that placed it on the seat of authority? With reference to this, will not the tale of her deceased father be repeated with her also? Such delicate matters demand utmost attention and contemplation. [passage omitted]

Government Criticized on Kashmir Issue at SAARC Summit

46560015b Islamabad HURMAT in Urdu
16-22 Jan 89 p 12

[Commentary: "Benazir and the Kashmir Problem"]

[Text] The entire country has expressed anguish over the manner in which the national stand on the Kashmir issue has been ignored by the government of Pakistan both prior to and during the recent Conference of the Heads. Before the conference, the signs for Kashmir House were

removed from the highways of Islamabad so that they would not offend the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. Similarly, the Kashmir Liberation League's president, Aminullah and several other workers were detained. Thus, under the leadership of the Azad Kashmir's president, Sardar Abdul Qayum Khan, a 10-party unity comprising of the Azad Kashmir's ruling party and the opposition was unsuccessful to demonstrate its grief, anger and protest against the Indian attitude towards the solution of the Kashmir issue. On 29 December, under the leadership of the Kashmir leader, the deceased Chaudrie Ghulam Abbas, a procession comprising of thousands of Kashmiris marched to the United Nations Observers office facing the Ayub Park and demonstrated in front of it. Besides Islamabad and Rawalpindi, there were demonstrations in the other cities of Pakistan also; whereas in Karachi, the protestors were brutally beaten with clubs. Beside Pakistan, on that same day, the Kashmiris in foreign countries also held demonstrations to protest against the Indian attitude toward the Kashmir issue. They reminded Rajiv Gandhi and the global conscience about those promises that have been made to the Kashmiris of granting them the right to decide for themselves about their future. Despite all that, this issue could not be brought under discussion during the Rajiv-Benazir dialogues. The Pakistan television, for the happiness of the Indian leader, not only avoided broadcasting news about the demonstrations held all over the world, rather as normally was done, they evaded the news about Muzafarabad's weather also in its news bulletin. The Azad Kashmir cabinet, in a meeting, declared this action as being contrary to the Pakistani interests and extremely agonizing for tens of thousands of Kashmiris, and it ordered the Muzafarabad bureau of Pakistan TV to be closed. It is worth mentioning here that after the Rajiv-Benazir meeting, during a joint press conference, when a journalist, with regard to the Kashmir issue, reminded the Indian prime minister, with reference to India's international promise, to hold a public referendum in Kashmir, he very audaciously refused to recognize the problem of Kashmir and said that elections had already been held there, and that the people had utilized their right to vote in the elections. Contrary to that, Benazir Bhutto adopted complete

silence. Thus she, too, evaded the basic responsibility of presenting Pakistan's stand on this issue. In the joint proclamation by the two prime minister, therefore, Pakistan did not consider it essential to present its stand on the disputed issues. Whereas, during the past 10 years, despite India's continuous protests, on every international forum, the deceased president, the former prime minister Junejo, the foreign minister and the Pakistani religious scholars have been raising this issue. Some sectors have affirmed that Mrs Benazir Bhutto and her government's attitude of being "awe-struck by India" is a result of an international conspiracy, which could be aimed at concluding this issue forever. They believe that the reference made to the Simla Agreement by both Rajiv and Benazir with regard to this issue also actually points toward that very fact. Because in the Simla Agreement, by calling the cease-fire line as the control-line, its disputed status has been made ambiguous. With regard to this matter, this sector believes that the statement made a few days earlier by Abbasi, the general secretary of the Sind Bar branch of the People's Party, is meaningful. In that statement, he had proposed to recognize the control-line as the international boundary-line. According to the Kashmiri factions, the Kashmiris neither participated in the Simla Agreement, nor do they accept any of its explanations now. Therefore, it is just futile to give reference of the Simla Agreement for the Kashmir issue.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary leaders of the Islamic Democratic Unity, Chaudrie Shujaat Hussain and Professor Khurshid Ahmed have declared Benazir's silence on this issue as an unforgivable national crime. They said that Benazir, by not stating at least Pakistan's fundamental stand on this issue, has insulted the Pakistani nation. Furthermore, the fact that the Azad Kashmir's president, Sardar Abdul Qayum and prime minister, Sardar Sukkundar Hayat both were not invited to Benazir's dinner reception clearly indicates that behind the curtain, this action also is a chain of that very "conspiracy." They have made it clear that this action on her part is an insult to hundreds of thousands of Kashmiris, and that it is synonymous with not recognizing their democratic rights. Miss Benazir's effort to please Rajiv so much is enough to point out her future intentions.

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