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4 March 1986

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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

GCC SECRETARY DISCUSSES MUSCAT SUMMIT, IRAQ-IRAN WAR

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 14 Dec 85 pp 10-12

/Interview with 'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah, GCC general secretary, by Fu'ad Matar: "Three No's in Interview with 'Abdallah Bisharah; Iranian-Saudi and Iraqi-British Talks Coincide; No Secret Contacts with Tehran, No Stability Before End of War, and No Shame in Security"/

/Text/ Riyadh--Throughout 6 years of GCC activities, we have never felt as we feel today the need for 'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah, the GCC general secretary, to dot the i's and cross the t's for us.

Throughout 6 years of activity, the hardship has never been as intense as it has been now and this hardship is keeping the GCC states sleepless, beginning with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Oman and ending with Kuwait, especially Kuwait.

The sphere of the Gulf states' security concerns has broadened and anxiety has become master of the situation. The current Iranian regime is not willing to come out of the shell in which it has enclosed itself, the uncertain alternative to the rule of the ayatollahs' is not going to storm the arena and impose itself, and thus impose a solution as well.

With the broadening fear of the phenomenon of terrorism that requires the Gulf states to fence themselves in, there is an increasing fear of the presence of a plan, rather a scheme, to drain Arab wealth, thus making it easy to topple the last bastion of Arab steadfastness, which is embodied in money.

Last week at the office of the GCC general secretary, I conducted this analytical interview, and I must underline General Secretary 'Abdallah's brilliance in tackling its important points. The importance of this analytical interview is that it was conducted in the wake of a summit (the Muscat summit), on whose final session's discussions there has been a lot of speculation, and in the wake of confidential resolutions adopted by the GCC states' rulers--resolutions which they have decided to keep confidential, especially in connection with the dispatch of an envoy from these states to both Baghdad and Tehran, meaning Yusuf al-'Alawi, the Omani minister of state for foreign affairs.

It remains to be said that publication of this interview coincides with two important events: The first is the official visit paid by Tariq 'Aziz, the Iraqi deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, to London and the first official visit paid by Ali Akbar Velayati, the Iranian minister of foreign affairs, to Riyadh. Publication of this interview also coincides with statements one hears from Iraqi officials about an extremely harsh Iraqi response, even harsher than ever before, should Iran carry out the offensive for which it has been preparing for months.

Question The latest GCC summit has been distinguished by the characteristic of moving toward moderation and toward a balance in its positions on regional and international issues. How successful has the summit been in dealing with Gulf issues that continue to be the subject of argument between the GCC member states?

Answer To be fair, it is premature to talk of the Muscat summit which ended 3 weeks ago and of the outcome of the resolutions issued by this summit, especially resolutions connected with the issues concerning the area. Insofar as an evaluation is concerned, the matter requires an adequate amount of time. This does not mean disregarding the impact left by this summit on the Gulf movement, which has become stronger at the regional and international levels. All I can say for certain is that the summit studied the area's conditions on the basis of the GCC states' shouldering of a delicate responsibility in insuring the area's stability. The question of moderation and balance is at the core of the GCC's tendency. The position of the GCC states has not essentially changed. What is important is the objective, not the degree of intensity.

Question The issue of Gulf security is still projected sharply as the most fundamental issue in the concerns of the area's states. What new developments are there in this issue?

Answer Let me tell you frankly that there is no shame in security and that there can be no intellectual, economic, or developmental progress without insuring security. This is indisputable. We in the GCC states have come to attach great importance to this aspect in the wake of terrorism's infiltration into the area. Therefore, there is a connection between the terrorism that has reached us and the area's security development. Rest assured that this issue means a lot to us, especially in the wake of the subjugation of Kuwait to terrorist acts that are intended to sabotage and destroy the mainstays of its security. The attempt on the life of the amir of Kuwait and the blowing up of cafes frequented by ordinary people with their children mean nothing other than the murder of innocent people for terroristic purposes. This is no secret to the GCC states, which are trying as hard as they can to avoid what is happening in other countries.

Question What point have the contacts reached between the GCC states on the one hand and Iraq and Iran on the other to persuade Iran to sit at the negotiation table, and why is not a policy of secret mediation efforts adopted?

/Answer/ We cannot take the role of spectator toward what is happening in the Gulf. Our refraining from adopting the secret approach of contacts with Iran emanates from our conviction that awareness cannot be generated in a void. Our open contacts create the state of activity required at the present time to move the situation toward what we view to be a responsibility thrown on the shoulders of the GCC to end the Iraq-Iran conflict. We must not despair. There is a tendency within the GCC on this point--a tendency to the effect that we must not reach a situation where we are compelled to give up. We must proceed to the end until this issue is settled.

/Question/ It seems that Iran's policy is based on leading the area's countries to the state of despair you have mentioned.

/Answer/ The problem is extraordinary and must be tackled in an extraordinary manner.

/Question/ Do you think that the calm at the war front between Tehran and Baghdad means a change in the Iranian position, or is what we are seeing currently the calm that precedes the storm?

/Answer/ From our reading of the Iranian statements and our observation of the positions of Iran's rulers, we conclude that there is no change in the Iranian position. This is due to the indifference the major powers display toward this war. It is our belief that international efforts must be made to help us end this war. Our interpretation of this international position is that this indifference is due to the fact that the war has not spread.

/Question/ Does this mean that the indifference of the major powers is due to the fact that they want this war to spread or because the chances of this war spreading are small?

/Answer/ It is well known that the major powers are concerned primarily with their interests and these interests have so far not been affected by this war because it has not spread.

/Question/ Do you not think that the Geneva summit touched on this aspect?

/Answer/ I imagine so because this area is one of the inflammable areas that can drag the major powers into invisible dangers. It is my belief that the area's issue must have been discussed at the Geneva summit. How? I do not know.

/Question/ Within the same framework, how much has this war, in your estimate, cost the GCC states? Moreover, can the development projects continue if the spending on this war continues?

/Answer/ Of course not. Without an end to the Iraq-Iran war, we cannot say that there is stability in the Gulf area. I cannot persuade the world that there is stability in the Gulf as long as this war continues.

/Question/ Was there, in your opinion, stability before the war?

/Answer/ At least the situation was different from what it is today.

/Question/ Was there more of a kind of relaxation than stability?

/Answer/ You can call it relaxation or uncertainty. Call it what you wish. However, the issue pertains to the priorities of the GCC states which seek a situation beneficial to everyone that persuades the world that it is stable.

/Question/ Can you not define for us the cost of this war for the GCC states?

/Answer/ I prefer not to wade into this issue because I truly do not know. However, I believe that what the area has incurred is a loss by all criteria. Let me also clarify an important point, namely that we in the GCC rely on a strategy founded on dealing with all aspects of the Iraq-Iran war for the purpose of ending this war. Moreover, regardless of how much money the Gulf states have paid, money is nothing compared to the blood that Iraq has paid.

/Question/ The intent of the question is that after the war, the battle of reconstruction follows.

/Answer/ It is better not to anticipate nor to think of crossing that bridge before we reach it.

/Question/ It seems that the process of establishing diplomatic relations between the GCC states and the Soviet Union has begun rolling. Can we have an explanation on the background of Gulf-Soviet contacts and on the significance of their timing?

/Answer/ We in the GCC rely on a formula of cooperation between six states, each of which has its interpretation. Flexibility is a distinguishing characteristic of this council, which is aimed at steering clear of codifying contacts with the world's countries. What is meant by codification is not to get into a mold. We do not fashion molds and this is why you find that each state has its national interpretations.

/Question/ To return to the issue of the Iraq-Iran war, what is the secret that has made mediation efforts with Iran fail so far, and do you expect more years of this war?

Answer In the GCC, we are always careful not to use the word "mediation." We prefer to use the word "efforts."

Question Why?

Answer The word mediation can be applied to the efforts of parties that are far from the area. As for us, we are among the parties that occupy a certain geographic reality, with its existing waters and borders. Mediation is attributed to a party that may come from Mars. But we are in the area and we, therefore, prefer to exert efforts to lead the area back to the coexistence formula that existed in the past.

Question This is insofar as the GCC states are concerned. Do we know why the mediation of the others has not succeeded so far?

Answer Iran has a certain position and a different visualization. This position and this visualization lead to a clash with all the opinions expressed on ending the war.

Question Does the appointment of Ayatollah Montazari mean anything to you in the GCC?

Answer We are not inclined to look at the issues in this manner.

Question How do you view the current Arab situation in light of the new developments brought about by the committees to clear the Arab atmosphere? Moreover, why do we not hear of periodic coordination and consultation between the GCC and the Arab League?

Answer One of the bases on which the GCC is founded is the creation of an Arab accord. Should an accord be absent, then let it be a truce. Should there be no truce, then let it be a silent dispute because we believe that Arab disputes reflect on the GCC states. In the past, a dispute assumed a well-studied information dimension so that the situation could remain within the minimum limits of a feud. But the current situation is different. This is why the Muscat summit's final communique supports and backs the committees to clear the Arab atmosphere. The prevalent belief is that the failure of these committees to succeed will lead to "excesses" in the confrontation and to a gap in Arab relations.

Question You have supported a clearing of the Arab atmosphere. Have you also supported in the Muscat summit the possibility of trying to secure Egypt's return?

Answer This issue was not discussed collectively.

Question It has been noticed that President Husni Mubarak was treated during his visit to Muscat in the wake of the summit as if the issue had actually been discussed. Was this treatment some sort of courtesy or is it due to a political position?

/Answer/ Frankly, this issue was not discussed and the decision on it has been left to the GCC states' individual contacts and efforts.

/Question/ You must have read the Egyptian president's latest statements. As a representative of the GCC, do you think that these statements pose an obstacle in the face of improving relations between Egypt and the Arab world?

/Answer/ We in the GCC follow a constructive course and do not seek provocation that leads to widening the gap in the Arab world. Our position is always one of either doing good deeds or remaining silent.

/Question/ Has any contact been made by the GCC states with Moscow or Washington or vice versa in the wake of the Geneva summit?

/Answer/ At the GCC level, nothing has happened. At the bilateral level, perhaps.

/Question/ What about the Arab summit and the circumstances of its convocation or postponement?

/Answer/ This is nothing new. This issue was discussed at the Muscat summit. The opinion is that the mission of the committees to clear the Arab atmosphere must continue before any thought is given to a summit conference.

/Question/ On occasion, through the soccer match between Syria and Iraq in al-Ta'if, we have seen the possibility of coexistence and of the emergence of reasonable sportsmanship.

/Answer/ You mean soccer diplomacy.

/Question/ Why are GCC offices not set up in Europe and in the major capitals, such as Washington and Moscow, to create an adequate Gulf presence?

/Answer/ GCC policy is based on not expanding GCC institutions out of consideration for and in order to bolster the Arab League abroad. This is why there is no plan to establish offices similar to the Arab League offices. The matter itself is tied to another goal, namely avoiding "bureaucracy" in the interest of quick movement.

/Question/ Even insofar as the establishment of offices in the Security Council permanent member states is concerned?

/Answer/ This is futile in the shadow of embassies and of Arab League offices. This is a policy embraced by the GCC states.

/Question/ When will the GCC building be completed?

/Answer/ In 3 years.

/Question/ It will, in any case, be completed before the Arab League building.

/Answer/ No, construction of the Arab League building will take 2.5 years. We consider ourselves the representative of the Arab League in this area.

/Question/ Each GCC summit has had a certain slogan or a name. What will be the name of the next summit in Abu Dhabi?

/Answer/ The harvest summit.

/Question/ And do you believe that everything has become ripe for harvesting?

/Answer/ It will ripen, God willing.

/Question/ Will it be the harvest of wheat, or dates, or of a solution to the Iraq-Iran war?

/Answer/ As set forth in the Muscat summit, the Abu Dhabi summit will be the summit of crops and of harvests.

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LIBYAN MANEUVERING TOWARD MAGHREB UNITY EXAMINED

Reconciliation Prelude to Unity

Casablanca LE MESSAGE DE LA NATION in French 10 Jan 86 pp 16-17

[Article by Mohamed El Achhab: "From a Hard Line to Detente"]

[Text] A possible detente in Algerian-Libyan relations, on the one hand, and in relations between Tunis and Tripoli, on the other, may well give the impression of a potential solution to the differences separating the countries of the Maghreb.

Such a solution would be feasible insofar as there might exist bonds of brotherhood, respect for one's neighbors and an awareness of a common destiny of our region.

Consequently, whatever the impact of tensions present in the region, the political constants of the countries of the Maghreb converge when it becomes a matter of defending the common interests of the entire community. This implies the search for a minimum of understanding in which a spirit of mutual comprehension and stability prevails, especially regarding politics in the Arab world, the African continent and the international community.

One has to observe that the experiences of the Maghreb have been bitter ones over the past 25 years. This bitterness is mainly due to the proliferation of inter-Maghrebian differences, Algerian obstruction of legitimate Moroccan rights, the matter of Tunisian workers in Libya and the conflict on the continental shelf between the two countries, as well as the Libyan-Algerian dispute, to name but a few recent examples.

By way of illustration, the border conflict between Morocco and Algeria, the dispute between Mauritania and Algeria over the attitude adopted toward the conflict in the Sahara, the difference between Libya and Algeria and finally, the tension between Libya and Tunisia might be cited.

This atmosphere of conflict has not prevented the conclusion of a treaty of brotherhood and understanding between Tunisia, Algeria and Mauritania, followed by the creation of the Arab-African Union (UAA) between Morocco and Libya.

All parties involved have drawn the necessary conclusions from these two moves, based on their own perspective. Certain circles believe that such alliances are positive steps on the path toward construction of the Maghreb. At the time of the establishment of the Arab-African Union, Morocco and Libya both proclaimed that the latter is not aimed at anyone.

Furthermore, the union is a complement and parallel to the tripartite treaty of brotherhood and understanding. Both countries have manifested their willingness to take in any Arab or African country wishing to join the UAA.

On the other hand, Algeria has expressed exaggerated displeasure over this move, viewing it as hostile to the Algerian revolution. Algiers responded with a strengthening of such bonds with Mauritania and Tunisia, going as far as a military alliance.

No Disadvantage

The birth of the UAA created a new strategic situation in North Africa that has affected the policies of each country in the region and led to noteworthy changes. Following President Bendjedid's visit to Washington, we have witnessed the Algerian-American rapprochement, a deterioration in relations between Paris and Algiers and a rapprochement between Cairo and Algiers.

In contrast, Moroccan mediation efforts in the conflict pitting France against Libya in Chad have been successful, resulting in warmer relations between Paris and Tripoli.

Within the framework of such changes, it cannot be denied that a rapprochement between Algiers and Tripoli, on the one hand, and Tripoli and Tunis, on the other, will help promote a framework of understanding between Maghrebian countries. Such an entente could not signify the disengagement of any country.

It goes without saying that the UAA allows both member countries complete freedom to rectify their foreign policies. The same is true of countries signing the tripartite treaty.

We therefore see no objection to seeing a country make a move aimed at instituting an entente in the Maghreb and serving the common interest. No country in the Maghreb needs the blessing of another to begin a process of co-existence.

Along this order of ideas, Morocco pledged last year to work toward the construction of the Maghreb and extended a hand to Algeria to enable it to get out of the impasse and embark upon the process of building a compact political and economic unit.

Objective To Attain

Any rapprochement between Algiers and Tripoli must therefore be governed by a sense of responsibility and must in no instance be affected by the climate of conflict prevailing in the Maghreb.

We therefore believe that this rapprochement must take place within the framework of the following principles:

Construction of the Arab Maghreb has become an overriding necessity. Its achievement implies the abandonment of any policy of "axes." While the recent attempt at a Maghrebian summit conference of the five countries failed, we believe that a meeting at the highest levels between Algeria and Libya could initiate a movement toward unity, especially since Colonel Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi, known for his commitment to union, will remain loyal to that spirit.

While initiating the dialogue with Algeria, Qadhafi has all the elements in the dossier on the conflict in the Sahara. The Libyan president is convinced of the proposed referendum and we believe he will defend the legitimacy of the Moroccan dossier.

One can even go further: The fact that Libya got rid of the POLISARIO complex is an example to meditate upon for Algeria, without forgetting that constancy resides in mutual support between Morocco and Algeria.

Libya's respective commitments within the framework of the UAA and those of Algeria within the framework of the tripartite treaty must be exploited to the maximum, within a context of complementariness in order to stake out the Union's path.

Construction of the Maghreb must remain the objective to be achieved.

However, it would be a mistake to imagine that this construction will take place at the expense of the sovereignty of any one country.

Insofar as Algeria gets rid of the POLISARIO, it will take steps toward the establishment of a real understanding with Libya and, consequently, with all five countries of the Maghreb.

Algerian-Libyan Rapprochement

Casablanca LE MESSAGE DE LA NATION in French 10 Jan 86 pp 18-19

[Article by Kamal Sadni: "Rapprochement"]

[Text] The Libyan president has reportedly proposed to his Algerian counterpart that they meet soon. Such a move fits into the framework of the recent rapprochement between the two countries, a rapprochement begun by the visit of a high Libyan official to Algiers at the close of a Maghrebian tour that began with Morocco.

Since that time, contacts between the two countries have been constant and the likely meeting between the Algerian and Libyan chiefs of state would strengthen the belief that relative changes in the climate of inter-Maghrebian relations are in store.

Algerian-Libyan relations do not go beyond the general framework characterizing inter-Maghrebian relations. Dominated by conflicting tendencies and actions, these relations follow an unstable curve. Regarding Libya and Algeria, one would be tempted to believe that their support for "radical" or "progressive" options would facilitate their understanding and cooperation. Nothing of the sort is true, or least not always. The fact is that the fundamental options have difficulty withstanding the changes affecting behavior in foreign policy and international relations.

Algerian-Libyan relations have often suffered from the instability and conflicts that prevail in the region, while their acceptance of the Maghreb is quite different. Libya has always hesitated between the Maghreb and the Macherk. Its entire foreign policy has been based on an original perception of inter-Arab relations and, more particularly, of the Palestinian cause. An analysis of its action could therefore be made based on what goes on in the Near East. Based on its geographic position, Libya is a Maghrebian country, and yet, the Maghreb is a hotbed of tension. Conflicts dominate cooperation or integration. While relations between Algeria and Libya have had ups and downs, they remain essentially dominated by the border dispute that constitutes an appropriate technique of bargaining and pressure. The drawing of borders inherited from colonization has not helped to make the desired Maghreb. Nor has it helped Tripoli and Algiers to consolidate relations of continuous cooperation; on the contrary. The rapprochements that have taken place from time to time are caused by the local, regional or international situation. This is also true of the ups and downs following the signing of the agreement of Algerian-Tunisian-Mauritanian brotherhood and harmony in 1983. Libya wanted to join in, but Algeria demanded that the border dispute between the two countries be solved first.

Gradual Normalization

Even better, Algerian President Bendjedid became the spokesman of tendencies hostile to Libya at the time of his trip to the United States in April. He did not fail to criticize the Arab-African Union treaty signed between Tripoli and Rabat in 1984.

In addition, divergencies between Algeria and Libya are numerous. First of all, they concern the perception of inter-Maghrebian relations, a perception that transcends and even ignores the specificities of each country in the region due to the political and ideological options that are not necessarily identical.

Full members of the "Front of Refusal" instituted following the signing of the Camp David agreements and marking the intransigence toward the "moderate" Arab countries favoring a peaceful process of settling the Israeli-Arab crisis, Algeria and Libya have not managed to bend the positions of the other fairly hesitant or indecisive Arab countries. Nor have they come to an understanding on other questions concerning their region, much less solved their bilateral differences.

Even during the euphoria when the conception of the Maghreb was relatively identical, given the conflict in northwest Africa, the ends and means differed a great deal.

At one time, the support lavished on the POLISARIO was in fact nothing other than the expression of a bitter struggle for the triumph of a certain type of Maghreb. It was a situation that led POLISARIO leaders to practice a "policy of bargaining" between the two countries.

But the Maghreb cannot be achieved by two or three parties. Every time a relative balance is restored, latent or covert forces work to destroy it. Sometimes it is a matter of external factors; often internal factors come into play.

It is enough for one of the countries in the region to experience difficulties in order for the policy of bargaining and pressure to begin all over again.

Inasmuch as Tripoli's and Algiers' Maghrebian options had become irreconcilable, the whole regional alliance system had to be reorganized. There was the Libyan-Moroccan rapprochement and the consolidation of the Algiers-Tunis-Nouakchott axis, initially, followed by the one including Algiers, Tunis and Cairo. In a transitional phase, Nouakchott continues to demonstrate "positive neutrality."

Having adopted a clear position in the conflict in northwest Africa, Libya alienated Algeria's sympathy. As we know, Algeria perceives cooperation and friendship with other countries in the region or elsewhere in terms of their position on the Moroccan Sahara. When Libya's changed positions, Algeria turned to Egypt, going so far as to support its possible return to the Arab League. Well before and following the establishment of the UAA, Algeria proposed that Chad lend military and economic aid (it goes without saying) in exchange for Ndjamenas's recognition of the SDAR. Actually, in so doing, Algeria threatened Libyan interests in that country.

Divergencies

What then are the factors dictating a change in relations between Tripoli and Algiers? Why did Libya make the move to renew relations with Algeria?

For some time, Tripoli has been intensifying contacts with several countries on a regional level. Undertaking a policy of openness toward its neighbors to the south, Libya wants at the same time to emerge from its relative isolation.

Libya is perhaps seeking to create the fewest adversaries possible, this for the purpose of achieving a double objective: grooming its image and regaining its traditional friends. It is in this sense that it continues to strengthen relations with Syria and Iran, while accommodating other moderate countries.

And yet, the opening to Algeria is of particular importance, first of all, because it fits into the framework of changes in the Maghreb, where the interplay becomes increasingly tight.

Second, it demonstrates an ever more pressing perception of insecurity. Libya would reportedly be willing to renew relations with Egypt, which could

be explained by the dangerous and influential dimensions of the Algiers-Cairo axis. But any policy of openness presumes concessions or something offered in exchange. What would be given in exchange for the Algerian-Libyan rapprochement?

Without a doubt, tension in northwest Africa would be a point of cardinal importance in any discussion of Maghrebian questions.

In the immediate future, several difficulties confront those involved in the Algerian-Libyan rapprochement. How could Libya reconcile its affiliation with the Arab-African Union treaty between Morocco and Libya and the normalization of its relations with Algeria? What card could it play to accommodate the two countries involved in the affair of the Moroccan Western Sahara? Would it play the card of mediation? Concerning the Chadian affair, Libya does not recognize the government in Ndjamena and supports G. Oudei, while Algeria maintains relations with Hissein Habre. There is also disagreement over the Israeli-Arab crisis, particularly the rivalries between the different factions of the PLO.

Finally, one must not forget the recent past when Algeria "guaranteed" the defense of the security of its Tunisian neighbor against any Libyan aggression following the Tunisian-Libyan crisis created by the expulsion of thousands of Tunisian workers from Libya.

Of all these divergencies, however, those relating to the conflictive situation in the Maghreb occupy center stage. They will determine the future of relations between Algiers and Tripoli, especially since they remain fashioned by the nature of the interplay of unstable alliances existing in the region.

11,464
CSO: 4519/60

DEVELOPMENT OF GULF-PRC RELATIONS EXAMINED

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 6 Dec 85 p 58

/Article: "All Paths Lead to Economics: Chinese Commercial Campaign in Gulf States"

/Text/ The visit made by PRC Vice Premier Yao Yilin to the UAE, Oman, and Kuwait in the second half of last November can be considered another step on the path of the increasing China's opening up, both economically and commercially, to the Arab world within the framework of an economic policy characterized by realism at home and by an evident desire to introduce the Chinese presence into the cycle of economic exchanges abroad.

The realism of the new Chinese leadership is evident in the official rapprochement in the new relationship with the Arabs. Whereas Beijing used to focus on its positions of support for pan-Arab causes, led by the Palestinian cause, and on the "third army," if we may use the expression, which ties it to the Arabs in the face of the two superpowers, i.e., the Soviet Union and the United States, the Beijing government has begun now to underline its interest in the Chinese Muslims to strengthen its ties with the Arab world, and with the Gulf states in particular. This is why the Chinese vice premier's visit to a number of Gulf states forms a new page in an economic and political relationship that has been growing for nearly 5 years.

In this respect, Kuwait was the first Gulf state to establish bilateral relations with China and one of the first Arab states to recognize the PRC, specifically in the mid-1950's and shortly after Egypt's and Syria's recognition. This Kuwaiti position has been met and continues to be met with special appreciation by the Beijing government because it secured for it the first official contact with the oil-rich Gulf area. The friendship between China and Kuwait is reflected in a constant development in trade cultural relations. It is also reflected in generous Kuwaiti aid to China, considering that between 1980 and 1984, the Kuwaiti Development Fund financed six Chinese development projects with soft-term loans totaling nearly \$180 million. In 1982, China granted the Kuwaiti Santa Fe Company a concession to prospect for oil and gas in the China Sea.

The Chinese opening up to the Arabs has come as a natural result of China's opening up at home and of its adoption under Deng Xiaoping's administration of a policy which is premature to describe as a liberal policy but which is characterized by evident flexibility and realism, considering that it has permitted the opening up so far of 14 gates, which represent 14 major cities that have been allowed to receive foreign investments, to conclude contracts with investors freely, and to offer incentives without referring to the central government.

Through this particular window, Beijing has permitted the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which are characterized by a Muslim majority, to build bridges with the Gulf states and to attract Gulf investment and money, even though this may lead to strengthening the Islamic cultural and intellectual movement in the two provinces.

On 1 September 1985, the Islamic Chinese autonomous region Ningxia, which enjoys self-rule, convened an Arab-Chinese conference in Yinchuan, its capital, which was attended by a group of financiers and businessmen from the Gulf states and by Chinese officials. It was decided at that conference to set up joint Gulf-Chinese projects in Ningxia and the Gulf side pledged to finance the autonomous region's social programs.

The Beijing government followed this conference by inviting a number of economists and businessmen from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE, and Kuwait to visit Yinchuan, the capital of the Islamic autonomous region, at the end of last October. The occasion was the inauguration of the Islamic cultural center which was set up in Ningxia with Gulf donations primarily. On this occasion also, the Arab and Chinese sides agreed to set up the Ningxia Chinese Islamic Company for International Economic and Technical Cooperation, which has obtained a license for its establishment from the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations in Beijing and from the people's government of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. The main partners in this company are the Chinese government and a number of Gulf states and of international Islamic organizations.

The company's constitution defines the company's objective as that of bolstering economic and technical cooperation between Ningxia and foreign Islamic organizations. The sphere of this cooperation has been defined within the framework of cooperation in construction in the Middle East, the technical service and trained labor sectors, joint establishments, and trade between the two sides.

The Islamic cultural center in Ningxia is the first product of Gulf-Chinese cooperation. It is, at the same time, a significant indication of the extent of Beijing's readiness to depart from Marxist-Maoist "dogmatism" in dealing with the Islamic world. This center, which was built with Arab funds and with some local donations, contains a mosque, an institute for Koranic studies, an Islamic research center, a library, a museum, a hospital with a 300-bed capacity, a sports complex, and housing for students and foreign visitors.

The first activity of the Ningxia Economic and Technical Cooperation Company will be the construction of a first-class hotel and four other hotels to host visitors who are expected to come from the Islamic countries now that China has opened the province's doors to Arab and Muslim tourists and has launched a campaign to advertise Ningxia's tourist attractions, particularly highlighting its Islamic features and historical sites.

Ningxia is famous for breeding livestock and developing livestock strains. Recently, the autonomous region has witnessed an unexpected and rapid prosperity as a result of the growth of sheep and cattle exports to the Gulf states. Last October, a Kuwaiti firm for shipping livestock concluded a \$7 million contract with the Chinese Grains, Oils, and Foodstuffs Import and Export Company. In accordance with this contract, the Kuwaiti firm undertakes to import 160,000 head of sheep from Ningxia before the end of the current year.

The other Islamic autonomous region, Xinjiang, was able to attract last year foreign investments exceeding \$100 million. Xinjiang, which is populated by Islamic (Kazak, Tajik, and Kirghiz) tribes, is tied by important trade contracts with Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, and the UAE. It is famous for its exports of Chinese rugs, agricultural products, and livestock.

But the constant improvement in China's trade relations with the GCC states is still colliding with a major obstacle, namely the absence of diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Bahrain. This means that trade exchange with these three states has to take place through the world markets or through a third party.

If Chinese Vice Premier Yao Yilin's recent visit to the Gulf was aimed primarily at bolstering official and trade relations with the area's states--producing as one of its fruits the conclusion of an economic cooperation agreement with the UAE--then the other objective was to explore the chances for the establishment of diplomatic relations with the other GCC member states. The Chinese vice premier did not conceal his country's wish to establish full diplomatic relations with the GCC's six members, considering that only three of them, namely Kuwait, Oman, and the UAE, have official relations with the Beijing administration. It was no coincidence that the vice premier's visit to the Gulf states came at the same time as the announcement about the formation of a new investment firm to employ Gulf funds in Chinese projects. One-third of this company is owned by the International Credit and Commerce Bank and the Abu Dhabi Investment Fund and the other two-thirds are owned by the Chinese International Credit and Investment Company.

China feels that the diplomatic relationship barrier has obstructed its entry into the Gulf contracting arena, especially in the building and construction sector. If it had not been for this barrier, the Chinese, not the Korean or Philippine, establishments would have won most of the area's construction contracts because the Chinese workers are the lowest-paid workers in the world and because, moreover, they possess the skills of the Koreans and can endure work under harsh climatic conditions.

In this respect, it is worth noting that nearly 10,000 Chinese workers are currently employed in Kuwait, in addition to 2,500 workers in Jordan and an unspecified number in Libya, Iraq, and Algeria. A few weeks ago, the Chinese International Construction and Services Establishment affirmed that it has concluded since last 12 February contracts to supply Arab states with trained labor in the construction and service sectors. This announcement coincides with an increase in the Gulf demand for Chinese drivers, cooks, nurses, and afforestation experts.

Even though Arab investment in China is still small, China's opening up to the Arab banking activities will help bridge the phases of the development of such investments. Last October, the Arab Bank, Ltd., became the first Arab bank to open an office representing it in China.

To develop Chinese-Gulf relations further, Beijing has begun to alleviate the restrictions which were imposed by Mao Zedong's regime on the Chinese Muslims' exercise of their religious rites and has begun to permit an increasing number of Chinese to perform the pilgrimage duty.

Will the Chinese contacts succeed in bringing about the desired rapprochement with all the Gulf states?

Answering this question is definitely the first objective of the visit the Chinese vice premier paid to the area. However, a new commercial development has cropped up at the level of bilateral relations between China and Saudi Arabia and it may be right to consider this development an indicator of Riyadh's future tendencies, considering that the Riyadh government has permitted the operation of a direct maritime line between the Islamic autonomous region Xinjiang and al-Damman Port--a line that passes through the Chinese port of Shanghai and the ports of Kuwait and al-Shariqah. China Ocean Shipping Co, a Chinese maritime company, actually announced that it will begin running two ships a month on this route as of the beginning of this December.

Is this a small step on the path of the normalization of relations?

Perhaps, but it is a first step.

8494/12276

CSO: 4404/173

BEDOUIN RESETTLEMENTS

Cairo THE EGYPTIAN GAZETTE in English 26 Jan 86 p 2

[Text] The World Food Programme, (WFP) affiliated to the United Nations, issued a report indicating that Matruh governorate has successfully achieved one of the biggest projects of food aid in the world, following a visit to Matruh by a mission of the Programme.

The mission report stated that the projects which have been carried out by the governorate helped Bedouin to settle down in specified places in the Western Desert. New houses were built reservoirs have been constructed and dams have been built. All these schemes help changed the nature of Bedouin life. Coffee and olive trees have been planted in diverse places in the desert.

Moreover, Mr. Mohamed Ahmed Allam, the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Reconstruction in the governorate stated that an agreement was recently signed between the governorate of Matruh and the WFP. According to this agreement the WFP will participate in construction projects in the Western Desert, and will also help settle Bedouin in these areas. The World Food Programme will offer 20 million dollars over a period of five years. Meanwhile, the governor of Matruh, Mr. Mohamed Yousri el-Shami pointed out that WFP helped Bedouin cultivate 960,000 olive, fig and almond trees. The programme will also help build 1000 houses, dig wells in the desert and build a number of dams.

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CSO: 4500/80

ROMANIAN RELATIONS PRAISED

Cairo THE EGYPTIAN GAZETTE in English 26 Jan 86 p 2

[Text]

THE real magnitude of Egyptian-Romanian friendly relations is shown in the substantial enhancement of cooperation bonds over the last 15 years. Such a positive evolution mirrors Romania's foreign policy, and the unprecedented intensification of relations with developing countries as a whole and, within this framework, with the Arab states. Egypt has become one of Romania's main partners within this group of countries, both in political and economic fields.

A decisive role in the process of deepening and amplifying Romanian-Egyptian relations in all fields of mutual interest was seen in the numerous meetings between the Heads of State of those countries and more recently, between President Hosni Mubarak and President Nicolae Ceausescu. The high-level talks, the agreements concluded and understandings reached on these occasions have opened up new prospects and given fresh dynamism, durability to Romanian-Egyptian relations, both on bilateral and world levels.

Particularly appreciated in Egypt is Romania's constructive position concerning the ways of settling the Middle East conflict, the outstanding contribution brought by President Nicolae Ceausescu to the efforts to achieve a solution for the conflict in this region, to establish a just and lasting peace, beneficial to all countries and particularly to peoples of this area, which is also a prime target of Egyptian foreign policy. Romania and Egypt have identical or very close views on major problems of the contemporary world, such as the observance of national independence and sovereignty, the settlement of disputes among states only through negotiation, the stopping of the arms race through the gradual elimination of all weapons, firstly, nuclear disarmament.

The amplexness of bilateral relations may well be demonstrated by the volume of trade exchange, which reached at the end of 1985 a record of about 1000 million US dollars, the commercial balance being in favour of the Egyptian side. Growth of commercial exchanges was accompanied with a significant development of economic cooperation,

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COAL-RUN POWER PLANT

Cairo THE EGYPTIAN GAZETTE in English 24 Jan 86 p 2

[Text]

THE contribution of two international agencies in financing the establishment of Al-Korymat power-generating station, north Upper Egypt, was the main topic discussed yesterday at the meeting of the Minister of Energy, Mr. Maher Abaza, a representatives of the African Development Bank, and the US Agency for International Development (AID).

This station, which will have a capacity of 1,200,000 kilowatts is the first giant station to be operated by coal in Egypt within the framework of the international plan for diversifying power sources and maintaining petroleum wealth.

Mr. Abaza said that an expanded meeting will be held in March and attended by representatives of banks in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Japanese Development Agency, and a French International Financing Agency, for discussing means of funding the establishment of the station. A US Consultative expertise office has prepared the economic and technical feasibility studies for the station, and submitted them to these bodies for scrutiny.

The Minister added that the building of this station will be put out to international tender in July. — GSS

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CSO: 4500/80

MOROCCO

NEED FOR HIGH COMMISSIONERSHIP FOR EMIGRE AFFAIRS PROPOSED

Casablanca LE MESSAGE DE LA NATION in French 10 Jan 86 p 15

[Article by Mohamed El Achhab: "Why Not?"]

[Text] Speaking frankly, King Hassan II brought up the problems involving our nationals residing abroad and the organizations in charge of handling their affairs and solving such problems.

Nor is this the first time that the king has raised the question. On the occasion of every visit he makes to France, he engages in a dialogue with his loyal subjects residing abroad.

Even better, in a pioneer role, the king opted for the participation of emigres in all national elections and consultations and their right to have candidates.

In his speech before Moroccan nationals in France, Hassan's will was expressed in a description of the situation in which associations of Moroccan workers and merchants living abroad find themselves.

The sovereign first of all stressed the absence of such associations from the management of workers' and merchants' affairs and deplored the favoritism and "friendship centers" that have undermined the associations.

Second, the monarch evoked the contribution of the Moroccan colony abroad to the recovery of the national economy, particularly the balance of payments, through the flow of hard currencies into the country that, he said, should be invested in productive sectors, thereby helping the Moroccan colony and the families of expatriate Moroccans.

One has to observe that there is a gap in the relations of associations and workers abroad. It is not an exaggeration to say that this has resulted in exploitation of which many Moroccans living abroad have been the victims.

The scattering of tasks in the field of the management of the affairs of Moroccan colonies abroad among several official organizations, to wit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of National Education, weakens the effectiveness of the action of these different departments, especially since the problems facing our nationals are highly diversified.

The initial objective at the time of the establishment of associations of Moroccan workers and merchants abroad was clear: to organize Moroccan citizens living abroad and ease the management of their administrative as well as social affairs.

The other objective, equally important, was to protect the Moroccan identity and culture and to maintain the ties binding emigres to their country.

In addition, these associations have the task of protecting our citizens abroad against pressures to which they are sometimes subjected, particularly from enemies of our territorial integrity. Attacks recently aimed at our workers and students and the propaganda campaigns orchestrated by our adversaries aimed at our expatriate colony are tangible proof of the role played by it in the fight to defend our sovereignty, especially since many of the Moroccans residing abroad are from the Saharan provinces.

These associations are also supposed to set an example of cohabitation and dialogue, far from any partisan bias, and to build democracy within themselves, especially since French legislation tends to allow immigrants to participate in French local elections.

Through specialized committees, these associations were also to consider the social problems of our colony, particularly the integration of the second generation of Moroccans, the fight against segregation and especially, respect for residency rules and the application of advantages granted by the host country.

In recent years, France and other European countries have brought up the matter of immigrants and made proposals concerning regulation of the stay of foreigners in those countries.

The reasons for such proposals are known. Crises have beset European countries and caused them to formulate conditions for the return of immigrants and provisions preventing families from joining the latter during their stay.

Knowing that the 500,000 Moroccans who reside in France face difficult problems, like their fellow citizens in other countries of the community, it is certain that Spain and Portugal's membership in the EEC will make those problems even more difficult.

This state of affairs encourages specific, objective measures aimed at putting an end to the worries of our nationals abroad. We must also start now to design the means of reintegrating our labor force, which has acquired appreciable competency.

Under the present conditions, the task facing the associations, in keeping with royal instructions, is to hold democratic meetings so as to respect the will of those involved: establishing a democratic framework that will promote any action aimed at solving the problems of Moroccan nationals, removed from favoritism and administrative delays; creating a solidarity fund of Moroccan emigres in which the associations will play a driving role. We hope that the royal decision to promote this institution will be carried out with all due speed.

Finally, we express the hope that for the purpose of eliminating all difficulties of our colony abroad, a high commissionership for emigre affairs will be set up and supported by all ministries involved.

11,464

CSO: 4519/60

OCTOBER RISE IN COST OF LIVING INDEX REPORTED

Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE in French 20 Dec 85 p 12

[Article: "Retail Prices Rise 1.1 Percent in October"]

[Text] The cost of living index for October 1985 reached 346.5 compared with 342.7 for the preceding month, thus marking an increase of 1.1 percent, arising from the increase in prices in the various sectors.

As a matter of fact, the index for the food sector rose 1.2 percent, caused by the rise in prices for fresh vegetables (8.2 percent), fresh fruit (6.5 percent), soda drinks (4.3 percent), eggs (2.1 percent), spice plants (1.8 percent), restaurant meals (1.1 percent), cereals (0.9 percent), and cheese milk (0.8 percent).

In the housing and transportation, and entertainment and miscellaneous sectors, the same trend was apparent (1 percent), resulting, where the first group was concerned, from the changes recorded for the subsectors: maintenance and repairs (+4.8 percent) and furniture and household linen (+1.7 percent), and in the second group, from changes in the prices in the subsectors: public transport (+1.8 percent), entertainment (+2.2 percent), various expenses (+1.5 percent), and private transport (+0.5 percent).

Moreover, the index for the clothing sector showed an increase of 0.9 percent. This was mainly due to the rise in prices in the subsectors: footwear (0.8 percent), underwear (3 percent), miscellaneous (2.6 percent), clothing (0.9 percent), and headgear (0.8 percent).

Finally, there was a smaller rise in the household cleanser, hygiene, and health sector (0.1 percent) as a result of increases in the price of household cleaning products (0.5 percent).

It may be noted than in September the rate of increase was 3.2 percent, i.e., as much as during the first 8 months of the year.

In the cities, the largest increase was recorded in Tetouan (2.2 percent) and the smallest in Casablanca (0.7 percent). The dearest city is still Rabat (363.2 percent), ahead of Agadir (359.8), Fes (351.5), and Marrakech (349.3).

By Sector:	August	September	October	Variation Oct/Sep
Food	350.8	368.9	373.5	+1.2 %
Clothing	267.8	269.0	271.6	+0.9
Housing	277.8	280.0	283.1	+1.0
Cleaning supplies, health	252.4	253.2	252.7	+0.1
Transportation, entertainment . . .	368.5	372.1	376.1	+1.0
General index	331.8	342.7	346.5	+1.1

By City:

Casablanca	334.4	345.6	348.4	+0.7
Rabat	346.9	359.5	363.2	+1.0
Fes	335.1	346.7	351.5	+1.3
Tetouan	316.4	325.6	352.8	+2.2
Kenitra	309.9	319.4	323.6	+1.3
Marrakech	335.1	345.9	349.3	+0.9
Oujda	323.1	333.4	338.0	+1.3
Agadir	348.0	357.0	359.8	+0.8

November Index: +0.8 Percent.

The retail price index for November rose to 349.5, i.e., an increase of 0.8 percent.

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CSO: 4519/48

CEUTA, MELILLA PROBLEM CONSIDERED

Rabat AL-BALAGH in Arabic 13 Dec 85 p 5

/Article: "Tangier Is the Best Solution"

/Text/ The issue of Ceuta and Melilla has returned to the limelight in the past weeks. It has returned because of the law on foreigners which Spain wants to apply within its borders and to the two Moroccan cities. The Moroccan residents of these two cities have raised this problem in protests and the organization of noisy public demonstrations, and in a march toward Madrid that they intend to organize this coming January.

Since Morocco is firm about its national rights in these two cities and demands the return of its sovereignty over the entire northern coast of the country, the diplomacy of the two countries has tried to bring this issue up quietly in hopes of reaching a peaceful agreement between Spain and Morocco.

However, the law on foreigners, which is similar to the general laws that have been issued by all of the EEC countries, has put the Madrid government in a bind. It has two solutions: either to apply this law to all Spanish territory, which, in the view of the Spanish Government, includes Ceuta and Melilla, in spite of controversy; or, to apply this law to Spanish territory within the Iberian peninsula, excluding the Moroccan cities. Such a decision would leave the door open to Spanish-Moroccan negotiations on the fate of the two cities and the beginning of official recognition of the rights of the Moroccans.

The Madrid government has chosen the first solution, to affirm its sovereignty over the two cities, indifferent to the demands of the Moroccans.

We believe that the government must take all steps necessary to oppose this position within the international arena, particularly within the EEC, which is also concerned with this matter. The Moroccan rejection must be decisively recorded. The issue is not opposition to a law that will be applied to Moroccan citizens in Spain, Ceuta and Melilla, but rather opposition to a law that has no justification for the two Moroccan cities.

If Morocco does not want currently to create open disagreement with the Madrid government over this issue, there are still many means to bring pressure, from review of all of the agreements from which Madrid benefits to serious

consideration of returning the city of Tangier to its place as a free market, with the potential to pull the rug from under the Spanish merchants who benefit from the status of Ceuta and Melilla at the expense of the Moroccan economy.

The return of an international character to the city of Tangier would restore it to vitality and direct the commercial exchange and smuggling activities to the city on the straits to Morocco's benefit, rather than, as currently, to Spain's benefit.

As long as the northern region is in this situation, a situation of dependence of economic life on the two cities, there can be no development projects able to transform it into productiveness. It would be better for the government to create a free zone in the manner of a number of countries, such as the Peoples' Republic of China, which created a broad free zone around the city of Shenzhen across from Hong Kong, preparatory to regaining the island without depriving it of its international character. Transformation of the city of Tangier into a free zone would not in any way diminish our national sovereignty, just as a number of nations that have done something like this have not diminished their sovereignty. Creation of economic free zones enabled them to control part of the commercial exchange.

Certainly, the Spanish residents of Ceuta and the Madrid government would be alarmed by something like this, because the sole benefit of Ceuta, in their view, and especially the view of the residents, is its status as a free market.

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CSO: 4504/175

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWED ON AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Dec 85 pp 64-65

/Interview with Ahmed Biaz, director of the Casablanca airports office: "We Have Successfully Raised the Level of Muhammad V Airport, and the Experiment May Be Broadened"; interviewer's name, date, and place not given

/Text In order to develop the airports, which were not up to international standards and were hampered by their routines and bureaucracy, the government established a Casablanca airports office, to which it assigned administration of Muhammad V international airport. The experiment has been a success. Today, Muhammad V airport is one of the best in the region, secure and well equipped. This is an interview with Mr Ahmed Biaz, the director general of the office, about the experiment and the possibilities of broadening it.

/Question Has the stagnation in the aviation industry affected the operation of Moroccan airports?

/Answer Before I reply, I want to throw light on the most important causes of the stagnation. We can look at them from two angles.

1. In regard to operating costs or the economics of operations, some expenditures may be controlled, such as fixed costs, but other costs, such as operating costs, are difficult to control. Chief among the latter has been the price increase of aviation fuels and the resultant repercussions on the cost of operations as a whole, which led to financial disarray in the aviation industry. So we see that, disregarding the other problems, the energy problem had a direct effect of a decrease in transportation movement.
2. The problem of filling and operating airplanes. It is well known that most of the new generation airplanes have very large capacity. This is a two-fold problem. The first aspect is that of the lifespan of the new planes, which is more than 20 years, whereas the lifespan of the old planes was on average, 10 years. This has led, and is leading, to a drop in the volume of work in the manufacturing companies. The second aspect is their large passenger capacity, such that it is difficult to fill these planes in the needed economic manner. This leads to fierce competition between the airlines, and to lower prices, a fact that has eliminated the feasibility of some of the routes and flights. The fierce competition and international economic stagnation has

affected not only the airlines but the volume of airport operations as well. This has brought about the need to review the development and expansion programs for the airports. This should be done in such a way as not to neglect the possibility of a sudden positive development, the first indications of which have in fact begun to appear. From this starting point, we see that during recent years air transportation traffic in Moroccan airports has shown a noticeable decrease, depending on the nature and type of traffic at each airport, including business, tourist, and migrant worker travel. Muhammad V airport knew a small increase in traffic for the past years, with traffic increasing by 5 percent in 1984 and 1985.

Question What are the duties of the Casablanca airports office?

Answer The Casablanca airports office is a public corporation with financial and administrative independence. It has the flexibility needed to allow operation of these airports in a most comprehensive manner. This office was established as the first experiment for airport operation on a modern and independent basis, in view of the fact that the old methods of operating the airports by the state were not ready to adapt to developments in air traffic. Rather, they began to impede growth. The first duty of the office is to provide the technical elements needed for operation at all levels. Likewise, the necessary organizational structures have been drawn up to continue to provide access and effectiveness for the movement of passengers and goods in the airport.

Question What are the goals of the office? Has it succeeded in achieving them?

Answer Within the scope of its work, the office tries continually to develop equipment related to air safety and the security of passenger transportation, and to extend all necessary services to the passenger passing through the airport, arriving or departing, so that airport services attain the desired level. This means that the office has aimed, from the beginning, to provide the greatest degree of safety for the planes and passengers and to increase the level of services, as well, of course, as achieving the necessary profitability by developing commercial activities in the airport, to enable it to meet operating expenses.

We must acknowledge that the airport corporation has to a large extent achieved the goals set for it. It has become an example to be followed in the field of airport operation. We may point out in this regard that the airports office previously organized a 1-month training course for a large number of airport officials from the Arab world. It has a special relationship based on an agreement it has set up with the Jeddah and Paris airports.

Question Will you extend the Casablanca experiment to all airports in the kingdom?

Answer The issue of the best way to establish the same type of operation in all airports has been presented to the Ministry of Transportation, taking into consideration their need for financial equilibrium, given their low volume of air traffic and the small revenues of a large number of them.

Question What about plans to enlarge Muhammad V airport?

Answer Like other international airports, Muhammad V airport is in a constant state of development and expansion to provide the installations and equipment to keep up with the new and unforeseen needs of the airport. It has been decided to implement some expansion this year. These include important expansions of the passenger terminal and construction of other facilities. There are plans to build a hotel in the airport and the runway design in the development plan provides for development and expansion of a facility to receive and load goods.

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CSO: 4504/173

MINING INDUSTRIES SITUATION DESCRIBED

Three Factors for Instability

Rabat AL MAGHRIB in French 20 Dec 85 p 4

[Text] In its bulletin, the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry published a report on mines in Morocco. According to this study, the mining sector constitutes an essential component in the national economy in terms of exports, since mining products still represent 30 percent of total exports even though this proportion is showing a tendency to decline, i.e., 55 billion in terms of appropriations. The number of employees has been regularly increasing for the last 10 years (an average rise of 3 percent annually) and now totals 66,000 people, of whom 10,000 are supervisory staff and contribute to the gross domestic product [as published]. The contribution of the mining sector, even though it has declined slightly since 1980, remains important (approximately 3 percent of the gross domestic product).

Triple Instability

Due to phosphates which dominate Moroccan mining production, the sector showed positive growth in 1984, even though it was hit by instability in three areas: that of demand, currency rates (the rise of the dollar to the detriment of the pound, the quotation currency for the main primary products on the London Metal Exchange), and prices.

As regards the OCP (Moroccan Phosphate Office), phosphate exports totaled 4.5 billion dirhams in 1984 (i.e., 80 percent of mining exports) and exceeded the 10 billion dirham mark if one takes private output into consideration.

Other Mines

The OCP's main customers are Spain, France, Belgium, Poland, the United Kingdom, Japan, Italy, the Netherlands, Rumania, and Portugal.

Moreover, the study observed that the preponderant role of the OCP in mining activity should not result in overlooking other mines which are very active and which, by contrast with phosphate mining, require much smaller investments of about 300 million dirhams (260 for the Beda copper mine). Thus it is possible to have recourse almost exclusively to Moroccan financing.

Mining production other than phosphates was nearly 2 million tons in 1984.

In 1984, the production of the main ores was: barytes 425,200 tons, iron 164,200 tons, lead 143,890 tons, fluorite 65,900 tons, copper 63,817 tons, manganese 56,786 tons, and zinc 20,634 tons.

The situation in 1985 was characterized by a substantial drop in prices at the beginning of the year, particularly in those of lead, zinc, and to a lesser extent, of copper; silver alone seems to have increased in the wake of gold.

Investments devoted to mining exploration in 1985 totaled 317 million dirhams, i.e., an increase of 88 percent compared with last year. Expenditures for exploration were 1 billion dirhams, and those for the mining of ore, 2 billion dirhams.

New Deposits

In 1985, large deposits of iron were discovered in the south of the kingdom.

In 1985 a large pyrrhotite based polymetallic mineral bearing deposit was discovered in the Marrakech area.

The Laayoune has various mining energy resources, including phosphates, bituminous shale, manganese, and iron.

As regards development perspectives for mining activities, the goals assigned to the mining sector by the 1981-85 5-year plan are summed up in five major objectives: the intensification of research, the development of production, more extensive development of mining products, the search for better commercial competitiveness, and increased training.

Recourse to international cooperation for financing projects and the operation of the mines will be increased, because this makes it possible to distribute the financial risks, and to profit from the experience and knowhow of foreign companies.

Outlook For Mining Industry

Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE in French 20 Dec 85 p 8

[Text] The mining industries are making progress: a slight increase in production in 1984 but the prospects for this year are hardly brilliant. A claim: the advantages of the investment code for exports.

The annual report of the Moroccan Mining Industries Association stated that although the situation for mining has improved somewhat in 1984 by comparison with last fiscal year, the progress of the industry as a whole is not satisfactory.

The sector's total production increased barely 6 percent, and this increase affects mainly two products, phosphates and barytes. The sector's contribution to the GDP [gross domestic product] rose from 8.9 percent in 1983 to 9 percent

in 1984. The turnover for exports of concentrates, byproducts, and anthracite totaled 10,206,500,000 dirhams, an increase of 45 percent due mainly to the rise in the value of the dollar and to increased prices for phosphates. These exports cover 30 percent of all national imports.

The mining organizations as a whole, confident of the sector's future and convinced of the avant garde role played by the national mining industry in economic development, continued to invest large sums both in research and in the improvement of production equipment. Thus the investments made by the sector, apart from the OCP [Moroccan Phosphate Office], totaled 700 million dirhams, of which research alone accounted for 530 million dirhams.

What is the financial situation of Moroccan mines? In 1983 it was very poor for lead, barytes, manganese, and iron, and remains critical for lead and iron despite some improvement by comparison with last year.

The outlook for 1985 is not brilliant and the international crisis, which at one time was considered to have lessened, seems to be regaining strength.

At the present time, developments in primary mineral materials are such that the big American and Australian mines everywhere in the world are in competition with the small and medium producers.

It is no longer a matter of hoping for an increase in prices, but rather of making Moroccan mining competitive by reducing its costs.

The problem nowadays does not solely concern businesses but the national economy as a whole of which the mining sector is one of the pillars. There is no need to point out the industry's role both because of the amount it pays out in wages and because of the jobs it provides in mining related sectors. Thus the matter which concerns industrialists in the present situation is to sensitize officials at all levels to the reduction of mining costs.

The Mining Industries Association, which held its general meeting on 5 November, has concentrated throughout the year mainly on pursuing its policy in this direction.

As we all know, financial pressures, already very heavy on national industries as a whole, weigh even heavier on the mining industry which suffers a double penalty in the area of exports:

By a value added tax which puts Moroccan mining exports in an inferior position on international markets and reduces their competitiveness.

By legislation which continues to exclude mining from those industries which benefit from the export code.

On these two subjects, the association has had to approach the authorities concerned, and everything leads one to believe that satisfactory measures will be taken shortly.

As a matter of fact, no decision could have greater importance than the inclusion of mining among the beneficiaries of the export code. We say and repeat that the recovery of our foreign trade balance depends on the development of the mining industry, which is one of the country's greatest sources of wealth, and this development can only be achieved if measures favorable to export development are no longer withheld from the mining sector.

Other factors continue to weigh on manufacturing costs.

The mining sector, which is a major consumer of electricity (15 percent of the national output), cannot continue to bear the successive increases in the price of electrical energy. The cost of the industrial kilowatt-hour in Morocco today is one of the highest in the world, and we ask that the system of rebates granted to some industries be extended to the mining industry, and especially to enterprises threatened with shutdowns.

The reduction of manufacturing costs depends on reducing total costs and especially costs that are higher than those of foreign competitors. Port costs today, already high, have been quadrupled for ore. This decision, which goes against the policy which the administration want to establish, must be repealed immediately.

The report concluded that "we all hope that a new mining policy will be adopted which will create the most favorable economic conditions for the sector's recovery."

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CSO: 4519/48

INTERVIEW WITH NEW SADR FOREIGN MINISTER

Dar es Salaam SUNDAY NEWS in English 12 Jan 86 p 7

[Interview with Mansour Omar, SADR foreign minister, by Attilio Tagalile: "SADR: We Are Winning the War"; first paragraph is SUNDAY NEWS introduction]

[Text] The newly appointed Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) Foreign Minister, who is also a member of the Polisario Politbureau, Ndugu Mansour Omar, was in Dar es Salaam last week carrying a special message to President Ali Hassan Mwinyi from SADR President Mohammed Abdelaziz. During his stay in the city, he also held talks with his counterpart, Ndugu Benjamin Mkapa. Ndugu Omar also talked to our Staff Writer Attilio Tagalile on SADR and other burning issues. His excerpts.

MINISTER's foreword: "We have engaged the Moroccan occupation forces on our land for the past ten years now. If there are still some people doubting what we have and are fighting for — even after ten years of fighting — we are prepared to have a referendum to take care of that. But one thing we would like to make abundantly clear from the outset is that we are opposed to a referendum under the occupation of Moroccan troops.

"We strongly believe that we have made our objectives clear during those ten years — self-determination. Many people the world over have fortunately understood our point, except King Hassan Two of Morocco. The king and his blind supporters don't want to understand our position because of the nature of his fascist rule.

"King Hassan does not care what happens to his people. The same man who has for a decade been fighting us, sells his territory in order to get money to enable him to finance his obnoxious wars. If all the

assistance Morocco has been getting were directed towards development projects, that country could have been a wonder land.

"Militarily, on the other hand, we have reached a very advanced stage. Moroccan troops initially tried to hold whatever land they could lay their hands on, but later found the going tough and abandon them due to our growing firepower.

"For just as our people defeated the Spanish colonialism, in a similar vein we are poised to defeat the new African colonialist. After ten years of continuous armed struggle, the strength of our people is clear, and especially so to the enemy. The Moroccan troops are presently in a very difficult position, psychologically. They are a demoralised lot."

Q: — Could you tell us your military successes against the Moroccan occupation forces during the last ten years?

A: — During the last ten years, Polisario captured 3,500 Moroccan prisoners. And this include high ranking army officers and pilots. But between 1982 and last year, Polisario killed 5,000 and wounded 10,000 Moroccan troops. In terms of military material, Polisario shot down 27 enemy fighter planes and captured several tonnes of ammunition and hundreds of trucks. Side by side with the war, we have been consolidating our institutions in the country such as hospitals, schools and others.

When the Spanish colonialists left, the local population was 80 per cent illiterate, but the situation has since changed. Presently 80 per cent of our population is literate. Our people are also engaged in communal agricultural undertaking whilst schools have been established both in the civilian and military sectors. The whole population has in fact been militarised.

In Western Sahara we have, during the past decade, been able to produce a unique

guerrilla fighter, a man who can easily withstand and adopt to the desert terrain. We cannot engage our enemy in classical warfare. He has more material, that could be suicidal. He has more men and material. Our strategy has been and will continue to be a war of attrition. The strategy has been not to give our enemy a single hour of rest.

Q: — You earlier on touched on Resolution 104. Could you elaborate on that?

A: — Resolution 104 was passed by the 19th Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Heads of State and Government Summit and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the Non-Alignment Movement. The resolution, which recognises the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination, calls for direct negotiations between the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) and Morocco in order to achieve a ceasefire.

The resolution was arrived at by the OAU Heads of State and Government mainly to serve as an honourable way for Morocco to extricate itself from the war. The second option is, of course, the military option which we are presently engaged in. We are waiting for King Hassan to accept Resolution 104, which is the basis for settlement in the Western Sahara question. We are already ready for peace, on the basis of this resolution. We will not, however, accept, as I earlier pointed out, any referendum under occupation of Moroccan troops.

Q: — According to western media, the wall erected by Morocco has reduced Polisario's tempo in the desert war against Moroccan occupational forces. Would you comment on that.

A: — The media reports are totally false. For, before the erection of the wall, we used to provoke Moroccan troops out of their hiding. We had to look for them. It was an arduous task. However, since the erection of the wall, our objective has been fixed. We know where they are — behind the wall. Besides that, the wall is not difficult to climb. So we have been going up, choosing our targets with ease. In short going through the wall has not been difficult, and we

have proved so. We have captured several prisoners and material since the erection of the wall.

But our strategy is to conduct war of attrition, attacking everywhere. We are the ones choosing targets and time. In 1975, Morocco occupied the whole of Western Sahara and parts of Mauritania. But after ten years, Morocco occupies only a quarter of the country. This shows that our strategy is winning. We are not in a hurry. Our people are all militarised, they have become used to the war situation.

We have succeeded in showing the world that the Moroccan army, which has been used in the past in oppressing and harassing people in other parts of the continent is nothing but a paper tiger.

Q: — You have spoken on how the Polisario has succeeded in scoring numerous military victories against the Moroccan occupational forces. Would you estimate when do you think the war in Western Sahara is going to end, given Morocco's apparent failure to cope with Polisario's rising tempo?

A: — You see when a war starts between two or more countries, one cannot say when it is going to end. However, with respect to SADR, there are already indications that the war is not going to take long, as I have just shown you how.

As I said earlier, there are two ways the war is going to be brought to an end. One is through the honourable route — a face-saving for Morocco — through OAU Resolution Number 104. The second option, is the military one. Through the present struggle, and should Morocco decide to continue to fight with the present tide against them, this is set to bring about multiplication of contradictions which would in the end explode within Morocco.

The Moroccan soldier will reach a point where he will be forced to ask questions on the war. We would emerge victors.

Furthermore, during our Sixth Polisario Congress held in November, last year, we set up a military strategy which, we hope, would help in bringing a fast and victorious end for our nation.

Q: — Libya, one of your early backers materially and morally withdrew its support from Polisario soon after signing the union accord with Morocco. To what extent has this move affected your struggle?

A: — It is true they stopped supporting us after that agreement. But you can see that it was after that agreement that OAU member states passed the peace plan, Resolution 104 on Western Sahara. As we all know, the resolution was later adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the Non-Alignment Movement.

Secondly, it was after the signing of that agreement between Morocco and Libya that more countries recognised SADR. These were India, Nigeria, Yugoslavia, Mauritania, Liberia, Ecuador, Burkina Faso and Peru. Militarily, as I have just said, we have achieved monumental successes.

Although Libya did withdraw its assistance from us, other countries stepped in to fill the vacuum. As for Morocco, she had thought that once Libya pulled out its assistance, that would signal the end of the Sahrawi People's revolution. How mistaken they were. For, we are standing on our own feet and the revolution lives on.

Finally, one thing I would like to say about Tanzania is that we in Western Sahara are greatly encouraged by the support we have been getting from our sisters and brothers in this country — the support which stretches over the past ten years.

Tanzania has come to epitomise the liberation struggle in the continent. We understand the economic difficulties the country has been facing, and we are greatly encouraged by the perseverance shown by Tanzanians in the liberation struggle against colonialism and racism.

We hope that Tanzanians will be rewarded with victories to be attained soon by countries they have been supporting.

CONDITIONS OF RIGHTEOUS GENTILES DISCUSSED

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 3 Jan 86 p 18

[Text]

THE NATION is indebted to *Kolbotek*, the television programme, for presenting so dramatically the plight of many of the Righteous Gentiles who have chosen to settle in this country.

Righteous Gentiles are non-Jews who endangered their own lives to rescue Jews during World War II. Anybody claiming to have done so, who can produce proofs in the form of affidavits or other evidence to a special committee of Yad Vashem, headed by Supreme Court Justice Moshe Bejski, is accorded great honour. Yad Vashem has an avenue named for them. It issues them with appropriate scrolls and reserves places for them, and even parking places for their automobiles, at the annual Remembrance Day ceremony.

So impressed were some of these Gentiles by the gratitude of the Jewish people that they married Jews and immigrated to Israel. Others came on aliya alone. Altogether, there are 34 of them now settled in this country.

From the *Kolbotek* programme, the horrified nation learned that Israeli gratitude to these Righteous Gentiles was apparently only scroll and tree deep. Twelve of them are living in conditions of dire poverty. Under the law, their National Insurance Institute benefits are pegged to the minimal, not the average, wage in the economy, on which they can hardly subsist, even with some additional help from the Treasury and the World Jewish Congress. The special benefits given to persons invalidated in concentration camps, for example, they do not receive. Also, because they were not Jews, they did not obtain the rights of Jewish immigrants.

Even worse that their financial plight is their social situation. Nobody cares about them, or worries about them. At a press conference yesterday, Judge Bejski made it clear that his committee is only responsible for selecting Righteous Gentiles, not for looking after them, socially or financially, after they settle in the state created by the Jews.

Fortunately, the response to the programme was immediate. Several Knesset members took action to have the law amended as soon as possible so as to provide the necessary financial relief for the Righteous Gentiles in need.

But the social aspects of the problem must also promptly be dealt with. The problem obviously arose because, in a country so bureaucratized as Israel is, where there is no department or agency specifically responsible for people, nobody does anything about them. Urgent action must be taken to place the responsibility firmly on somebody's shoulders, so as to ensure that these heroes will be given the respect, as well as the support, they deserve from the Jewish People and the State of Israel.

USD 6 MILLION ALLOCATED TO ARAB AUTHORITIES

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 30 Dec 85 p 2

[Text]

The cabinet yesterday decided to give the Arab and Druse local authorities \$6 million to cover most of their accumulated \$8.5 million debt. The decision came at the end of the lengthy debate in which Finance Minister Yitzhak Moda'i opposed the grant, saying the Arab authorities did not keep proper books and did not pay as much tax as the Jewish population.

The vote in the cabinet was 18 to 0, with Moda'i in the end not voting.

The cabinet decision was based on a proposal by Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who, along with Minister-without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman, last week met the heads of the Arab authorities. Peres proposed that \$4 million go to Arab authorities and \$2 million to Druse authorities, and that the money be handed over by the Treasury in three stages - one-third immediately, one-third after the authorities submitted their books, and the final third after the authorities informed the government of the steps they had taken to make their operations more efficient.

Minister-without-Portfolio Moshe Arens suggested that the Treasury should distinguish between Arab and Druse local authorities, and that the Druse councils should be dealt with together with the Jewish authorities. Religious Affairs Minister

Yosef Burg, on the other hand, said the Treasury should not distinguish between Druse and Arabs and should deal with both groups as one.

Housing Minister David Levy asked that the state allowances and benefits to Druse be equalized with those for Jews - as the Housing Ministry has done with housing grants.

Moda'i said that money should not be allocated without receipt of books and bills. "We would not allocate money in such a way to Jewish local authorities," he said. Moda'i proposed that Peres's proposal be withdrawn.

Moda'i said that Arabs paid only one-fifth of what Jews paid in internal taxes. Interior Minister Yitzhak Peretz said the real figure, per capita, was 30 per cent and implied that Moda'i discriminated against religious Jewish local authorities.

Peres wound up the argument by saying that without a large government allocation, the Arab deficit would simply grow.

He added that the Arab local authorities, per capita received only 30 per cent of what the Jewish local authorities received. He said that state funds were not invested in industry and sewage in the Arab sector, and that the education system in the Arab sector was in very bad shape. The government could not ignore this, said Peres.

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CSO: 4400/97

NEW POSTAL RULES IN EFFECT

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 31 Dec 85 p 2

[Article by Judy Siegel]

[Text]

Post offices and sorting centres will tell all bulk mailers whose letters are addressed by computer, but who neglect to pre-sort them, to take them back.

The new regulation is legal, and will not be rescinded, according to the ministry.

The cost of pre-sorting the mail is much smaller than the 40 per cent discount given for doing so, according to a ministry source. All that has to be done is to add a magnetic tape to the billing computer.

The income tax authorities, for example, send out a quarter of a million pieces of mail at frequent intervals, requiring sorters to work three full days on those letters alone.

Bezek, which sends phone bills through the mails and which used to be part of the Communications Ministry, has not yet reacted to the new regulation.

Starting tomorrow, the public will receive no more bills for water, gas, telephone, insurance, TV licences, and income taxes, nor will bank statements be delivered, unless the public and commercial institutions arrange their bulk mail with postal codes placed in sequence.

The Communications Ministry's move which will save time and manpower, comes three months after the ministry told an apathetic array of institutions that they must send out their bulk mail in batches, pre-sorted according to Zip codes.

Of the institutions informed - including Bezek, the customs, National Insurance, the Postal Bank, income tax, and the property tax - only the Customs Authority asked for a 10-day extension to make the necessary arrangement. The others didn't even react.

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UNITED KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT LEADER DISCUSSES FUTURE OF KIBBUTZ

Tel Aviv SPECTRUM in English No 5 Dec 85 pp 20-21

[Interview with Aharon Yadlin, head of United Kibbutz Movement and former education minister]

[Text]

Spectrum: The kibbutz movement has a glorious past, but there are people who doubt whether it has a future. Do you think the movement has a role to play in the future of the State of Israel?

Yadlin: Definitely yes. It is true that from the mid-1950s until the early 1970s, the kibbutz movement suffered a period of crisis. It virtually ceased to grow demographically. It lost its position of prestige in Israeli society; people questioned whether there was still a need for a pioneering movement, for cooperative voluntarism. We did have political power — our largest-ever number of Knesset and government members — but there is not always a direct link between political power and the development of a movement.

Then, in the mid-1970s, there began a period of recovery. The model of the recovery period, for me, is the last 10 years, in which the UKM grew by three percent annually, meaning a demographic growth of 30 percent. Two major factors generated this recovery. The first was the movement's entry into the industrial age. Thus, despite the crisis in agriculture and the need for less agricultural workers, the kibbutzim did not fail. Today, 50 percent of our output is from industry.

The second is the new balance between the family and the collective, reflected in the decision that children should sleep with their parents.

I feel that within 10 years the UKM will grow to a stable population of 100,000, as opposed to the 45,000 adults and 25,000 children who today form a stable population of 70,000.

What kind of future do you see, taking into account right-wing trends and the religious sector, while moderates are more drawn to liberal trends rather than socialist collectivism.

It's true we are no longer the centre of Israeli society. In sociological terms, we were once the central reference of Israeli society — a framework which all related and looked up to; even those who were not part of the kibbutz movement saw its values as binding on Israeli society as a whole. This time has passed, and I don't know if it will return. One of the challenges facing me is to restore the kibbutz movement to its central position, making it once again an influential factor. But our society today is polarized, and the labour movement is not the dominant movement, either. Today Israeli society is engaged in a spiritual-ideological civil war, and it's not clear which side will win. But to those who question the future of the kibbutz movement, I say that we survived the Likud government without going under. This is one of the greatest things we proved — that we can survive even with a government unsympathetic to us, and even in the face of a campaign of incitement against us. But today we must be a partner in the struggle to preserve the image of Israel as democratic, humanistic and tolerant. A society moving towards greater equality and mutual responsibility. There is no guarantee that the entire labour movement identifies with us, certainly not. There are differences of opinion within the labour movement, and within circles close to us, as to the image of Israeli society.

Can you say something about the relations between the UKM and the Labour Party?

The ideological basis of the Labour Party has been weakened. It's a party, I'd say, based on a weak apparatus. It's in the midst of a financial crisis, and the local branches aren't functioning. I think the party has 3,000 dues-paying members. If the division of power in the party were based on effective membership defined by the payment of dues, we would be a decisive majority. But we don't want to be a decisive majority. As a sector in society, we have limited power. But I think the party was wrong to push us to the sidelines, as reflected in our representation in the Knesset.

The necessary condition for our success within the party, and for becoming an effective political factor in Israel is that we should present ourselves as a united movement; that the process of unification should be completed.

There is another matter to be considered here. We must free ourselves from the sharp internal division between doves and hawks because, in the UKM, there are no devotees of a greater Israel on the one hand, nor advocates of peace at any price. There are of course different shades of opinion. But I believe that, should there be an opening to peace — and we must do everything we can so Jordan should enter the peace process — we will all agree to certain concessions. If the peace process will not advance, we are all theoretical hawks. I don't think there is any real basis for dividing the kibbutz movement when we are confronted with the radical position of the Likud and the even more extreme groups on the issue of Judea and Samaria. Therefore, we can build a truly united UKM, with a socialist-humanistic message, seeking a breakthrough in the peace process.

Don't you feel that the Right, or more specifically Gush Emunim, has captured the imagination of the public in Israel on the issue of settlements?

To a certain degree, yes; but we must clarify, both to ourselves and to society, the difference between the settlement approach of the kibbutz movement and Gush Emunim's settlements in the territories. They settle in areas which we see as disastrous for the State of Israel. Since their, object is to

establish 'facts in the field', they scatter their settlers in dozens of locations, most of which are unimportant — a small number of people with no economic base. If there is any real Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria, it is to be found in the few large towns. All the rest are unimportant outpost communities. If they capture people's imaginations, I can understand this. But think we must explain why this is wrong. Our approach is that settlements should be established solely on the basis of security consideration and social self-realization. We are a settlement movement, but one which builds communities. The communal aspect is no less central than the establishment of a new settlement.

Today, we must, regrettably, also build settlements based completely on industry. It is important that every community should be emotionally tied to the land, but we must not live in a fantasy world. The kibbutz movement must not become stagnant. It must grow, not only in the existing kibbutzim, but in the number of settlements. In other words, while the old kibbutzim have become a permanent multi-generational phenomenon — and this is the great achievement of the kibbutz — it's important that there should also be new groups starting out on the path of Degania, the first kibbutz, in the year 2,000. Why is it important to grow? Because I believe that we must maintain the critical mass of the kibbutz movement in Israel. It would be disastrous if we should drop below three percent. Growth to four percent of the Jewish population would not only be an important achievement in itself, but would restore us to a vital position in society.

What's on your personal agenda as the new movement secretary?

I would list four tasks: one, to reclarify to ourselves our ideological identity, as an existential goal; two, to recommence a process of economic growth, based on our own real assets and not on speculation; three, to once again becoming a leading factor in Israeli society; and four, to build the movement as a democratic one which comes to grips with the breach between the member kibbutzim and the national movement, and with the alienation between the individual members and the movement.

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CSO: 4400/96

EXTREME RIGHT THREATENS CIVIL REBELLION OVER TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE

Tel Aviv SPECTRUM in English No 5 Dec 85 p 5

[Text]

At long last, the full dark logic inherent in the metaphysical proto-politics of the radical Right has surfaced into the light of the public discourse. Israeli society took a giant step toward the unknown when powerful elements on the Right threatened civil rebellion against Prime Minister Shimon Peres' peace policy. If Peres' current peace initiative was not serious, if it had no chance of success, that discourse would not have heated up so; nor for that matter would we have seen the apparent rapprochement of Jordan and Syria. Syria, long a foe of any Arab peace moves toward Israel, noticed that something might be going on; like Syria, Israel's radical Right - and Ariel Sharon - decided that where there was diplomatic smoke, there might be peace process fire.

It is precisely right-wing apprehension over the possibility of a renewed peace process which accounts for the loss of control and lack of self-restraint exhibited by the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. That body declared in November that any government which would agree to hand over sovereignty in any part of the West Bank to an Arab power would be considered "illegal" and "should not be obeyed". Flyakim Haetzni, author of the resolution and leader of what some call the hysterical wing of the settler movement, went on to say that should the prime minister actually do to the West Bank what Marshal Petain did to Paris (!) many would react to him as did General De Gaulle. "A prime minister who hands over parts of Eretz Yisrael will be regarded as a traitor", he explained. The resolution warned that if an attempt is made to forcefully pull some 100,000 Jews out of their homes" - there are actually 50,000 West Bank settlers including children - "a civil war is liable to erupt which in the best of cases will be non-violent". Several days earlier, a private West Bank Jewish weekly published a call for "civil war" to bloc a peace-for-territory deal. Several days later, a Hebrew weekly distributed in high schools and published in Tel Aviv ran a call expressing readiness to fight a civil war to guarantee peace.

Thankfully the new turn in public discussion did not last long. State Attorney-General Yitzhak Zamir ruled that the West Bank newspaper should be shut down for inciting to revolt and Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin ordered it closed. Zamir demanded an investigation into the left-leaning children's paper.

The Council then backed down. Moderates (sic), outnumbered by an extreme fringe at the first meeting where the

resolution passed, mobilized their forces and retracted the threat. Meeting a week later they declared that a decision to trade territory would be "immoral", not "illegal", and made no mention of "civil war". Still, in order to underline the limits of their moderation, they added that "no one" that is, not even a Knesset majority, "has the authority to give up parts of Eretz Yisrael". Benny Katzover and Otniel Schneller, who helped shape the new "moderate majority", previously - in fact, only a few days previously - refused to "rule out civil rebellion". But now faced with the need to back out of a corner, they declared it would be "sufficient if we emphasize the illegal character of handing over parts of Eretz Yisrael".

So much for moderation.

That the Right has become so agitated is a sure sign of the fire concealed behind Peres' smoke. The extremists' extremists lost the skirmish but they got their battle cry out onto the airwaves and into the headlines. Next time it will seem a natural part of the crazy national debate, unless the majority delegitimizes this issue. The settlers let it be known that while they can just about control the hysterical faction, they concur in rejecting the government's right to conclude a territorial compromise. The establishment Right, led this time around by Ariel Sharon (see separate story, page six) threw down the gauntlet against the prime minister, savaging his policy as "base" and warning that Peres is conducting a dangerous secret diplomacy which threatens the peace with Egypt, while opening the way for Jordan to re-enter the West Bank and for the Palestine Liberation Organization to join the peace process.

West Bank settlers have approximately 1,000 men under arms. There are serious doubts that the army knows about all of these; some of the weapons are not registered. The settlers have now made it clear that even the functional compromise Peres has in mind, involving the devolution of the occupational authority in the West Bank and Gaza to a mixed Jordanian and local Palestinian structure, is "traitorous" in their eyes, "illegal" and "immoral". They must be faced down not only with respect to their incendiary rhetoric, but with regard to their ability to stage their threatened uprising. "Civil war" must be rejected by the Knesset; the Security Services must ensure there will be no revolt. □

19274
CSO: 4400/96

REAL WAGES DROP TO 1967 LEVEL

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 1 Jan 86 p 1

[Article by Avitemkin]

[Text]

The level of real wages of public sector workers has dropped to its 1967 level, the Central Bureau of Statistics disclosed yesterday.

In the second half of 1985, the level of real wages in the public sector fell by 22 per cent, following a 9 per cent drop in the first half of the year, the CBS reported.

Workers in the other sectors fared better. Their wages went down by 17 per cent in the second half of the year, compared to the first half of the year. The figures also show that the wage level of all the country's workers returned to where it was in 1977.

The statistics also show a remarkable improvement in the balance of payments during 1985. The excess of imports of goods and services over exports - excluding military imports - decreased by almost \$1 billion in 1985.

In the last two years, the gap between imports and exports was reduced by \$1.7b.

As a result of these developments and of increased American aid, there was in 1985 a surplus of some \$500m. in the current account, which measures the flow of payments both to and from Israel. It was the first surplus since 1954.

The CBS statistics show that the GNP last year grew by some 2 per cent, the standard of living decreased by 2 per cent, and investments went down by 11.6 per cent.

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TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER TO BRAZIL, CHINA DESCRIBED

Haifa ISRAEL BUSINESS in English No 413 Dec 85 pp 1, 2

[Text]

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER — the sale of innovative knowhow — is steadily gaining in importance, as a foreign currency earner for the Israel economy. In many cases, experts from this country have built complete systems and production plants for customers, both in developing and in highly industrialized nations abroad.

TWO ANNOUNCEMENTS, AT the beginning of last month, underlined this trend. A member of the Brazilian government stated, during a visit here, his country's interest in Israel knowhow for the irrigation of more than a million acres in its development areas, and Miluot, a kibbutz owned cooperative, announced that it is negotiating with Chinese authorities on the erection of several cotton seed flour production plants in that country.

IN BOTH INSTANCES, substantial business deals are under consideration, likely to result in extensive exports of Israel products. This is the direct result of an ongoing effort to make scientific and engineering ingenuity serve the country's welfare. Forced to get the greatest possible benefit from every drop of scarce irrigation water, for instance, Israelis have completely new technologies to their credit in this field, such as trickle irrigation and the computer control of entire networks.

THE PRODUCTION OF cotton seed flour, on other hand, resulted from farmers' efforts to squeeze additional benefits out of byproducts. In this, as in many other cases, the result can produce widespread benefits: protein rich cotton seed flour could become an important new source of human nutrition, especially in parts of the world where millions do not have enough to eat.

IN MANY WAYS ITSELF still a developing country, and certainly one plagued by difficult

economic problems, Israel continues to gain importance as one of the world's foci of technological progress. Although unable to invest the large sums available to research organizations in other places, R&D teams here produce a constant stream of important innovations.

THE SCOPE OF SUCH product oriented research is impressive. It ranges from agrotechnical systems to medical instruments, from food and chemical industry innovations to advanced aerospace equipment. Israel firms offer the world interesting data processing developments, economical alternate energy systems, and uniquely effective industrial production systems.

THEIR ABILITY TO OPERATE at the cutting edge of advancing technology already has enabled many Israel firms to carve out significant niches in the world market. To do so, they have had to overcome great difficulties, among which their distance from most potential customers is one of the most important. However, more and more business organizations here are managing to bridge that gap.

MUCH OF THEIR SUCCESS is due to the fact that Israel suppliers do not sell only equipment, but also ways and means of using it to best advantage. Perhaps because their own country still is developing, Israelis are fully aware of their customers' needs in this respect.

BECAUSE OF THAT understanding, the supply of equipment and of complete production plants from Israel almost always includes manpower training, for both operational and managerial positions, and often also guidance at the level of social and community organization. Experts here are convinced that technology, per se, is no cure-all: unless the community learns to use it for its own benefit, it can even become a destructive factor.

THE COUNTRY'S GROWING technological prowess and the ability to suit it to the specific needs of different customers are major factors behind Israel's most recent export gains. Foreign sales advanced by 8.8% during the first ten months of this year, and in October 1985 alone they were no less than 32%(!) ahead of the same month a year earlier.

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CSO: 4400/95

FRAUDULENT LAND DEALS IN WEST BANK ALLEGED

Jerusalem ISRAEL SCENE in English No 13 Oct 85 pp 3, 4

[Article by Gidon Orr]

[Text]



major scandal has been brewing over alleged fraud and extortion over the sale of land in Judea and Samaria. Politicians swapped insults as both the police and the Knesset's State Comptroller's Committee began investigating the affair.

Vice-premier Yitzhak Shamir condemned what he described as a "witch-hunt" against Israeli land developers in the area. "Be careful. Don't touch land redemption," he said. "The police must, even when it investigates criminal acts, consider the national interest. Criminal suspicion must be investigated. But no policeman or officer must be influenced by defeatists who want to harm settlement."

MK Yossi Sarid of the Citizens' Rights Movement (CRM), who passed a file of allegations to the investigators, replied: "Patriotism has, in this case, become a rationale for villainy."

Behind the heated rhetoric, police investigators have arrested several land dealers and lawyers, both Jewish and Arab, on suspicion of fraudulently acquiring land from Arab owners. Some suspects are being held in custody. In addition, a senior government official, at least one politician, a leading building contractor and a number of lawyers are also believed to be under investigation.

The police say they now have some 700 cases on file in which Arab landowners complained they were cheated out of their land. The breakthrough came a few months ago when seven Arab judges were arrested on bribery charges. The arrest of

these notables gave West Bankers confidence that the police could be trusted and would not cover up allegations against important people, a police source said.

Most of the allegations involve trespassing, fraud and forgery, but there are suspicions of intimidation and even violence against people unwilling to relinquish their property. In one case two Israeli lawyers have been remanded in custody on suspicion of being part of a gang that specialized in defrauding elderly West Bank residents of their land. They are suspected of authorizing powers of attorney with the knowledge that the signatures were not those of the landowners, and of obtaining landowners' signatures by posing as government officials.

In another case, police arrested Ahmed Ouda, a government clerk, who is said to be one of the richest men in the West Bank, with a \$1m. fortress-like mansion near Kalkilya. Ouda is a key figure in selling Arab land to Jews.

A Justice Ministry official Plia Albeck stressed that not all the alleged victims were Arabs. Many Jews have also complained that they were duped into handing over thousands of dollars for land and were left with nothing for their money. Police said that the frauds were not organized by one gang. Indeed, they stressed that the trouble is that anarchy has reigned rampant. The first official report of large-scale illegalities in West Bank land dealings came some two years ago in a report by State Comptroller Yitzhak Tunik. But the Knesset State Comptroller's Committee, which then had a Likud majority, kept the report secret and it was eventually filed away.

The present committee is now studying the report. But because Arabs who sell land to Jews face the death penalty under Jordanian law, most of the details and the proceedings of the meetings are being kept confidential. While the report does not name any well-known political figures, it outlines in great detail "crimes committed by people buying land in the name of 'national salvation' and earning huge tax-free profits in the process."

In another development, the CRM handed over a file on the land deals to Attorney-General Yitzhak Zamir, claiming it documents widespread irregularities and illegalities in the purchase of land from Arabs. MK Sarid said: "All this high-flown talk of redeeming the land and pioneering serves as a cover-up for corruption and cheating."

Sarid and CRM Secretary-General David Zucker allege that government officials, officers in the military government and in the civil administration and the police have been involved in irregular land deals. The report names the accused. They include Ya'akov Aknin, former director of the Israel Lands Administration, contractors Avraham and Moshe Gindi and Moshe Zar, a well-known land dealer who was sentenced to four months in jail for his role in the Jewish terrorist underground.

There is little new in the CRM's allegations, observers point out. But they add fuel to the political fire that has flared up over the matter. This has been reflected in the meetings of the State Comptroller's Committee where chairman David Libai (Labor) has accused Likud members of trying to put an early end to their discussions and MK Benny Shalita (Likud) has accused "leftists" of doing all they can to disrupt the "holy work of settlement."

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CAMEL DAIRY INDUSTRY PROPOSED

Haifa INNOVATION in English No 121 Dec 85 pp 6, 7

[Text]

Beersheba – Scientists here propose the development of a camel dairy industry, as one answer to the problem of mass starvation in arid countries. Dr. Reuven Yagil, a researcher at Ben Gurion University, has developed experimental evidence to prove the feasibility of that approach.

Although widely known through African desert areas, camels are not being used there as a source of human nutrition. In those countries they serve primarily as beasts of burden, and their potential as a source of milk and meat has been generally neglected.

That, Israel scientists say, is a shameful waste. Camel meat is tasty and nutritious, and camel milk, although not as fat as cow's milk, it can be a useful source of proteins and other elements vital for human nutrition.

This fact is important primarily because camels can flourish where other livestock cannot survive. They can subsist on a diet composed mainly of dry vegetable matter, which cannot support cattle or even sheep, but which is fairly common even in arid zones.

The camel's water requirements are minimal:

because its organism "recycles" moisture and loses only very little to the atmosphere, this animal can routinely go two and three weeks without drinking a drop; in extreme cases, they have been known to survive more than seven weeks without water.

The average camel in this part of the world can produce about 10 liters of milk per day, during a season that lasts up to one and a half years. However, animals fairly common in India and Pakistan can give up to four times that quantity, and efforts are now under way at Ben Gurion University to breed a more productive Middle Eastern camel.

Dr. Yagil and his associates have proposed the establishment of a camel research and breeding establishment in Israel's Negev, and have requested U.N. support for that project. Here fertilized ova of exceptionally good milk producers would be implanted into ordinary animals, for the very rapid expansion of the herd of very productive animals. These would then be made available to growers in African and Middle Eastern countries, where the development of a new branch of agriculture, adapted to arid local conditions, could be of crucial importance.

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BROMINE OUTPUT EXPECTED TO DOUBLE

Haifa ISRAEL BUSINESS in English No 413 Dec 85 p 7

[Text]

Sdom — Some \$150m. will be invested in the expansion of the Bromine Group during coming five years, to double its output and sales to an estimated \$277m. a year. The comparative figure for 1984/85 was near the \$140m. mark, nearly 17% above that of the preceding year.

The Bromine Group, controlled by Israel Chemicals Ltd., consists of nine companies that engage in the extraction of bromine from Dead Sea brines, the production of valuable compounds from that material and the sale of such products in various foreign markets. These Israel firms play a significant role in this industry, on an international scale: about one fourth of all the world's bromine is now produced in this country.

The program now to be implemented aims at two related goals. On the one hand, extraction capacity is to be expanded, to provide the wherewithal for steadily growing foreign sales. On the other, chemical industry development is being stressed, to enable Israel to sell valuable compounds, rather than the comparatively low priced raw material. A ton of bromine sells for about \$600; downstream products, which may be worth as much as \$20,000 a ton, are likely to be much more profitable.

The company's development program is based on ample mineral reserves: the Dead Sea contains enough dissolved bromine to keep the enlarged plant going for more than a thousand years.

Because of its rising profitability — earnings amounted to slightly less than \$15m. last year, up from \$12.5m. in 1983/84 — the Bromine Group expects to be able to finance a major portion of its new investments out of undistributed profits and internal reserves. Only about \$40m. are to be raised in capital markets; to that end the company expects to float shares representing a little more than 20% of its total capital to investors in the United States.

AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS BOOMING

Haifa ISRAEL BUSINESS in English No 414 Jan 86 pp 4, 5

[Text]

The industries that serve agriculture have grown into a major factor in Israel's export drive. According to recently released data, their sales brought in \$ 865m. during 1984/85, and they are expected to top the \$ 1 billion mark in the year that ends on March 31, 1986.

To a significant extent, this foreign trade success is based on industries, first established here to serve Israel's own highly sophisticated farming sector. Some of those enterprises, many of them still small, are now taking their first steps toward the foreign sale of their products.

Much of this effort concentrates on equipment developed specifically to meet the conditions of this country's semiarid climate. Heavy duty tillage systems, capable of cultivating soil after six months of hot and dry weather bake it nearly to the hardness of stone, is one such line.

Another is Israel's broad range of irrigation systems and their components. Developed because farmers must make the most of the always insufficient quantities of fresh water available, this includes many completely original technological innovations, such as trickle irrigation, metering valves, computerized irrigation controls and the use of irrigation water for the application of plant nutrients.

However, an important role is also played by industrial ventures established first and foremost in order to convert the country's mineral resources into

foreign currency earners. Fertilizer sales to customers abroad brought in no less than \$ 420m. last year, to which plant protection chemicals added another \$ 156m. A field of endeavor based on the petrochemical industry here — the production of plastic films for use hothouses, as a ground cover — "plastic mulch" — and so forth, generated an export volume of \$ 70m.

Some objections have been heard here, since these industries' foreign sales have enhanced the difficulties faced by Israel exporters in European fresh produce markets. Sales of irrigation systems to Spanish and Portuguese growers — and, for that matter, to farmers in hostile Arab states — have helped them turn out produce, which now competes with farm product exports from this country.

However, there seems to be no reasonable alternative to the present policy. Both growers and makers of farm equipment will continue to do their best to increase sales abroad, and both groups are likely to benefit from the need to compete.

Export efforts by producers of agricultural production inputs in this country will this year focus on Agritech, an international exhibition of farm machinery, irrigation equipment and related goods. Manufacturers from Israel and many other countries will display some of the latest agrotechnical developments before potential buyers from all five continents.

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BRIEFS

TRADE WITH SWITZERLAND EXPANDING--Tel Aviv--Trade between Israel and Switzerland expanded to a significant degree, during the first six months of this year. Data to that effect were recently made public by the Swiss Israel Chamber of Commerce, in Zurich. According to those statistics, Israel's sales to Switzerland expanded 14.3% over the previous year's level, to reach a total of SFr 134m. in January-June 1985. At the same time, Israel's imports from that country expanded by 36%, for a total of SFr 335m. [Text] [Haifa ISRAEL BUSINESS in English No 413 Dec 85 p 6] /9274

CSO: 4400/95

SHAM'UN'S ROLE HURT BY STAND ON CONFSSIONALISM

Doha AL-RAYAH in Arabic 10 Nov 85 p 6

[Article by 'Abbud 'Atiyah: "In the Wake of His Refusal To Eliminate Confessionalism in Lebanon, Has Camille Sham'un's Star Set?"]

[Text] He was president of the republic from 1953 until 1958 when the revolution deposed him. He was one of the leaders of the tripartite alliance that opposed the Shihabi regime in the period from 1958-70 and succeeded in overthrowing this regime by bringing Sulayman Franjiyah to power in 1970. He was and still is in form the leader of the so-called "Lebanese Front," a bloc of various Maronite political parties which have gathered their forces in one trench to fight the Muslims, Palestinians, and leftists. Not long ago he was leader of the National Liberal Party. But what about today?

In the fall of 1985, following half a century of political life, Camille Sham'un is an example of a rise, downfall, and suicide "a la Lebanaise."

For over 5 years now, Sham'un has baffled the Lebanese people by his constant movement from one hole to another until he surprised them last week with a statement which sounded like a declaration of political bankruptcy without declaring his intention to retire from politics.

While the mass media were singing the praises of the agreement the interlocutors in Damascus had reached on a large number of points of contention, including the abolition of political confessionalism, Sham'un surprised us by declaring his opposition to the abolition of the existing system, viewing the 150-year-old confessional system as "responsible for the prosperity and flourishing state the country has enjoyed in the past."

Of course we will not get involved here in refuting this allegation or in reminding "president" Sham'un that confessionalism before the war brought oppression and deprivation upon one-third of the country's population, namely the Muslims, and during the war this same confessionalism caused the deaths of over 100,000 citizens. But we do wonder why Sham'un timed his statement to coincide with the emergence of some omens of a serious solution which can bring the Lebanese war to an end, albeit for a limited period of time. And what is the use of opposing what the three leading parties--the Amal Movement, the Socialist Progressive Party, and the Lebanese Forces--had agreed upon?

To understand the answer, we must review the general situation in the country from the Israeli invasion until the present day. In the fall of 1982, the political Maronites believed that they had scored a crushing and final victory over the Muslims due to the departure of the latter's chief ally, namely the Palestinian resistance, as a result of the Israeli invasion.

For 1 and ½ years, or until November 1984, the political Maronites were split into two camps (there was a kind of tacit agreement on such a split): one camp was represented in the regime and adopted the American option which it tried to impose on the Muslims with the presence of the multinational forces in Beirut), and the other camp, represented by the Lebanese Forces and the Lebanese Front led by Camille Sham'un, adopted the Israeli option with the presence of an Israeli embassy-like liaison office in al-Dubayyah and in an exchange of visits with the leaders of the enemy).

But things did not work out as planned. On the one hand, neither America nor Israel expressed any readiness to lose a single penny in helping the political Maronites for the cost of keeping American forces in Beirut and of the ammunition these forces fired over our heads was paid from Lebanese coffers. Yitzhaq Rabin was extremely frank on more than one occasion when he said that Israel would not do anything to protect the Maronites from any danger. Thus, the Muslims, by their 6 November 1984 uprising, were able to impose the Syrian Arab option in place of the two aforementioned ones.

The Lebanese regime was the first to adopt the new option to save itself from the predicament of military liquidation, a likely possibility (from the technical standpoint at least) during February 1982. And so after President Amin al-Jumayyil had threatened Washington that all the shells the Syrian forces fired on Ashrafiyah would be thrown back at Damascus, he hastened to get close to Syria. As of the date of this article, eight summits have been held between Presidents Asad and al-Jumayyil and the ninth is scheduled to be held within the next few days.

Ever since the second Lebanese Forces' uprising under the leadership of Elie Hubayqah, the Forces began marching along the Beirut-Damascus line. The agreement these forces reached with Amal and the Progressive Party in Damascus is but another heading of this new line.

Fatal Mistake

As for Camille Sham'un, his fatal mistake was his late announcement of his adoption of the new option. When he came out with his statement 3 or 4 months ago supporting the Syrian initiative, no one in Lebanon or Damascus needed such pronouncements. Why? Because the bigwigs had already gone toward Syria, but most importantly, Camille Sham'un had nothing left to offer.

From the military standpoint, we all know that the Liberal Party militias were liquidated on 7 July 1980 at the hands of Bashir al-Jumayyil and what was left of them joined the Lebanese Forces. As for the Liberal Party's political apparatus, it kept on westling with its weakness and inability to play an effective role independent of Phalange patronage and supervision until it met its demise last month. Sham'un wanted to abdicate in favor of his son, Danny,

so elections were held and the son was elected leader of the party, a move which was rejected by a large number of the political council's members, who broke away from it. The separatists later took control of a large number of Liberal Party offices, positive proof of Sham'un's weak leadership, for that was the first time that a Lebanese party had refused to transfer its legacy from father to son. But because the heir failed to pull his bequest together, the father returned to his party leadership position as a "dean."

Opposite Direction

Thus we see that Syria had the right to exclude a politically powerless and weightless person. Moreover, the national and Islamic parties had a right to reject him as an interlocutor, and instead of declaring bankruptcy and retiring, Sham'un chose a course contrary to the general orientation. In addition to his blatant call for preserving political confessionalism and the old system, something opposed by all Muslims and some of the Christians, and with Elie Hubayqah taking it upon himself to placate the position of the other camp, Sham'un instructed his son to embrace the militias which were dealing with Israel under the ostensible supervision of fugitive officer Antoine Lahd.

Thus, Sham'un began spitting out one statement after another in defense of Lahd's patriotism and devotion to Lebanon! The aim, which has become well known, was to obtain a card the Sham'un clan would give up in return for an invitation to Damascus to be assigned a role, any role, in any settlement negotiations. However, as we have already said, Damascus does not seem to be interested in pleasing Camille Sham'un and officials there will not bother to win an endorsement which does not make any difference one way or another.

In short, Sham'un has sentenced himself to death in the "prime" of his old age (85 years). He, who used to be compared to Juan Peron of Argentina, finds himself today without an effective party and the father of a son who is incapable of reigning over what is left of this party. And instead of retiring to a life of leisure after a full public life, Sham'un insists on turning his weak eyes away from a reality that no longer recognized him to go on as a stammering old man saying things that are rejected by second-and third-line leaders and ignored by everyone.

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GORBACHEV ADVISOR INTERVIEWED ON LEBANESE SITUATION

Beirut AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 2-8 Dec 85 pp 28-29

[Interview with Yuri Primakov by Randa Taqi-al-Din: "New Reality Must Be Honored or Else War Will Go On! Our Relations with Nabih Birri Are Good but Naturally Not As Good As Our Relations with Walid Junblatt"; in Geneva, date not specified]

[Text] Mr Yuri Primakov is a Soviet expert in Middle Eastern affairs, a member of the Soviet delegation to the Geneva summit, an advisor to Soviet leader Gorbachev, and the director of the Science Academy in the USSR (an extremely important position in the Soviet hierarchy). He is considered the number-one expert in the Soviet Union on Near Eastern affairs. AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI met with him in Geneva during the superpower summit to talk about Lebanon and the region.

[Question] Does the Soviet Union believe, as the U.S. tends to believe, that the Lebanese question and Lebanon as a whole have been put in Syria's charge in the sense that anything related to the Lebanese question has to pass through Syria?

[Answer] The fate of the Lebanese people is in the hands of the Lebanese people themselves. However, in my opinion, Syria is today playing a role aimed at bringing stability to Lebanon. It is a positive role, but the gist of this statement does not mean that the fate of the Lebanese people is in Syrian hands. I do not think that any foreign power can bring the situation in Lebanon under control. The Lebanese domestic situation is very complex and is not, as you can imagine, a chess game between Syria and Israel. It is a deep, multifaceted crisis brought by different objective and subjective causes. Of course, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was the main cause of Lebanon's present dilemma.

[Question] Do you think that Syria will succeed in advancing stability and in stopping "fraternal bloodshed" in Lebanon?

[Answer] I hope so. The Soviet Union support all forces seeking to further stability in Lebanon. It particularly supports Syrian policy which takes this matter as its objective.

[Question] What do you expect for Lebanon in the near and distant future?

[Answer] You must direct this question to the Lebanese first and not to strangers. I believe that the Lebanese are still capable of solving their problems. Naturally, the existing confessional forces must be taken into account and we must not forget that Lebanon is one country and it is impossible to divide it into cantons.

[Question] But the country's reality is that it has been divided.

[Answer] It has been divided because of the war. Traditionally, we have always opposed the sending of UN troops to any place in the world, but when the Lebanese South issue was put forth, we did not object and did not vote against sending international forces because we thought that such a move may help create a basic moral, if not material, barrier.

[Question] Do you think that this state of partition will go away if the war is brought to an end?

[Answer] The situation is very complicated. The Soviet Union has always supported and still supports Lebanon's unity and independence.

[Question] Do you believe it is possible to have a united independent Lebanon after all that has happened?

[Answer] Yes, but of course not right away. There is a new balance of power that must be taken into account.

[Question] Do you believe that a new constitution can help unite the country?

[Answer] Yes. However, I cannot say how a new Lebanon should be. But I do say that the reality should be taken into consideration or else the war will go on.

[Question] Do you think it is possible to remove confessionalism from the Lebanese makeup?

[Answer] Theoretically this is the best solution, but not at present. For example, will the Druze give up their independence?

[Question] But the problem has been that of the Shiites ever since they began looking at themselves as the majority and demanding a bigger share in government.

[Answer] They are divided. There is Birri on one side and Hizballah on the other side.

[Question] How good is your relationship with Nabih Birri?

[Answer] It is good. He visited Moscow. Of course, it is not as good as our relationship with Walid Junblatt.

[Question] Some observers are expecting a battle between Syria's followers and 'Arafat's followers in Lebanon. What does the Soviet Union think about that and, in particular, how does it feel about the war between President Hafiz al-Asad and Mr Yasir 'Arafat?

[Answer] I am not aware of such a battle. About the struggle between President al-Asad and Mr 'Arafat, we are against it because we support unity and peace.

[Question] How are relations between the Soviet Union and 'Arafat? And what do you think about the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement?

[Answer] We have criticized the Jordanian-'Arafat agreement for several reasons.

First, this agreement makes no mention of a Palestinian state, so how can we support a rapprochement that does not grant the Palestinians their right to self-determination and their right to exist?

Second, the agreement makes no mention whatsoever of true representation of the Palestinian people. We think this is unfortunate because the majority of Third World countries regard the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Third, they stressed the need for forming a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to meet with the Americans and to win American recognition and then to meet with Israel. We are against this course of action. We knew in advance that the Americans would not be responsive, hence the Palestinians would have played all their cards without getting anything in return.

For these three reasons we are against this accord, especially since it is in the spirit of a unilateral solution. We are against unilateral solutions, and this is our policy in the Middle East.

[Question] Do you think that Soviet-'Arafat relations have suffered since the signing of this agreement?

[Answer] I do not think that Soviet reservations can do irreparable harm to our relations with 'Arafat. I still believe that 'Arafat is the man with whom we should be talking and our contacts with him have been uninterrupted.

[Question] What does Moscow think about Syrian-Jordanian rapprochement?

[Answer] Moscow supports it.

[Question] Do you think that this rapprochement will influence Syrian-Iraqi relations?

[Answer] I hope so because we are very much interested in the restoration of normal relations between Syria and Iraq.

[Question] Do you believe that this can happen soon?

[Answer] I cannot answer this question. There are facts that indicate that each of the two parties is trying to follow the rapprochement road. We hope so because it is necessary that the Arabs unite in order to confront the continued Israeli occupation of Arab territory.

[Question] How do you describe relations between the Soviet Union and Iran, which has so much influence over the Shiites in Lebanon? What is the Soviet position on the Iran-Iraq war?

[Answer] We need good relations with Iran as well as with Iraq, especially since Iran is a neighboring country with a long border with us. We were very pleased with Iran's policy when it removed American bases from its land following the revolution. At the same time, however, we are against certain reactionary currents that have spread in this country. As for the Iran-Iraq war, we have opposed it from the outset and have declared as much from the UN rostrum. We have many reasons for opposing this war, including the fact that it is between two countries with which we maintain or hope to maintain good relations. This war is against the interests of both peoples and stands in the way of uniting their efforts against Israeli expansion.

[Question] Is there any initiative for improving relations with Teheran?

[Answer] Our men are still there.

[Question] What about the abduction of Soviet diplomats in Beirut? It has been alleged that pro-Iranian elements were behind it.

[Answer] We are against terrorism and we thank the persons and forces that helped us gain the release of our two hostages, considering that the third one was killed. I do not know for sure what group carried out the abduction, but I thank Walid Junblatt and the Druze who helped us gain their release, Walid is a friend and his father was a great friend as well.

[Question] Do you think that Moscow's relations with Israel will be restored very soon?

[Answer] This matter cannot be realized quickly. I do not think that a resumption of relations between Israel and us is imminent.

[Question] But are there serious ongoing contacts?

[Answer] No, all that happened was that the Israeli ambassador in Paris "approached" our ambassador at a social function.

[Question] It appears that endeavors are being made to improve relations between Moscow and Cairo. What are your comments?

[Answer] I have met with President Mubarak more than once and he explained to me his desire to improve relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union on

the grounds that this is essential. But at the same time, I understood from him his desire to cling to his special relations with the U.S. We are not against that, for President Mubarak wants to obtain economic aid from the U.S. This is the main reason for his continued adherence to his special relationship with the U.S.

[Question] Colonel Qadhafi visited the Soviet Union recently. How do you describe your relations with Lybia?

[Answer] His visit was a good thing. We maintain good economic relations with Lybia.

[Question] Diplomatic relations between Abu Dhabi and you have been established following the example of Kuwait and Oman. Do you consider this an indication of imminent relations between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union?

[Answer] Of course this is a great decision Abu Dhabi made. We aspire to good relations with all Arab countries. We are doing everything we can to set up diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia. It is wrong to think that we do not have a diplomatic relationship with the Kingdom. We do not have an ambassador in each other's country, but we recognized Saudi Arabia in the thirties, a fact underscored by the Saudi foreign minister in one of his press interviews. We are fully ready to establish diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia.

[Question] Is there anything new in Soviet policy following Gorbachev's ascent to power?

[Answer] I do not think that Soviet policy in the Middle East will change. It is different in the West where policies change when leaders change. We are not in the U.S. Our policy is the one set by the Communist Party. Of course, there may be some adjustments in courses, plans, and formulas, but not in essence.

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ROBERT FRANJIYAH WELCOMES SYRIANS IN LEBANON

Beirut AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 11-17 Nov 85 pp 14-16

[Interview with Robert Franjiyah by Jibran Tuwayni: "I support the Presence of Syrian Forces in all Lebanese Areas. What Is Important Is the Opinion of 95 Percent of the Non-Christians!"; in Paris, date not specified]

[Text] Mr Robert Franjiyah viewed the abolition of political confessionalism as removing one of the reasons for Lebanon's existence. He said that the tripartite committee did not represent all the Lebanese, but that its meetings were a basic step toward ending the war and moving on to dialogue.

Franjiyah emphasized the importance of a national encounter which will result in the formation of a new government. He noted that secularism conflicted with the personal statutes applied by the Islamic sects and said that in order to consecrate the three presidencies, their basic powers must be preserved. He also said that international emergency forces were not necessary so long as their work was limited to sending reports to the UN and that Lebanon had no one left but Syria. He supported the presence of Syrian troops in all Lebanese regions.

He accused "Christian ignorance" of causing the belts of misery around Beirut and in the regions and said that 50 refugees from the north perpetrated the Ihdin massacre. He ruled out the possibility of conciliation with President Amin al-Jumayyil "so long as he looked on himself as God's chosen representative on earth" and emphasized that the armed Palestinian presence posed an international danger to Lebanon.

All this was stated in an interview AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI had with Mr Robert Franjiyah in Paris. Below is the full text of this interview.

[Question] During your presence in Europe, did you meet with any Lebanese or Western politicians?

[Answer] There were some contacts with some Lebanese politicians, but I did not meet with any Western officials because my visit to Europe was for a rest following surgery.

[Question] With regard to the proposed solutions and ongoing contacts regarding the Lebanese crisis, does Robert Franjiyah have a working paper or a plan other than the constitutional document?

[Answer] Robert Franjiyah has many ideas and visions which stem from the constitutional document but which also go beyond it. I do not wish to announce them at present because the time is not right and because the Lebanese people, after 20 years of war and destruction and due to the deep wound they have suffered, need to stop the fighting and bloodshed first and to reach a general conciliation that can facilitate future discussions of any subject related to the composition of a new Lebanon.

[Question] What is your assessment of the tripartite committee meetings in Damascus and do you think this committee represents all the Lebanese sides?

[Answer] I have always believed that dialogue is the only way by which the Lebanese can get out of their dilemma and is an urgent necessity. As for the Damascus discussions, it cannot be said that the tripartite committee includes or represents all the Lebanese factions. The tripartite committee includes the warring parties in the Lebanese arena and its meetings are a basic step which will enable us to stop the wheels of war and bloodshed immediately so that we may enter into a dialogue among all the Lebanese so as to arrive at appropriate decisions that can guarantee full and lasting coexistence in the future.

Government After the Encounter

[Question] Do you consider an expanded national encounter as a necessity, or do you believe that an expanded government makes up for such an encounter?

[Answer] A national encounter is very necessary and a government must be formed as a result of this indispensable encounter, particularly since the state establishments have been paralyzed and destroyed. The new government must focus all its attention on breathing life into these establishments so as to provide the minimum needs of daily life for citizens.

[Question] And where can such an encounter take place?

[Answer] Wherever circumstances allow, and it makes no difference whether it is held in Damascus or Lebanon. If it is held in Damascus, there will be an arbitrator among the different groups and if it is held in Lebanon, the factions will have to agree on a location so that we may all come out with decisions to rebuild Lebanon and unify our goals.

With an Equal Share

[Question] What do you think about the principle of share and share alike in the parliament?

[Answer] I support equal sharing at the parliamentary representation level because it is inconceivable that a certain group should feel that it is ruled by another group. Total sharing of rights and obligations is a national duty.

[Question] What do you think of the proposal calling for the appointment of deputies?

[Answer] If the aim is to go back to the French mandate, I am against the appointment system because it does not afford true and sincere representation. We must not forget that only 5 percent of the Lebanese people are carrying arms and fighting while the other 95 percent are against war and bloodshed. But if the aim of appointment is to represent this 95 percent, which holds views that differ from those of the 5 percent, representation will be true and appropriate. Otherwise, the appointment process will not benefit the country because the important thing is the opinion of the 95 percent regarding reform and the future of Lebanon.

Political Confessionalism

[Question] Some are demanding the abolition of political confessionalism. How do you feel about this?

[Answer] I consider the abolition of political confessionalism a hasty step because it is one of the bases of our country's make-up. Furthermore, the preservation of the freedom and multiplicity of the sects is also part of the foundation of Lebanon and of the freedom of its believers. Therefore, I say that the summary abolition of political confessionalism at present means the removal of one of the reasons for Lebanon's existence. It is a bit early, it is early yet to abolish political confessionalism.

[Question] What is your position on secularism?

[Answer] I do not know whether secularism is acceptable to the other side at this time, particularly since it conflicts with the personal statutes applied by the Islamic sects in Lebanon.

[Question] Do you support the consecration of the three presidencies?

[Answer] Consecration of the three presidencies? I am against such a consecration if it means that one of these presidencies will be rendered purely ceremonial. But if the basic powers of these presidencies are safeguarded and recognized as important in their capabilities, then I support such a move. I am against rendering the presidency purely ceremonial as is the case, for example, with the British monarchy today.

[Question] What do you think of the proposed decentralization formulas?

[Answer] I support an expanded administrative decentralization which has become necessary for our society and our daily life.

[Question] What about political decentralization?

[Answer] I am not convinced that political decentralization can benefit Lebanon.

[Question] Some are demanding the withdrawal of the Lebanese army to the barracks and its rehabilitation at the hands of Syrian officers. How do you feel about that?

[Answer] There is no objection to training the army with Syrian officers for purely technical reasons.

[Question] Do you think that Lebanon today is in need of international guarantees?

[Answer] I do not think that international guarantees are a pressing or necessary matter, especially since we have seen the results of superpower guarantees. In the 10 years of the war the intervention of all forces and all countries has led to nothing but the destruction of the country. We have tried the United States which, because of the bombing of the Marine headquarters and notwithstanding the heavy price it paid, packed up and left us behind. We have tried France as well, but it is still saying to this day that it does not understand the purpose of our cause, not to mention all the countries that have passed through; the only one which has remained to lend us a neighborly hand is Syria. With its help and in cooperation with it, we will be able to bring the war to an end.

(He added:) More important than international guarantees is the fact that the Lebanese people have begun to wake up and mature and have come to realize that the only guarantee for their future and survival is the self-guarantee. Hence, I would like to reaffirm that if we long to build a country for our children, an eternal country, we must do it ourselves.

International Forces for Support

[Question] Do you believe in the efficacy of international troop support for the Lebanese army to protect Lebanon's borders?

[Answer] If we are talking about Lebanon's borders that require protection, they are the southern borders. But our belief is that international forces will not prevent an Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Here I ask you again: What is the use of such forces save for sending reports to the UN? Even in the UN we must not forget that every resolution that has been passed in Lebanon's favor against Israel has been met with an American veto.

[Question] Is Israel's goal to annex the Lebanese south?

[Answer] I do not think that Israel is thinking of annexing the south. My view is based on the basic maps that outline "Israel's dream." The everlasting danger, however, lies in Israel's persistence in disrupting Lebanese-Lebanese coexistence and tearing some Lebanese asunder in an attempt to turn Lebanon into a racist country under its protection. We must not forget that our free economic system disturbs Israel and poses a threat to it, especially since Israel's aim is to undermine the Arab regime by partitioning Lebanon and the region into racist confessional mini-states to justify its racist existence in the Middle East.

Return of Refugees

[Question] Will the refugees return to their areas and villages any time soon?

[Answer] The return of the refugees is a necessity and a national duty. In the wake of the displacement process which has resulted in demographic segregation, the Lebanese formula has been threatened because demographic segregation poses a danger to the formula, the system, and the country. Therefore, the return of Lebanese refugees, and I stress the word Lebanese, to their areas is an urgent national necessity if we are to reestablish the coexistence formula.

[Question] What is the situation of the refugees from the north?

[Answer] The total number of refugees from the north is no more than 50. These were asked to leave in order to save their lives following the Ihdin massacre, which they perpetrated, and their lives would have been in danger as a result.

[Question] What about the rest of the refugees?

[Answer] I do not think that there are any refugees other than the ones I mentioned.

Samir Ja'ja' Affair

[Question] Is there a solution to the Samir Ja'ja' question and is the matter being discussed with Mr Elie Hubayqah?

[Answer] The only solution to the Samir Ja'ja problem is for the judicial powers to fulfill their obligations. The file has been turned over to the Lebanese courts which are directly responsible for this case and must meet their duties, something we have been saying since 16 June 1978. Ja'ja case and the cases of those who perpetrated the Ihdin massacre are the concern of the courts. As for the discussions with Mr Elie Hubayqah, I would like to keep them a secret, begging your pardon.

[Question] Do you support the matter of collecting arms from the militias?

[Answer] I support the collection of arms, which must be placed in depots supervised by forces recognized by everyone, provided that it is done in all areas of partisan influence and that these weapons are used for self-defense only.

[Question] Why?

[Answer] Because I consider this arrangement a temporary measure until the establishment of an equitable state that is able to maintain safety and security. We hope that this will happen soon after the Damascus meetings and the anticipated national encounter.

[Question] Do you support the deployment of Syrian deterrent forces in the various regions?

[Answer] I support the presence of deterrent forces in all areas, especially since no one has responded to Lebanon's request for deterrent forces except the Arabs, in particular Syria.

[Question] Who has the right to request Syrian troops?

[Answer] The Lebanese as a people and as groups, so long as the head has lost consciousness.

[Question] Do you believe that the Syrian presence is inevitable?

[Answer] The Syrian army will not come in unless President Hafiz al-Asad thinks such a move will lead to a solution to the Lebanese problem because the consequences of the Syrian troop entry into the country in 1976 must not be repeated.

[Question] There is lawlessness in West Beirut. How do you think this situation can be dealt with, especially since recently the Christians have been subjected to collective displacement?

[Answer] The only solution to West Beirut is a Syrian deterrent force or some other force.

[Question] The Lebanese army, for instance?

[Answer] Yes, provided that it does not order the shelling of the southern district and that it treats everyone fairly.

[Question] Has the Barbara roadblock been removed?

[Answer] I have not been there to find out.

[Question] How have the abduction incidents on the road between Tripoli and Zgharta been handled and is there a danger of a recurrence?

[Answer] Abductions between Tripoli and Zgharta have been going on for 2 years and we have not been able so far to prevent eight families of those abducted from our areas. Moreover, Tripoli officials have failed to put a stop to retaliations in Tripoli, but I would like to emphasize that Shaykh Sa'id Sha'ban has been fully responsive to the settlement of this matter. I would also like to point out that history has shown that the abductor is the only loser from coexistence who wants through such abductions to disturb this coexistence.

Danger Lies in Christians' Stupidity

[Question] Whom do you accuse?

[Answer] To begin with, I accuse the Christians.

[Question] Do you see any danger to the Christian existence or role?

[Answer] I do not think that the Christians' existence is in danger. I do believe, however, that the danger is a consequence of the Christians' ignorant attitude toward human and demographic development which has prevented them from developing the system of rule in order to create a better form of coexistence among the sects, a matter which has led to the presence of belts of misery in Beirut and its environs as well as in Mount Lebanon.

[Question] Is there a possibility of a conciliation with President Amin al-Jumayyil?

[Answer] So long as President al-Jumayyil thinks of himself as being sent from heaven as God's ruler on earth, there will be no conciliation.

[Question] Some people say that relations with Walid Junblatt are very bad. Why?

[Answer] There is no truth to these allegations.

[Question] How do you explain President Sulayman Franjiyah's refusal to take part in the National Union Front?

[Answer] We sent representatives at all the meetings, the Shaturah one in particular, without our personal attendance.

[Question] Do you support the Shaturah resolutions?

[Answer] I do not support any of them.

Relations with Syria

[Question] How do you understand the special relations with Syria?

[Answer] Consultation and cooperation in foreign policy.

[Question] What about economic policy?

[Answer] The two systems are completely different.

[Question] And defense policy?

[Answer] Syria does not need the Lebanese army to defend it. A case in point is the October 1973 war between the Arabs and Israel when Lebanon offered sister Syria all the help it could on several levels, including social and oil facilities. I remember how we began applying at the time the "odd and even" system with respect to license plates in order to provide Syria with oil reserves.

[Question] Does Robert Franjiyah have a militia?

[Answer] Zgharta has a militia.

[Question] Al-Muradah?

[Answer] Al-Muradah.

[Question] Under whose command?

[Answer] The political command of Zgharta al-Zawiyah.

[Question] Who made the decision to attack the Kurah and do you think it was a wrong decision?

[Answer] It was not so much a decision to attack as it was an act of self-defense.

[Question] With which one of the two blocs, the Eastern or the Western, should Lebanon's foreign policy be?

[Answer] With the nonaligned countries.

[Question] Do you support the idea that the presidency should be for the Maronites?

[Answer] Not if it is purely ceremonial.

[Question] Do you support the idea of the Christians offering concessions?

[Answer] Yes, provided that such a move leads to an agreement with the other sects in Lebanon's interest with the aim of correcting past mistakes and does not eliminate the Christian role so as not to make a bigger mistake.

[Question] Are you thinking of creating your own political party?

[Answer] In a country such as Lebanon, I do not have much confidence in parties. Rather, I believe in currents and groupings because Lebanon, by its very nature, is free thinking and rejects subservience. It is impossible of it to accept easily and readily the idea of being shackled by party ideas and cadres. The Lebanese human being is noted for his personal initiative and Lebanon is distinguished by what its people believe in.

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MURABITUN LEADER COMMENTS ON SYRIAN INFLUENCE

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[Interview with Ibrahim Qulaylat by 'Abd-al-Wahhab Badrkhan: "They Agree on Partitioning the Country and the People; What Goes on in Damascus Does Not Concern Us"; in Paris, date not specified]

[Text] Mr Ibrahim Qulaylat, leader of the Independent Nasirist Movement--al-Murabitun--refuses to speak from a Sunni point of view when talking about the affairs of the Sunni sect at this stage; he insists on talking about an "Islamic position" and "Islamic pan-Arab and national forces" in facing the other forces, which he places in one basket and accuses of "confessionalism, sectarianism, racism, Shu'ubiyah, and fascism," as well as about cantons and emirates.

Qulaylat still contends that the conspiracies of 16 April 1984 and 22 March 1984 were aimed at changing Beirut's countenance and at imposing solutions based on partition among those who only represent those forces that are under their "immediate command" but "without a mandate from anyone."

Qulaylat does not expect the Damascus contacts to be an antidote because he believes that the ordeal can only be dealt with through a "universal Arab role." He is surprised at all the fuss over the diminution of presidential powers, for in his view, the power of the primer minister will be diminished since he will be at the mercy of the "veto" of his six deputies who represent the main denominations.

Qulaylat spent a few days in Paris consulting with a number of Lebanese politicians there. Below is the interview:

[Question] Ibrahim Qulaylat, where do you live and why?

[Answer] Geographically, I live outside Lebanon, but this is only geographic absence which is nothing but a formality. My brothers and I are still pursuing our responsibilities more diligently than if we were in the country. I would like to say that the Independent Nasirist Movement and al-Murabitun forces are still targets for liquidation and eradication because of what they represent. This is not new, for everyone remembers that we were the only Lebanese side to demand the expulsion of the Zionist enemy in the June 1982 war during the

invasion of Beirut. We were also the only side in the Lebanese arena to have been subjected to such a level of pressure and disarmament.

These same practices were later repeated with the Zionist enemy's allies and collaborators without any effect on or change in its course.

Those who bet on the movement and its institutions fading away as a result of such pressures were surprised to learn that it was nothing but an illusion. The movement and its institutions have succeeded in asserting their practical and effective presence in a way that astounded the scheme that was put into effect after the 6 February 1982 Beirut uprising, the uprising which was led by the nationalist forces and which caused the abrogation of the 17 May agreement. Likewise, and notwithstanding our appreciation of Syria's geographic continuity role in this process, Libya and the pan-Arab forces that fought Israel had a prominent role as well. History will show that those who sacrificed their blood to bring about the 6 February uprising were Independent Nasirist Movement--al--Murabitun--elements who refused to abandon their pan-Arab course, thus quashing the Israeli plan, and not those who grew up in the shadow of this plan and acquired peace under its auspices.

Camps of Christians' Displacement

[Question] In what framework do you place the war of the camps and the displacement of Christians from West Beirut?

[Answer] This was an objective of the attempts to liquidate the Independent Nasirist Movement--Murabitun--and its institutions by facilitating the passage of the denominational scheme. This scheme stormed forward with amazing speed when it took on the Palestinian question in the camps war. Had Murabitun efficacy not been undermined so severely on 16 April, the conspirators would not have dared to hit the camps. On the other hand, ask our Christian population in al-Mazra'ah, in al-Musaytibah, in Ra's Beirut, and all over Beirut how they felt between 22 March 1984 and 16 April 1985. They themselves became targets in a way they had never experienced before in the past 10 years. We have martyrs who fell under the bombardment while they were ringing church bells on Christmas. Their feeling today is that al-Murabitun was hit in order to intensify denominational, racist, and sectarian proposals at a time when we had been rejecting the idea of setting up a Sunni canton since 1981, saying that we would fight it harder than any other denominational canton, and rebelled against all plans despite temptations.

[Question] What is al-Murabitun's situation today and how does it move about in Beirut?

[Answer] We reaffirm the impossibility of being written off in Beirut, and in Lebanon in general, because our roots are deeply set in the ground. We are present in the street and every household and have institutions. The conspirators may have been more successful than Israel was in removing the superficial manifestations of our movement, but they failed to undermine its content. Perhaps a close impartial look at al-Murabitun's role, be it at military, social, or political level, reveals that our presence is not

governed by formalities such as offices or five person mafias setting up an office, a party, or an organization. Neither does it await an edict from one of the embassies or instructions from a Mosad officer's doorman in the area. No, what happened will not induce us to compromise on our fundamental course with its national, pan-Arab, and Islamic dimensions, in addition to the Palestinian question. This is self-evident because we are a revolutionary movement which is interacting with the aspirations of our people and is not seeking to practice combative luxury. I believe that those who failed to fight the battle of the true pan-Arab and national struggle in confronting Israel and fled to hotels in order to pontificate outside their country have no right even to talk about the future or the fundamental issues of this country. This is a decisive stage that has gone down in history. Some riddles may exist, but they do not affect the essence. A look at past circumstances we have experienced with the same difficulty as the current stage reveals that the mode of operation was never the problem because we were always able to adapt it to the situation.

[Question] What then is the proposed formula with which you are facing the current stage?

[Answer] The intensity of the rounds that were aimed at liquidating the movement and at blurring its role at this decisive stage made it incumbent upon us, as an ideologically revolutionary force, not to allow the classic formulas to rule our combative action in view of the fact that the course of the national and pan-Arab Islamic confrontation has proven their futility at all levels, beginning with the fight against the Zionist enemy all the way to the confrontation of national events. Everyone knows that we have adopted a systematic formula with vertical depth in all fields. More importantly, we as a movement will maintain our actions and our views because we are deeply rooted in the ground.

You remember that following the Israeli invasion and at the beginning of the Phalange's coercive practices, we proposed a mobile formula. Observers were amazed at our ability to keep up our national actions, thus reemphasizing the fact that we are not controlled by superficial formulas and are guided only by commitment. During the stage of national and pan-Arab silence following the Israeli invasion, these forces imagined that those that fled in the confrontation experience and failed in society as a whole could harass the movement in order to penetrate and undermine it. But these forces remained insignificant symbols that split from the movement's ranks or were those secreted in by the Israeli invasion. Elimination of our movement was not the only objective, for other forces were targeted as well. Striking al-Murabitun was the means to that end in view of what this movement represents on the national, pan-Arab, and Islamic levels.

[Question] Is this confrontational position of yours a result of your exclusion from the proposed plans?

[Answer] We must mention that prior to 16 April, some forces were urging us to support them and there were attempts to draw us in through all sorts of temptations. We refused, however, to be a veil for coming events. We could very well have been at the negotiating table, not from a decision-making

position but rather from an dishonorable one in that we would represent simply another color to complete their schematic decor. However, we refused this logic, thus triggering such rancor against us that its intensity assumed the form of eliminating a key party. We do not talk from a sectarian or confessional point of view but rather from our eagerness to preserve the unity of the Muslims and of the Islamic position. In this we agree with Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din and many of the Shiite leaders. The only way we can be serious about our historically decisive struggle with the Zionist enemy is in the shade of a unified Islamic position. As for pan-Arabism, this is a different matter and we will not allow anyone to take us back to the conflicts of the days of the overlords. Otherwise, we will all fall into the Zionist trap.

[Question] In view of your continued action, what plans are you proposing and defending nowadays?

[Answer] Let us be logical. Our fundamental issues are not subject to circumstantial interpretation. We are continuing our struggle in order to foil attempts to impose on us any of the conspiracy's plans. No one can represent our rights in our absence and we will not allow anyone to do so. We are not an appendage to our country or to our Arab or Islamic environment. We are a vanguard, as everyone is aware, because we have restored to the national, Islamic, and pan-Arab concept its significance and value through our struggle with the Zionist enemy at the most dangerous stage.

[Question] Can this position be extended to include the Sunni sect?

[Answer] We are working for an Islamic position in coordination with the true leaders of the Shiite Islamic sect for the sake of a rectification process that will allow us to unite under one position and to outline a clear specific vision of our future goals and means of rebuilding the country with its Christian and Muslim wings. Racist, confessional, and Shu'ubi pressures are trying to impede this endeavor, but we are confident that we will be able to overcome them in the future. The Sunni sect has always adopted a vanguard national position at the Islamic unity level and it does not have any denominational, racial or minority complexes.

[Question] Concerning the personalities with whom Damascus is consulting, do they not represent the Sunni sect?

[Answer] Under existing circumstances, it is impossible for a sect or a faith to be represented by an individual or a group. Perhaps the impossibility of having one Sunni representative in the age of conspiracy and in the Israeli era puts the Sunnis ahead of the Christian community and ahead of the fact that the conspiracy has created "Amal" and Nabih Birri while Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din and Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadallah hold positions that are in contrast to his stance. Therefore, the conspiracy failed to install a representative for the Sunni sect, and the Christians, more so than the Muslims, must understand that this is Sunni determination to express their adherence to Muslim unity, to national unity, and to national affiliation. As for the matter of who has been empowered to represent the Sunnis in

charting the map of the future, I have much respect for Prime Minister Rashid Karami and Salim al-Huss because I am confident that they will not sign any plan or accord that undermines their representation or excludes them from the decision-making process. I do not think that they claim to represent the sect even by suggestion. Apart from that, we are not in any way concerned about who has been consulted in this regard. I am certain that Prime Minister Karami and al-Huss will not approve any line that may lead to unimaginable consequences against anyone who has worked hard for fundamental rights and issued, be they national, pan-Arab, or Palestinian.

[Question] Is there coordination, as in the past, between al-Murabitun and the Islamic leaders?

[Answer] More than coordination. We are not two different parties. We are in one position and separation is only between the committed and those who violate the main pillars of this united position. Our position on the most important issued we are not facing is almost identical to that of most Islamic leaders, particularly the Grand Mufti, Shaykh Hasan Halid, Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, and a number of political leaders and popular influential personalities. We are in constant consultation with the prime minister and the speaker of the house within the framework of available boundaries in order to fashion and fortify morally the unity of the Islamic position.

[Question] Was the 16 April operation in retaliation for al-Murabitun's rejection of a specific political offer?

[Answer] Of course. It was in reply to our refusal to approve the plans that were put before us when we were discussing and trying to agree on a role for our movement in the chartered courses. This operation would have been more effective were it not for the steadfastness of al-Murabitun's faithful young fighters. Hence, there were proposals and discussions about forming a national leadership. We met with Walid Junblatt concerning the idea of disregarding parochial regional proposals and worn-out slogans, such as the war against Israel, on the basis of groupings in the name of patriotism and of elevating national action to a national level. In fact, the national command was announced during the meeting which took place between Walid Junblatt and the Libyan leadership. While we were pursuing these steps, the conspiracy, with its known intensity, was carried out against our institutions as well as against our national horizons which were expanding as a result of the proclamation of the national command and of our considering Lebanon as the central point in the Arab region. Here I would like to emphasize that besides targeting al-Murabitun and the Palestinian cause, the formation of national unity, which was announced under al-Qadhdhafi's leadership, was also an objective. I am confident that brother Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi will have to say a clear and decisive word in this regard. Otherwise, we have clear and factual information that allows us to say much in this regard as well.

[Question] How do you view the situation in West Beirut and what do you suggest for bringing it under control?

[Answer] We have already talked about this seriously deteriorating situation. I believe that West Beirut, Beirut the capital, cannot regain its position, its role, and its purity at the national, pan-Arab, and Islamic levels unless all the repercussions and schemes that have been carried out against it and its people since the 1982 war are rectified. In this connection I say that all the plots that have been carried out against Beirut and the trifling with its history and heritage are not impossible to correct if the concerned forces were to abandon their pontificating and adhere to preconceived plans. We as a position and a movement and as al-Murabitun forces have been able to penetrate this illusion through a rectification process with all politically democratic and militarily combative means. Now, the law of the armed jungle prevails over the Lebanese arena, Beirut particularly, for every Tom, Dick, and Harry to exploit. Therefore, we who are concerned with the unity of Lebanon and of Islamic, national, and Arab issues say: There is no benefit in any right, cause, principle, destiny, or future without force under existing circumstances. Hence, the urgent emergency decision by Al-Murabitun to announce the start of operations by units operating in Beirut following 16 April, specifically during the second round that accompanied the May round, was aimed at the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian camps in Beirut. This also confirms that the forces which are concerned with the rectification process in Beirut the capital have not surrendered to the existing scheme. Everyone is witness to the accomplishments of the fighting units in the capital during the post-April and May conspiracy period during which all the confessional, racist, and regional forces entered into an alliance to liquidate the Islamic, pan-Arab, and national presence in Beirut which had been established by the vanguard war represented by the Independent Nasirist Movement and al-Murabitun forces.

We are in the process of conducting a serious discussion at all levels to reach a framework that is able to effect a comprehensive rectification process and to get rid of the byproducts of the Israeli invasion of Beirut. This role can only be restored by a responsible realization of the value of Beirut's role. This urges us to caution anyone directly or indirectly involved in the Lebanese question to be aware of this truth. If this situation is not corrected in the heart, in the capital Beirut, all plans and proposals will remain isolated and unable to realize any firm and lasting solutions in Lebanon.

[Question] Do you agree with Prime Minister al-Huss' request for a deterrent force?

[Answer] Prime Minister al-Huss is free to say and believe whatever he likes. However, what he says is not necessarily binding upon the people of Beirut. For objectivity's sake, I wish that he had clearly asked for Syrian forces because this is the criterion of the way things are nowadays since everyone knows that there is no such thing as an Arab deterrent force.

[Question] Are you hoping for a solution for Beirut's security with the help of the Lebanese army?

[Answer] About the role of the army, we say that the existing sectarian and denominational armies cannot be stifled nor can they undertake any national

or pan-Arab role to unify Lebanon under current circumstances. West Beirut has the Amal army, 6th brigade, which has undertaken many heroic deeds in many instances. But it seems that the role of this sectarian denominational army is limited to the Red Line in West Beirut. The highlights of this role can be summed up in attacks against Beirut's history, heritage, and people, desecration of our sacred places, and betrayal of those who fought Israel, namely al-Murabitun and its institutions. Even the 'Abd-al-Nasir mosque and al-Murabitun cell were not spared "its heroic endeavors to maintain law and order." We have not heard that this army--and there are other armies such as the Maronite army in Sarba and the Druze army in Hammana--has fought even the Maronite army along the Green Line to foil the partition scheme, as its leaders contend.

This is on the national level. As for the pan-Arab level, the 6th Brigade had a role--to the extent of the arrangements that created it--in facing the Palestinian issue and the camps war. This army's tasks are still confined to the boundaries of the Red Lines, as I have already said, because the reasons for its existence are based on this role. We have never heard that it has taken a position to fight the Israeli army although 80 percent of its members are from the south. This precludes any possibility of imposing any reality within the framework of such schemes and plans based on this army--the 6th Brigade--at the national, Islamic, or pan-Arab level. My opinion of this brigade is shared by Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din.

[Question] What do you think about the ongoing contacts with Syria and what is your position as a movement on the Syrian role in Lebanon?

[Answer] We hear about things going on in Damascus, about people coming and going, and about plans and accords. We must make it clear that we do not care about any plans or solutions that have been put forth, beginning with the Zionist invasion, the presidential elections, the Lausanne conference, and the events that took Beirut by storm and ending with today's events. We wonder who has been appointed at this stage to sit at the table in order to chart the country's map or represent the people's interests and aspirations. Who has empowered such a person to do that? What legal or constitutional representation did he rely on? And beyond the legal and constitutional framework, does he have the power of popular representation? And whom does he represent? That is why we do not care about their working papers and their agreements. This is their concern and no one can squelch the aspirations or delusions of some forces. However, they must not think they can impose their delusions on certain groups in the country.

[Question] What are your reasons for doubting their representations? Does Walid Junblat not represent the Druze, does Nabih Birri not represent the Shiites, and has the Christian side not picked its representatives?

[Answer] The boundaries of their representation fall within the limits of the forces they command under the protection of force, the rifle, and all the regional realities that have allowed them to meet and decide the fate of the country and the people. Because their representation is limited and pre-programmed, this means that they are not absolute representatives of the whole country and all the people. A case in point is what happened in East Beirut, which we are still carefully watching.

[Question] Do events in East Beirut lead you to conclude that Christian representation is not adequate?

[Answer] Events confirm this. But our view is that the bases of our apprehensions and our distrust of what is going on are different from those that are now emerging in the Christian community. At any rate, we can understand how the parties to the Damascus contacts can agree to stop the crazy fighting for which other areas such as West Beirut are paying. However, their fighting and their accord are governed by an agreement on the map and on sharing the country and the people under the fundamental elements of the current emergency stage which has caused them to be so conceited as to believe that they can monopolize the decision-making process in everything. But surely, without a doubt, this stage will pass. So long as there are majority forces and so long as there is an Islamic and a Christian silent majority, a plan can be drawn up to counteract initiatives with the rifle and the gun.

[Question] Does al-Murabitun have a rifle, a gun, and a military establishment?

[Answer] Al-Murabitun's rifle is an ideological one used for the benefit of principles and not for the sake of confessional, sectarian, racist or Sh'ubi issues. Otherwise, we would not have been the target of the denominational scheme which coincides in one way or another with the Zionist scheme. We have refused to be symbols of a desired plan in the region. We have rejected the Sunni canton plan.

[Question] What can make the Damascus encounter a success? Is it a national conference or is it a national unity government to pave the way for conciliation?

[Answer] As I have said, we are not concerned with what is going on in Damascus, be it in form or substance. No amount of good will can achieve the necessary results. Before we talk about a national unity government or national conciliation, the basic forces that have an interest in building Lebanon must settle among themselves all questions related to what a country means and what Lebanon's Arab affiliations mean. The forces that are supposed to announce a formula for ending the ordeal must, through a joint and unified position, settle such issues as how to fight Israel and how to end the occupation. Here we must not mix the goal of ending the occupation with the historical and crucial struggle with the Zionist enemy over the question of Palestine and Jerusalem. This is a self-evident. Moreover, we must have a common denominator before reaching a stage of consultation for reaching sharply defined formulas and ideas for rebuilding Lebanon and repairing the damage that has been done to the country and the Lebanese people. Therefore, we have no confidence in any of the ongoing endeavors that carry great slogans for ending Lebanon's ordeal.

[Question] You believe that a national conference is nothing but a slogan?

[Answer] Yes, a slogan to cover up the plans of denominational forces desiring to realize confessional, sectarian, and Shu'ubi interests. I called

the Shtawrah conference a national rubberstamp conference and a cover-up for partition under the slogan of patriotism.

[Question] Even with Sunni participation?

[Answer] The problem is not a matter of Sunni participation. We want national participation. The favored forces at this stage lack a national, pan-Arab, and Islamic scope. As for the Christian community, we are watching events there and we can say that there is a silent majority that has expressed its position in one way or another. Furthermore, we cannot ignore or disregard the position and viewpoint of a Maronite Christian leader of Raymond Iddih's caliber. We agree with Iddih and with other leaders as well on specific basic issues.

[Question] Then you share Iddih's viewpoint regarding the Syrian role?

[Answer] We wish to deal with Lebanon's ordeal through a universal Arab role and position. We will adhere to this fundamental position and hope that the Arabs and the Arab League will heed their responsibilities in this regard to prevent a recurrence of Lebanon's ordeal and tragedy in many Arab countries in the future.

[Question] Damascus has reassured many leaders that even in the absence of Sunni representation in the tripartite meetings, the Sunni share, and consequently Sunni rights, will be preserved.

[Answer] We do not pay attention to such logic. Treatment of an ordeal that has ravaged the Lebanese people for the last 10 years is not a matter of shares. Treatment must be based on justice, equality, and dignity and must be able to rebuild Lebanon on a foundation of democracy, justice, and national equity and to eradicate all the faults which have existed since 1943 and are the cause of current events in Lebanon.

[Question] Are you calling for Sunni rejection similar to that of Christian rejection?

[Answer] First of all, we cannot say that the Christian position has been one of rejection in the full sense of the word. Second, we are in a state of confrontation for the sake of crucial national, pan-Arab, and Islamic goals. It appears that one objective in the schemes' dossier is to embroil people in name of the Sunni sect in the factional confessional game. We will resist this objective more intensely than we resist other factional confessional forces.

[Question] One proposed idea is the abolition of political denominationalism. How do you feel about that?

[Answer] This idea is both astounding and ludicrous. Those who are calling for the abolition of political denominations base their advocacy on the fact that they themselves are racist denominational forces. Otherwise, they would

not have been, as they imagine, nominated to chart the future map of Lebanon: the country and the man. We believe that under existing conditions there are no serious proposals in any of the basic directions necessary for Lebanon's reconstruction. Let them first agree on a basic principle of what the country's unity should be. Today they meet amidst a hullabaloo of propaganda, suggestions, and slogans about building Lebanon's unity while each of them, outside the convention hall, holds on to the basic components of his canton or emirate. It is under the auspices of such meetings that canton establishments, such as the TV station in East Beirut and the Marrush port in Khaldah, are born. How can the people who are facing their worst social and living ordeal be expected to yield to deception? How can they be expected to believe in plans and proposals for current courses.?

[Question] Do you demand that the denominational division of the three presidencies be preserved?

[Answer] I would like to deal with this matter from another angle. Much has been said, on the part of the Christians in particular, about the fact that the basic reason for the recent rejection is the mandatory presidential powers. I wish this rejection had focused on the mandatory powers of those who decide the country's future and unity, for all other matters become secondary when the key forces in the country's structure reach an understanding. As for mandatory powers, all that is understood from current events is that the main purpose of raising the subject of the three presidencies is not presidential powers but rather the mandatory powers of the prime minister. We know that the Lebanese constitution in our democratic parliamentary system grants presidential powers only by customary law and any powers outside the constitution are privileges which, if reformulated, will have to be made into law. But the main defect lies in undermining the authority of the executive power and the prime minister. I cannot express an opinion regarding the plan put forth in Damascus because I am not acquainted with it. However, available information indicates that Lebanon would have seven prime ministers, considering the fact that the prime minister would be surrounded by six deputies who would enjoy almost the same power as his own, with slight differences. Such a defect is underscored by the fact that these deputies would have the right of veto. Hence, it is clear that the target is the premiership. This issue is being raised in distorted ways so as to conceal any breach of such powers. And based on successive constitutional amendments related to the mandatory powers of the three presidencies the abolition of the premiership itself, and not only the powers of the prime minister, almost seems to be a practical and scientific reality in the formula to be forged.

[Question] Another proposed idea is the appointment of some members of parliament. How do you feel about that?

[Answer] At this point in our country's trying circumstances and with all due respect to many current deputies, I say that the term of their mandate is extended by contractual agreement, just like regular employment. But if we are serious and sincere about rebuilding the country's future, we must restore the people's decision-making role. In talking about the appointment system, our question is: Who is qualified to make such appointments? It is natural that under existing conditions, the three denominational forces will

monopolize the appointment process. This, plus the other things we have already stated, leads us to believe that the current courses are not serious about restructuring the country and the citizen. This does not prevent us from saying that the existing parliament, with due respect to the majority of its members, is no longer suitable for the coming phase in view of all that has undermined its role, for parliament elected the president of the republic under the auspices of Sharon and his occupation. This parliament approved the 17 May accord and the peace with Israel. Such undemocratic representation of the people must be stopped. I believe that it is possible for all forces that are managing the struggle at this stage to agree with us on this point. We must find an alternate formula that represents the people's aspirations and causes. Who can guarantee that Israel will not have a hand in the appointment process since it has maintained its role through certain forces? Why else would some sides, which are supposed to be allies of the Arabs or the Syrians, turn against this role?. Such a switch is not a personal stance and I believe that Syria must have its say in this shift because Israel, and the United States by extension, or vice versa, were behind it. Moreover, I say that the one who suggested resistance to the Syrian role was the American ambassador, according to Damascus. What else would compel these allies, these sudden allies of Arab options, to refuse? Hence, I say that Israel will have a hand in appointing deputies either directly or by proxy, at least in the areas under its control.

[Question] If an amendment of the electoral law is proposed, will you support one electoral district or a multielectoral district system?

[Answer] I hope we will not be lost in proposals such as these at this delicate stage. To begin with, we concede that Lebanon is one district. What I mean is that Lebanon is one united land and one united people. There are basic elements that have not yet been settled. We are still facing the principle of cantons and emirates, not to mention the Israeli occupation. We do have priorities which include the struggle with Israel with its national and pan-Arab dimensions, the unification of Lebanon, and ways to remove all defects from the body of Islamic unity. We reject any ideas that call for resisting the Zionist enemy up to the security belt and then recognizing Israel borders, safety, and existence. The value of our national resistance and our struggle to liberate our land lies in a fixed equation, in addition to our Arab Palestinian people's right to Palestine and Jerusalem. Therefore, our political program does not include any measures that tend to thwart or weaken crucial and strategic issues.

[Question] Do you also reject proposed ideas concerning political or administrative decentralization?

[Answer] In the shade of the existing scheme to settle the denominational forces with their factional and Shu'ubi interests, we reject any form of decentralization by any means, including administrative decentralization because those lurking forces that support, in one way or another, the Zionist plan to partition Lebanon need much less than administrative decentralization as an excuse to consolidate their cantons or emirates. Therefore, we support absolute national decentralization for all Lebanon

and reject any discussion that provides legal and constitutional protection for denominational cantons.

[Question] Another proposed idea as well is the army's return to the barracks for retraining and rehabilitation, perhaps in Syria. What is your opinion on this subject?

[Answer] The subject of the army is one of the most important reconstruction issues. Who will decide what kind of army, forces, barracks, and armaments it will have? Since 1976, we have been living with precedents set in 1981 and 1982. We all know that the Lebanese army used the occupation army as a shield to enter West Beirut. Thereafter, and under the slogan of the army's national composition and the abrogation of the 17 May accord, we were surprised with the presence of several denominational and sectarian armies. Should the army be sent back to the barracks at a time when all the various forces are capable of forming the army of the future? We consider them denominational sectarian militias which are almost more dangerous to the country than the popular factional party militias. It is interesting that the plan you are talking about was charted by the forces that organized and realized the confessional and sectarian multiarmy system and divided among themselves the establishment which we had hoped would create a national army governed by a national defense policy to safeguard the nation's if this is the kind of army they want, it is now a group of their personal armies and they want to build a federal army. At best, only a federal army or a multi-denominational army can be put together in the future but this is not enough to give us an effective force.

[Question] Will you at a certain stage support the idea of international troop support for the army to carry out an agreed-upon security plan?

[Answer] First of all, we believe that the army must be totally reorganized into a new structure based on national principles and clear missions. As we have said, the 6th Brigade has no mission outside West Beirut, where it is working against national and Islamic forces, against Muslim unity, and against the Palestinian cause, and it is not required to fight in the south. The same thing may be said about the Hammanah and Sarba Brigades. Moreover, how can the ubiquitous geographic, demographic, and denominational red lines be explained? And how can we explain the fact that these forces, which claimed to have defeated the superpower armies by abrogating the 17 May accord, stopped at the gates of Suq al-Gharb and Jizzin? Who drew the red lines? If the line in Suq al-Gharb is American, then it follows that the one in Jizzin is Israeli. How can we trust this army and how can we even imagine that an army in a state such as this can command international or Arab respect and trust? The army must be the backbone of the country and if we succeed in restoring the nation's main components, including the army, we can then think about whether we need Arab or international forces.

[Question] Realistically, there is a consensus that the army is incapable of bringing the situation under control, hence the idea of calling on Syrian, international, or Arab-international troop assistance for it.

[Answer] Right now we do not have just one army, but several armies. This is a problem we need to settle. As for assistance, we note that the Progressive Party, or the Druze position, has not yet announced its support of a Syrian army security role in the mountains and the Shuf. Furthermore, I wonder if Amal, in the presence of a joint Arab-international role, will accept a security role in Lebanon by the Lybian, the Iraqi, or even the Yemeni army. Therefore, we believe that this matter lacks the elements of seriousness. We do not need an international role. Let us look into changing the army's composition and structure to render it more effective. This is not impossible and is an indication of seriousness.

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ABU-AL-'ABBAS DETAILS ACHILLE LAURO HIJACKING

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[Interview with Abu-al-'Abbas by Faris Ghallub: "Abd-al-'Abbas Tells the Whole Story for the First Time"; date and place not specified]

[Text] The PLF is famous for its ability to develop new military tactics to fight the Zionist forces and send its fighters into occupied Palestine, notwithstanding all the severe measures the occupation forces adopt with the aim of closing the borders on the Palestinian people so as to prevent their return to the land of their forefathers to defend its dignity and sacrifice their lives within its boundaries. The PLF, for example, was the first Palestinian organization to undertake air operations when it used gliders with engines to shell an industrial district in the Haifa suburbs and an air balloon to land combat units in occupied Palestine. The PLF is also famous for its adherence to the honorable fighting principles and for its keenness in striking military targets without harming the innocent. For instance, the PLF denounces hijacking because it endangers innocent civilians and has refused from the outset to resort to such a tactic. That is why it was strange when the mass media announced last October that PLF fighters had hijacked the Achille Lauro cruise ship. To find out how and why this operation took place, AL-DUSTUR recently conducted an interview with PLO Executive Committee member Muhammad 'Abbas (Abu-al-'Abbas), who was elected PLF secretary general in the Seventh General National Conference, which was held in September 1985.

Abu-al-'Abbas is known for not deceiving himself or the public and for relying on a realistic political analysis in his work. He always says the truth, even about himself and against the objections of others.

[Question] A PLF group embarked on a combat mission against Zionist military targets, but they hijacked the ship that was carrying them to occupied Palestine instead of carrying out their assigned mission. How did that happen?

[Answer] On 6 October a combat group moved in retaliation against the Zionist operation against the PLO leadership in Hamman al-Shatt in Tunis to undertake a large-scale combat operation against the Israeli navy in Ashdod Harbor and, at the same time, to deal a mortal blow to the enemy with this large-scale raid. There is no doubt that this was not a spur-of-the-moment combat

mission and was not so much a direct response to the Zionist raid as it was an expression of the Palestinians' persistent and endless suffering as a result of the imperialist and Zionist racial persecution of the Palestinian people. At this point, some facts must be underscored.

The first fact is that the fighters were in fact PLF members, but were not within the structure of organizational direct-action cells. They left Lebanon in 1982 for various areas and agreed among themselves to continue the struggle. They contacted a military command member in the PLF, placing themselves at the disposal of the military command. They presented to this commander the idea of undertaking an action against the Zionist enemy by taking off from faraway areas. The military command a long time ago submitted to us a report in this regard and we approved the principle of undertaking such a combat operation against the enemy. It appears that the fighters had completed their final preparations for this operation, whose timing coincided with a possible retaliation against the Zionist raid. This means that the operation was ready and was awaiting a chance to be set in motion. The Zionist aggression was actually very propitious for making the personal decision to move. The group's aim was only to strike at the enemy. It used the ship as a means of transportation, just as any person uses a taxi to go from one place to another. These comrades did indeed succeed in camouflaging everything and set out for their target aboard the Achille Lauro, a ship that operates 9 months out of the year, or from March to November, around the Mediterranean on regularly scheduled cruises from Genoa to the Egyptian coast to Ashdod and back to Cyprus, Greece, and Genoa. This regular fixed course afforded a good opportunity for careful, long-range, quiet reconnaissance for the operation.

While the Palestinian fighters were in a state of combat readiness, and only 11 hours before reaching Ashdod Harbor, a coincidence changed everything. The ship's intercom system failed and the captain decided to send the ship's crew to call the passengers to dinner instead of making an announcement on the microphone. When a cook, who went to call the passengers to dinner, firmly knocked on the fighters' cabin door, they imagined that the ship's security had found them out because never before had they received a knock on the door without prior notice or a phone call or a request. The urgency with which the person knocked led the fighters to open the door quickly with their weapons ready. At this moment, the employee broke away from them, but they ordered him to freeze. The other employees gathered around and the group aboard the ship with its weapons was discovered. The leader of the combat group decided to take over the ship to ensure the group's safety and nothing more.

This is the way things developed at the discretion of the group leader, who wanted to save the group and himself from possible arrest at the hands of the captain and the crew because such an action could have landed them in the hands of the enemy in Ashdod. This unexpected turn of events changed everything and the facts clearly corroborate this matter.

From a military point of view, it is impossible to issue a military order to 4 fighters to seize a ship with 1,200 passengers aboard. Ships, as we all

know, are equipped with weapons and security personnel. Moreover, had the decision been to seize the ship, the incident would have been exploited politically and neither I nor anyone else would have been surprised by what had happened because I truly had no idea or knowledge that a hijacking of a passenger ship was likely or was going to take place.

It is very clear that the fighters' behavior aboard the ship clearly proves that the aim was not to harm the passengers or to hold them hostage. This is what the ship's crew and officers emphasized in their testimony before the Italian court on 6 December. When this group was contacted by radio, it responded immediately and headed for Port Sa'id without setting any conditions. They surrendered the ship and left it peacefully and everything would have been brought to a peaceful end were it not for American terrorism and haughtiness against these fighters, against Egypt, and against Italy.

[Question] When the incident got underway, news reports said that the hijacking took place while the ship was in Port Sa'id and that some passengers had remained in Port Sa'id and were not aboard. Why was that?

[Answer] The traditional journey of this cruise ship is along a set course that passes through Alexandria first and from there to Port Sa'id and Ashdod. When the ship sails into Alexandria, many passengers prefer to visit Cairo and the pyramids. At this particular location many passengers left the ship to visit Cairo and rejoin the ship at Port Sa'id because the ship makes a brief stop in Alexandria and sails on to Port Sa'id, which is closer. The ship was seized shortly before Port Sa'id, between Alexandria and Port Sa'id. This is where they were discovered! Of course the ship was supposed to dock at Port Sa'id for 1 hour to pick up passengers and go on to Ashdod. This leg of the cruise takes 8 hours. The cruise between Genoa and Ashdod takes 6 days. The fighters stayed over 5 days on board the ship without being detected. Had they wanted to seize the ship they would have done so before Alexandria, especially since Reagan's daughter, an Israeli family, and over 80 Americans were on board. And suppose that the mission was to seize the ship and harm the passengers, the number of persons aboard the ship was reason enough to hijack the ship and sufficient enough to hold passengers hostage. However, there was no intention of taking hostages and, therefore, it was not important who was on board the ship. The fact that the fighters were discovered forced them to take over the ship.

As you well know, we in the PLF have declared right from the start our opposition to any operation that harms innocent civilians. We say it clearly now and always that we do not support the taking of hostages and the harming of civilians, and if in this case some comrades were forced to seize the ship, we treat this incident as a happenstance and not as a consequence of a political decision.

[Question] Abu 'Ammar said that following the hijacking, the group contacted an anti-PLO country to get instructions. Does that mean that these individuals or some of them were agents of a hostile country who were able to infiltrate the front, or was their behavior, such as seizing the ship and forcing it to sail to Tartus, based on personal judgment alone?

[Answer] The fact is that Abu 'Ammar's claims were based on information coming from a party that had a basic position on the matter of armed struggle. I am of the opinion that the party that provided the information to brother Abu 'Ammar had no concern for the Palestinian armed struggle or for Palestinian organizations. I allow myself to say here that this was a great fallacy. The group was made up of dedicated fighters on a suicide mission for the sake of the homeland and were surprised by bad luck or misfortune. Talk about contacts with a hostile country has been refuted by the facts, rejected by the investigations that have been conducted, and disproved by the actions of the fighters themselves who responded to our appeal and headed immediately for Port Sa'id. But to accuse young fighters fighting for their homeland because of a mistake or a coincidence, this is where we specifically disagree with our brothers. We emphasize that the fighters deserve support and applause, even if their plan had to be altered at some point. American blackmail and intimidation must not cause us to doubt our fighters, especially since these are experienced ordinary individuals who are fully aware of their national cause. The following can be said in this regard: no contacts whatsoever, either with a hostile country or any other side.

[Question] Why did they go to the Syrian port of Tartus?

[Answer] The fact is that when their plan to go to Ashdod failed, based on what they told me, they wanted to go to Ashdod under the force of arms nonetheless. But they gave up this idea on the captain's advice, especially since the passenger list did not include enough Israeli or American citizens to be used for pressure. Consequently, going to Ashdod would have exposed the lives of all the hostages to imminent danger, so they preferred to go out into the Mediterranean until a safe way out of their dilemma could be found. My opinion is that the visit to Tartus, plus the contacts and discussion that took place, clearly suggest that they did not at all trust the Syrian regime. This is corroborated by the threats they made when they were off the Syrian coast. This means that the comrades' personal position conflicted with Syrian policy. When I questioned them, they said: "We decided to force quick intervention, being fully aware of the close Syrian-American relationship. We must bring this fact into the open. But when we heard the call on the radio, we returned to Egypt." We are aware of the fact that young men under 20, finding themselves in a difficult dilemma, use personal judgment after careful consideration without undue complications. They could, assuming for the sake of judgment that an agreement existed with Syria, have given themselves up to Syria, thus giving it a chance similar to that during the TWA hijacking to be the one to gain the release of the hostages and to do this and that. The comrades' position was very clear and everyone must clearly appreciate this.

I say again that we must not be intimidated by American threats and browbeating and must be truthful at any cost. What sets a revolutionary apart is his commitment to tell the truth, no matter how difficult it may be, and to cherish his work, even if it fails, not out of petulance but out of a determination to succeed the next time.

[Question] What information does the PLF have about the American citizen who the Reagan administration claims was killed during the hijacking? Is there any evidence that American agencies perpetrated this murder in an attempt to discredit the PLF and the Palestinian people? And what role did the Syrian regime play in this affair?

[Answer] This is an invention better left alone especially since much has been said about it. The fighters aboard the ship did not hurt anyone nor did they murder anyone. We do not say this to escape American reprisal, but because it is the truth. The truth is that the ship had 14 American citizens aboard. Had the fighters wished to murder Americans, they would have killed them all or would have picked healthier and more effective individuals. Facts indicate that a security arrangement was worked out in this case and my guess is that it was a direct American-Syrian one, especially since the ship's captain did not announce anyone missing from the ship until 4 or 5 hours after the hijackers left the ship. Upon repeated questioning by Egyptian security and by me personally via radio, he said that everything was fine and that there were no casualties. Suddenly, 4 hours later, he discovered two persons missing and an hour later he found one of them, an Austrian girl. He later said that one American, named Klinghoffer, had actually been missing.

Of course, I must tell a story I have never told before. One hour after the fighters left the ship, four gunboats, possibly American, came to the ship when it was outside the territorial waters to conduct a search. These boats, 4 hours later, could have discovered a casualty or a dead man. Most probably they found a dead man, this old man, who may have died after 3 days of starvation, fright, or illness or even of negligence because no one was in a position to take care of him. The final announcement of his death came after the boats made arrangements to turn his body over to Syria, taking advantage of the threats the fighters had made when they were off the Syrian coast. This is what happened when America turned over the body to Syria, which dutifully claimed to have recovered it from the water and to have done an autopsy which revealed three bullets in it. The fact is that this old man did not require any bullets. My guess is that had there been an intent to kill him, there would not have been any need to waste the very few bullets the fighters had.

The case of the American casualty may have been a joint American-Syrian attempt to discredit the PLO, the PLF, and the Palestinian fighters. It is nothing but a fabricated story that cannot be substantiated. Naturally, attempts are being made now to force some of the fighters to confess to the murder. We are aware of what detention and blackmail can do, especially since the fighters have been subjected to sharp, outrageous criticism by some of their friends. They have been accused of contacting a hostile country or collaborating with the Mosad and doing many other things. Such accusations can affect their morale to the point of their making false confessions. But I am well aware of the truth because after the fighters left the ship, I questioned them about everything and they assured me that they had not harmed anyone. Furthermore, why would they harm this American from among 400 other passengers? The other 400 passengers have confirmed that the fighters treated them very well and the ship's captain confirmed

that before leaving the ship, the fighters paid him \$100 for the tobacco they had used. He repeated this in his published court testimony. He said that when they broke a piece of glass, they paid him \$100 to cover its cost. One fighter personally served coffee to an old woman, according to her testimony. How can we reconcile such absolute kindness and the murder of an old man? Why was not the murder announced as soon as the fighters left the ship, assuming that the captain had been under threat of arms? Why did he announce the casualty 4 hours after the boats had visited the ship? And why did Syria move so fast? Under normal circumstances, when a large ship sinks at sea, the search operation takes no less than a month and, in some cases, years without it being found. God be praised! This casualty in his wheelchair was suddenly found by the Syrian navy in 2 days. Is the Syria navy that efficient in other operations? Of course not, despite my best wishes for it to attain the level of efficiency it exhibited when finding the casualty. At any rate, it is very clear that America and the Syrian regime have a common interest against the Palestinian people and the PLO.

[Question] America's behavior, such as its collusion with Israeli aggression in Tunis and its interception of the Egyptian airliner, proves that it is a direct party to the Arab-Israeli conflict and not just an intermediary. What should Arab and Palestinian reaction to such behavior be?

[Answer] The truth is that the most significant outcome of the incident was the exposition of the American role. Events, which culminated in American piracy against an Egyptian airliner, proved that America is the direct enemy. In the past, Israel used to carry out U.S. policies in our region. For the first time, America has entered the battle directly through its fleet and its air force. This makes it easier for us to expose the true enemy to our people and our public. In this framework, we must once again call attention to the fact that America and Israel are one and that Israel is nothing but an American state. It is on this premise that we must deal with the Zionist American enemy. What happened must be a good lesson to those who have long bet on some kind of an American role in favor of our national cause. Is it possible for America to be the adversary and the arbitrator at once, especially since it is engaged in a war against the Palestinian people?

It is clear that America has declared war on the PLO through Reagan's decision to fight me and the PLF in our capacity as part of the PLO and the Executive Committee. This decision is a declaration of war which warrants a counter-declaration of war. We do not have to use the same tactics. America and imperialism are on one side and we and the other revolutionary forces are on the other side. We and all the forces that have been the target of American terrorism are on the other side, and these forces are something to be reckoned with.

Indeed, attempts to neutralize America in the conflict are very stupid. Unfortunately, we still see in the Palestinian street and within the Arab situation people trying to adorn America's ugly image. Many have gone so far as to express opinions that serve American interests and harm the cause under the pretense of preserving the Palestinians' reputation. A case in point is the comment of many people have made from a Reaganite perspective against our comrades' action, which may be metaphorically called the

Achille Lauro incident because I do not look upon what happened as a hijacking but rather as a happenstance.

The term for what happened to the Achille Lauro from the viewpoint of rejecting hijacking operations is one thing, and from the American perspective another thing. We are against hijacking operations, even by our fighters. But we do not adopt this position to please America nor do we express it to convince America that we are good guys. At any rate, a cowboy does not deal with good guys. Let those people understand this. To a cowboy, the only good guy is an agent. They must also beware that all the statements they expounded harmed them and hurt their reputations with the Americans who tried to adorn their image before them. Those Palestinians and Arabs who at one point thought to raise their voices next to the American voice in condemning the PLF and its leadership must understand that they will only lose themselves, for they must remember the saying: "It was devoured the day the white bull was devoured."

America is after the PLF and Abu-al-'Abbas, not because the PLF is a center of power in the Palestinian arena and not because Abu-al-'Abbas is America's only enemy, but because the PLF and Abu-al-'Abbas are an integral part of the PLO, an integral part of the Palestinian struggle. America has noticed that a large number of those who falsely claim affiliation with the Palestinian people and the PLO speak its language and follow in its footsteps. Therefore, the time is right to castigate Abu-al-'Abbas and move him out of the way. But the next target will be another symbol and another organization and this is what must be made perfectly clear. Those who are blinded by organizational bigotry, by news agencies, and by other media must imagine themselves in the proper position. They are America's next target, even if they are the most moderate people. The Palestinian is wanted by Reagan and America only because he was born to Palestinian parents even though he may carry U.S. citizenship. Witness the Alex 'Awdah affair. Why was Alex 'Awdah killed? Was he a terrorist? Alex 'Awdah represented the ideal Palestinian and the urbane Palestinian as well.

Why were Muhammad Milhim and Bishop Elia Khoury rejected? Why? There are thousands of questions. Why are elderly Palestinians and Palestinian children being murdered? Only because they are Palestinians. When some Palestinians stand up and add their voices to that of American hatred in condemnation of us, they dig their own graves. Whereas we can actually lean and rely on millions of Palestinian and non-Palestinian fighters, the day will come when they will not find any support or any welcome and will have lost both this world and the hereafter.

America can only be counteracted with American logic and the enemy can only be confronted by a serious responsible stance. Fear of America, which leads some to voice these fallacies, is the most conspicuous state of imbalance to be manifested in recent months. Dreaming about some kind of a role for America is futile, in my opinion, and if we were to judge by the nature of the existing struggle, we must always think of America and Israel as one target and one framework and not as an alliance. I reject the claim that there is merely an alliance between America and Israel just as I also reject

the claim that Israel is blackmailing America. No, this is not true, it is a big lie. The fact is that Israel's interests and America's interests are one. America has an interest in the Middle East called Israel and Israel has an interest in power called America. Hence, Israel is an integral part of America: it is an American state. Just as we must not separate Miami or Chicago from America, so we must not separate Israel from America. Consequently, just as it is impossible for America to bargain over Miami, it is impossible for it to bargain over Israel unless a serious change in the balance of power can be effected, thus compelling it to pull out or get rid of one of its children in order to protect its greater body. This is unlikely today for it requires great effort and a change in the balance of power.

[Question] The United States has been focusing its efforts on foiling the Jordanian-palestinian initiative and on excluding the PLO from the peace process. Do you expect the Syrian regime to offer the "Salvation Front" as an alternative to the PLO in the peace process? And what will be the outcome of such an endeavor?

[Answer] I can say that the number one enemy of peace is America and I mean Israel as well. The parties that stand to gain most from continued tension are America and Israel. Therefore, it stands to reason that America should obstruct and sabotage any serious tendency toward peace in the area. It is not satisfied with that alone. It is trying to **maintain its** aggressive policy at the expense of a constant Palestinian retreat. Every day its leaders come up with another demand and every day they demand another concession with the ultimate goal of annihilating us. Even the Jordanian-Palestinian initiative, regardless of what we think of it and irrespective of our stand on the Jordan-Palestinian accord, is opposed by Israel and America. They want to cross out the Palestinian number which is represented by the PLO. Hence, our current central task is to safeguard the PLO because this means safeguarding the backbone of our next movement. I believe that America is in agreement with the Syrian regime to the point of congruence on this point. Syria wants to annihilate the PLO and America wants to annihilate the PLO. America realizes that the secret of Palestinian strength lies in the PLO and Syria realizes that as well, and so the two are in agreement. Annihilation of the Palestinian people can only be realized by annihilating their sole legitimate representative, hence the American game through some independent Palestinians and some Arab parties and the Syrian game through the Salvation Front and its Arab relations. We do not need an alternative organization. No, the Salvation Front will not be an alternate organization, not because the front does not wish to be but because the plan calls for the non-existence of such a thing as the PLO, regardless of who may be at its head. Thus, we see that the attempt to form an alternate organization is not aimed at representing the Palestinian people, but rather at wiping out their representatives. The existence of two liberation organizations automatically means skepticism about both of them and representation for no one. Syrian hints about an alternate organization based on the Salvation Front play into American hands and represent one more step toward delivering the coup de grace to the PLO and its role as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

If the mission of the Salvation Front is to be an alternate organization to the PLO vying for the right to represent the people with a view to doing away with both organizations, it will be possible for it to succeed. This is easy to achieve with Syrian backing. However, if it is meant to be a representational substitute for the PLO, I think that the first people to oppose it will be the Americans and the Syrian regime.

[Question] Developments indicate that peace endeavors may fail. In such an event, do you expect the Zionist enemy to carry out Sharon's plan to turn Jordan into an alternate homeland for the Palestinians? And what are the possible consequences of such a move?

[Answer] This is indeed related to the previous question. I believe that current developments do not suggest to us the possibility of success for just peace endeavors. Basically, such a possibility does not exist because of American-Zionist intransigence and Arab internecine fighting. Consequently, the logical idea is to eradicate the Palestinian cause and all the Palestinian people.

Within the framework of such eradication lies a tremendous number of possibilities: the Yigal Alon plan, the Sharon plan, and any other plan that can contribute to our removal from our national cause. We believe that the strongest candidate in the future will be the Sharon plan and not the Alon one, which has become unattainable. The Sharon plan is better because it kills two birds with one stone: the occupation of new territory east of the river and an alternate homeland for the Palestinians east of the river. Such a plan would enhance the enemy's unity, bring greater devastation upon our strength, and, among other things, create new trouble in the Arab homeland, particularly in the wake of the Jordanian-Palestinian detente. An agreement does exist and this agreement has at least ended the struggle between the PLO and Jordan. The absence of struggle between the PLO and Jordan is a positive state which we must mention. The details of the agreement are another matter which must be discussed within the framework of our debate on this accord.

Thus we find that a decisive task awaits the Jordanians and us, all the anti-imperialist forces and us, which can be summed up in the need to unify our efforts to counteract the Sharon plan, if not next year, then no later than a few years from now if we fail to employ or change the balance of power, forcing the enemy to think with a different mentality.

[Question] What are the other Zionist plans for the foreseeable future and what steps can the Palestinian people and the Arab nation take to counteract them?

[Answer] The main plan of the enemy is to consolidate its settlements on the West Bank and expel the Palestinians from Palestine and, subsequently, to implement the Sharon Plan. Of course, in order to succeed in this plan, objective circumstances must prevail and I believe that the objective Arab situation provides the best opportunity for the enemy to implement its plans.

Such plans must be faced today rather than in the future. In the future, we are going to lament the East Bank as we have lamented the West Bank. Today, however, we have enough time to do much counteracting. We can actually pave the way for new facts and realities that can force the Arabs and the world to take notice. The most prominent course of action to which we must adhere is armed struggle because this is the only course that commands notice and the only one that can mobilize our masses. We may disagree on any issue, but there is no quarrel over our right and our confrontation with the enemy.

[Question] There are indications that the enemy is carrying out its strategy for the eighties in several Arab countries by stirring up sectarian chauvinism. An example is the recent trouble in Algeria between the Berbers and the Arabs. What must the Arab nation do to counteract such eventualities?

[Answer] The Arabs' problem is that they are aware of their enemy's program, but they do not take any positions to confront it. The enemy's strategy is not a secret and I do not say that it has not been read. No, the Arabs do indeed read, but they do not benefit from what they read. The enemy's program of creating sectarian enmities, splintering the Arab position, inciting the Arabs into internal fighting, and planting minorities to rule the majority is nothing new, and confronting it is not difficult either. Confrontation can take off from one point which can be summed up in engaging the enemy in a counteroffensive and achieving a minimum level of Arab solidarity. These two things are enough to stop or impede the Zionist program at the Arab level. With serious support for the Palestinian national struggle, the tables can be turned against the enemy's program. Our security is being tinkered with and the same thing will happen in North Yemen, Saudi Arabia, the Arab Maghreb, and Sudan. In other words, this is the way things are headed and, consequently, our confrontation can be achieved only by an Arab program that is able to throw off the enemy and to stop its program at the executive level.

[Question] Can a counteroffensive be waged using the same tactic: sectarian strife within the Zionist community between eastern and western Jews, for example?

[Answer] Certainly this is their most salient domestic weakness. However, we must put it in its proper perspective and must not bet on it. Our only betting should be on our fundamental issues. Israeli society is ready for a serious, vehement domestic struggle and all we have to do is to dig up some things because this is an existing situation which can be exploited. The eastern Jews within Israel face a kind of ugly persecution that can indeed be exploited. Eastern Jews must realize that the Israeli ruling establishment is an integral part of American imperialism and, therefore, exercises the same kind of persecution against them as against the Palestinian people and that we share a common interest as Palestinians and Jews in fighting and destroying this establishment. This tactic can yield results, but it must not be the main one, only one of the many other means. It may become one of the important tactics in the future, but we must not rely on it as a main one in our present struggle against the enemy. My guess is that a time will come in the future when Israel will suffer class and sectarian strife.

Yesterday I read a news item about "Nuturi Carta" demanding independent passports which state that these citizens are against Israel, against the state. Such a stand preceded that of many others who claim to be against Zionism and Israel.

Actually, we must explain to the Arab and Palestinian public that it does have among the Jews. The Nuturi Carta stand, irrespective of its background, incarnates the truth and must be appreciated. We must make good use of such a position. We may find inside Israel many forces able to fathom the Palestinian struggle. Hence, action at this level within the Zionist entity could be beneficial.

[Question] An Arab newspaper claimed that you wrote a secret report purporting that the Mosad had infiltrated PLF ranks to engineer the ship hijacking. What is your comment on this and what are the motives behind the publication of such news?

[Answer] Actually, when I read the news I was very upset. However, after careful scrutiny, I calmed down a little. My guess is that the side which leaked this news is close to the Mosad and wants to expose our reactions and tendencies, particularly since this information is completely groundless and it is regrettable that it was reported in an Arab newspaper. As for the report, I have not submitted any reports to the Central Council, neither verbally nor in writing. Everything that took place was explained to the press and via direct contacts with my colleagues in the Palestinian command many days before the Central Council convened, so there was no need for the council to discuss this matter. But accusing the fighters who undertook such a momentous mission against the enemy of working for the Mosad goes against Palestinian reason. The PLF can be proud of the fact that it is the only organization about which the Mosad does not have enough information, that none of its members has collaborated with the Israeli enemy, and that the Mosad has not been able to uncover any of its combat endeavors. Now the Mosad, through its agents, is trying to spread this poison. My only concern right now is to emphasize that the front is determined to carry on its armed struggle and vehemently determined to escalate the struggle against imperialism worldwide and against Zionism. Time will bear me out and there is no need to comment on such a false and absurd press report.

[Question] Two explosions were set off in Paris and it was said that a person phoned to claim that the PLF was responsible for this operation.

[Answer] My guess is that this person was a Mosad or CIA operative. America and Israel are trying to discredit the Palestinian fighter worldwide. We have become accustomed to their perpetrating criminal activities to pin on us. This operation cannot be outside the scope of Mosad and American activities. The PLF is innocent and has never contemplated such operations. It is against the murder of innocent civilians and has never undertaken any action against civilians. Even the ship operation was not directed against the ship or the innocent. Now America is persisting in its attempts to discredit the Palestinian fighter and we will reply to this in the way we deem appropriate.

I am not revealing any secrets when I say that the PLF has called the international revolutionary forces and parties to a secret general conference to establish together the best means of combating American terrorism worldwide. We have actually received replies and have held long dialogues with several of these forces, who have set a final date and place for this conference. The results of this conference will be announced in a subsequent open communique without compromising confidentiality.

The growing relationship between the PLF and the international revolutionary forces that are confronting American terrorism has taken giant leaps forward following the American piracy against us. We will, not to say we have already, retaliate in our own direct or indirect way and in cooperation with our friends against American terrorism.

With regard to the Zionist enemy, it is evident that the tempo of combat operations has picked up recently. We proudly say that the front played a key role in this escalation and that some combat operations, which have already been carried out, we will announce at a later date because the security situation required that we not announce them now. It is ironic that America and the Arabs pin on us operations with which we have nothing to do, such as the Paris incident, while some key operations we undertake remain unannounced so as not to embarrass those Arabs who are afraid of America. Our fighters actually carried out several operations last week, but we have not announced them because we do not want to enter into peripheral battles with those Arabs who are afraid of Israel and who pay undue attention to America. I believe that our revolutionary allies worldwide are fulfilling their ideal duty and the coming months will witness a qualitative development in the struggle against imperialist interests in the world and against American terrorism worldwide.

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RESTORATION OF CAMPS, OFFICES, ARMS SUPPLIES

Beirut LE REVUE DU LIBAN in French 14-21 Dec 85 pp 33-35

[Article by Nelly Helou: "History in Three Phases of the Palestinian Camps in Lebanon"]

[Text] In the three preceding articles of this report, we discussed the establishment of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon in 1947 to 1948; then their progressive transformation into fortifications and arsenals for accumulating weapons of all calibers and their ammunition. We also referred to the Palestinian interference in the internal affairs of a country that accorded them the greatest hospitality.

In this final article we discuss the situation as it appears in 1985 in the camps in the south and in west Beirut, 3 years after the Israeli campaign "Peace for Galilee."

Certain realities are making themselves evident: the return of the Palestinian leaders charged with reestablishing the political-military bases and the resistance networks dismantled in June 1982. Also, it is noted that despite the Syrian pressures, 'Arafat's standing is still quite high among the Palestinians. The latter are restrengthening the camps, although controlled by "Amal" and the 6th Brigade, and are renewing alliances with the Lebanese and training fighters.

The problem of the presence of more than half a million Palestinians in Lebanon thus remains unsolved and will always constitute an obstacle in any inter-Lebanese solution.

Return of the Fighters

During 1984 there was a lot of talk about the return of the fighters to the Palestinian camps of west Beirut. According to a report in the London SUNDAY TIMES, the PLO had reportedly quietly started its return to the Lebanese capital. The report stated that 1,500 guerillas had returned to Beirut and added: "The PLO's new leadership meets in the Club Sportif of Haifa, next to the Bourj Brajneeh camp. The returning Palestinians are not all allies of Syria, which has not succeeded, despite all its efforts, in stopping the flow of pro-'Arafat people, whose return is facilitated by the financial

capabilities of Fatah and the cooperation of some Lebanese quarters. As for the fighters of the dissident branch, they have reportedly returned to Beirut at the request of the Syrian authorities."

The French weekly L'EXPRESS, in an article published on 10 August 1984, wrote: "Without weapons and without noise! Hardly 2 years after their dispersion to nine Arab countries, the Palestinian fighters are returning to west Beirut. Military leaders have arrived secretly to return to their old sanctuaries, either via the Syrian channel, or by landing under false identities from Cypriot ships plying from Larnace to Beirut."

According to JEUNE AFRIQUE, 2,000 to 2,500 fedayeen have returned to the Lebanese capital since the withdrawal of the U.S. Marines. "They are busy reorganizing their offices and repairing their bases..."

In the Lebanese daily LE REVEIL, an article dated 16 August 1984 launched a cry of alarm: "Having left with all honors by the front door, the fedayeen are returning here on the sly, through the window. They have returned in successive waves, benefiting from two favorable circumstances: the mountain war in September 1983 and the battle of west Beirut in February 1984."

Citing "Voice of Lebanon," the daily provides the following information: "In west Beirut and its suburb there are 67 Palestinian leaders and 2,500 fedayeen belonging to dissident Abou-Moussa of the Saiqah (Syrian allegiance), the Democratic Popular Front, the PFLP, and the Popular Front-General Command (PFLP-GC) of Ahmed Jibril. Offices of the various PLO organizations have reappeared in the 'refugee' camps at Bourj Brajneh, Sabra, Daouk, and Shatila, as well as in the so-called 'national' regions: Shiyah, Haret Hreik, Ras el-Nabeh, Ouzai, Bir Hassan, Mazraa, Mousseitbe, etc. The leaders are training the young people between 14 and 18 years old, and as usual they are playing on religious feelings to keep the support of the Sunnis, making that community believe that they would help it stand up to the Druze-Shiite alliance imposing its hegemony in west Beirut and in the southern suburb. At the same time, the Palestinians are supporting the so-called 'left-tending' small groups by providing them reinforcements and arms, hard cash, and men."

Every Male Palestinian a "Potential Fighter"

This issue of the return of the Palestinian fighters came under discussion in 1984. It was raised especially by the Western media and was the subject of contradictory statements and articles on the local and regional scene. Obviously the Lebanese Sunni circles, led by Rashid Karami, denied the fact.

In reality, it was not so much keeping a count of the Palestinian fighters entering secretly or under Syrian cover that was the main aspect of the issue. Much more important and serious was the return of those capable of achieving the military, political and financial staffing of the Palestinian resistance; of clandestinely restoring the basic structures within a short time. Nothing easier than to recruit the personnel: every male Palestinian is a potential fighter. All the information sources thus prove that this staffing has been underway since 1984; and that it is going on both within the camps and also in various quarters of west Beirut and the southern suburb. For example, one can

cite the case of Khaled Khalife, an official in an 'Arafat security office in Hamra sector, and who lives in the Khayme apartment house. On the other hand, Abou-Fida Hamrane is assigned to establish relations between the PFLP-GC of Ahmad Jibril and the Amal movement, particularly with the Akl Hamiye group. In Acca hospital, Dayfallah Yahye is assigned to organize a whole network, in which nurses are involved, including Siham Taha. At Nahmeh, on the south coast, the PFLP-GC is establishing excellent relations with Arab el-Maslakh.

The various Palestinian organizations, loyalist or dissident, Fatah, Security 17, Saiqah, PFLP, DFLP, PLF, ALF and PFLP-GC have thus all returned to west Beirut, to open offices, reorganize their bases, recruit and train new units (Palestinian and Lebanese), and establish contacts with the political leaders. Often the Palestinians have returned with false papers, by the mountain route, helped by Jumblatt's Druzes or by disembarking at the military bath, coming from Larnaca.

Obviously, following the Israeli operation of June 1982, the resistance's room for maneuver in Beirut is limited. The restoration of the infrastructure is being carried out secretly, under the cover of sports clubs and small Lebanese groups. It is good to keep in mind this thought by Abdelatif, one of Nayef Hawatmeh's close colleagues: "There remains in Lebanon a political freedom that we have found nowhere else in the Arab countries, and we exploit it discreetly."

Control of the Beirut Camps

Between 19 May and 17 June 1985, there were lethal clashes with heavy weapons between the Shiites, that is, Amal and the 6th Brigade, and the Palestinian fighters. The war of the camps reportedly resulted in more than 585 killed and 2,370 wounded on the Lebanese side, while the Palestinians, according to the figure arrived at by Abou Jihad, the Fatah number two man, lost more than 800 killed and 4,000 wounded.

The big Shiite-Palestinian argument was primarily over the problem of security in the camps. Amal and the 6th Brigade reject the principle of self-security and want to put the camps under their control. The Palestinians, on the other hand, want at all costs to regain their freedom lost in 1982.

The war of the camps ended with the "Damascus agreement" concluded on the edge of the Barada between Amal and the Palestinian National Salvation Front (PNSF), which includes the Palestinian organizations (pro-Syrian) hostile to the PLO leader. This agreement was based on the following points: return of the Amal militia to the positions they occupied before the fighting started; adoption of the principle that security of the camps is an integral part of the security of Beirut; and deposit of the Palestinians' heavy and medium weapons outside the camps under the supervision of a joint commission.

Since June 1985, Amal and the 6th Brigade have controlled the Palestinian camps of Sabra, Shatila and Bourj Brajneh for the reason that these two Shiite groups have since February 1984 assumed security in west Beirut and its southern suburb. In principle, the PNSF, of Syrian allegiance, is in a majority within the camps.

However, the reality is very different. Though Amal and the 6th Brigade were able at the time of the battle of the camps to take control of Sabra camp, the fact is that the Daouk sector, near the camp, resisted and was able to maintain its alliance with the PSP and the Mourabitoun. Likewise at Mousseitbe there are a large number of Palestinians allied with the PSP.

Shatila camp has been even more difficult to control. Although these two camps are placed under the surveillance of the PNSF, it appears that 50 to 60 percent of their people still favor 'Arafat. At Bourj Brajneh, this proportion is even higher: 80 to 90 percent of the Palestinians living in this "fortress" are reportedly 'Arafat people. The battle had touched only the periphery of the camp, since the interior was well fortified.

Furthermore, the battle of the Palestinian camps revealed that the inter-Palestinian solidarity is stronger than the interest ties linking Syria and its Palestinian allies. At the time of the battle, Abou-Moussa, "Damascus' man," did not hesitate to shell from the mountain, under Jumblatt occupation, the positions and quarters of Shiite dominance, while various Palestinian factions proclaimed their determination to struggle against Amal to the end.

Source of Arms in the Camps?

Military activity is somewhat reduced in Sabra. On the other hand, it remains apparent at Shatila and in full swing at Bourj Brajneh. The war of the camps and the Shiite-Druze war in November in west Beirut proved that the Palestinians have an impressive military arsenal.

This leads one to believe that many arms caches were not removed by the Israelis in June 1982, or by the Lebanese army at the time of establishment of Greater Beirut. One can also conclude that arms are continuing to flow into the camps, as well as ammunition, which are immediately put underground.

Money is obviously the best entry visa for weapons and ammunition into the camps of Sabra, Shatila and Bourj Brajneh.

According to a Western press report, "The assets of the PLO have been estimated at \$5 billion. In addition to apartment buildings and offices in Middle East capitals, and shares in American companies, the PLO runs a hotel and airline in the Maldives. Yasir 'Arafat has spent large sums buying weapons in order to reestablish his forces in the Palestinian camps in the south, Beirut and Tripoli.

"Mr 'Arafat has leased part of an island 75 kilometers square in the Red Sea, Kamaran Island. The total 'key money' \$25 million. Annual rent: \$1 million. Underground shelters have been prepared and the runway lengthened. The PLO, which recently sold three Fokker 27's, has established an embryo air force in North Yemen composed of MiG 21's and MI 18 helicopters. Also, it has invested \$25 million in a cement plant near Sanaa," the article concludes.

In a statement reported by AFP on 29 October, 'Arafat admits sending arms to the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Also, it is considered that the PLO leader can easily bribe the PSP (Jumblatt has received \$2 million for his port of Khalde), the Mourabitoun, Amal, the 6th Brigade, etc. in order to get all kinds of weapons and ammunition into the camps. There is so much connivance in this quagmire, this cavern that is west Beirut. Also, the term medium weapons used in the Damascus agreement is very vague.

The camps are on the way to becoming fortresses again. The battle to disarm them again will be even tougher and more costly in men and material, particularly in regard to Bourj Brajneh camp. Amal was never able to do anything against this camp, particularly since the Palestinians have the support of the PSP and the Mouribatoun. Would Saiqah, and the El-Assad and Hittine brigades, all three pro-Syrian, undertake a new war of the camps?

Civilian Life in the Camps

Civilian life has resumed though with the reservation of facing any eventuality. The shelters have been repaired, and food and medicine stocks replenished. The camp committees are still functioning, now in cooperation with the PNSF. The purpose of these committees is to handle the social, administrative and cultural problems. The Palestinians have hospitals at Sabra and Shatila (named Gaza and Akka), Austrian and Norwegian social-medical centers, and an UNRWA clinic. These establishments suffered in the battle of the camps and are gradually getting back into operation.

The UNRWA has also restored its schools, though not at the past attendance.

Realities in the Southern Camps

"The security of the camps is linked to the security of Saida, which has been assumed by the town's political council." This was stated some time ago by the political council in the southern capital, a council composed of the main political organizations and personalities in the district capital, following a meeting with the representatives of the PNSF. Theoretically, the camps in the Sidon region are controlled by the dissident Abou-Moussa and the local political council. In reality, the 'Arafat people have always had a discreet but effective presence. Though there are 35,000 Palestinians in the camps, one should know also that almost 20,000 of them live in the souks and near the port, where their political-military activity is more difficult to control.

As for weapons, here again one should not be deceived: Ain Heloue is the counterpart of Bourj Brajneh, and has been reestablished since 1982 as a veritable fortress that it would be difficult to occupy without the help of the pro-Syrian brigades already stationed in the south.

In Tyre and its surroundings that are predominantly Shiite, the Lebanese population is estimated at 150,000, compared to 65,000 Palestinians. This very high proportion is in itself a factor for destabilization.

Amal has taken over maintaining order in the camps, where there is no apparent military activity. On the eve of the battle of the camps, in which Amal

suffered many victims, Amal had further tightened its control over the Palestinians, often making preventive arrests. Camp Zifta is sometimes nicknamed "Ansar Shiite" by the Palestinians.

The Shiites oppose having the fedayeen participate in the resistance to Israel in the south, but accept their aid on the technical and financial levels.

The actual facts on site are somewhat different. More than one Palestinian leader has already said that the fedayeen are participating directly in the southerners' resistance. Also, the Israeli incursion into southern Lebanon outside the security zone on 3 December against a PFLP-GC base proved that the Palestinians are indeed present and active in the south, and that they are reestablishing their bases and networks. From the south to Beirut is it a return to the starting point?

Only Solution

According to UNRWA figures, there are in Lebanon today almost 500,000 Palestinians divided as follows: 225,000 in the camps, 95,000 outside, and 180,000 having entered Lebanon illegally. These figures are short of the reality, because since 1969 the influx of Palestinians has been such that any reversal is difficult. One can talk about almost 700,000 Palestinians out of a Lebanese population of 3 million. The proportion is huge, even if one settles for the 500,000 figure, which means that one-sixth of the Lebanese population is composed of Palestinians. Do you know any country in the world that would tolerate such a percentage of foreigners on its territory?

Is their presence in the camps--fortresses--around the capital and in the major cities an acceptable fact, with the danger that this involves on the security level?

The problem of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon remains unsolved. The Palestinians are reestablishing their resistance network; the leaders have all returned to Beirut, the weapons easily reach the camps, the PLO money overcomes with dollar blows all the reticence and apprehensions. Again they are renewing the political-military alliances on site and participating directly in the fighting on one side or other in the military conflicts between Lebanese. This was true in the latest bloody clashes in west Beirut between Druzes and Shiites.

The Palestinian presence is too heavy a burden for Lebanon to bear, both on the demographic and economic levels, a burden that has become even heavier in the past 20 years with the Palestinian interference in our internal affairs, which caused the war of 1975.

What is even more serious is that one can see no solution to this massive presence. For Lebanon, one solution might be acceptable and healthy: the dividing up of this Palestinian mass among the various Arab states in an equitable way based on the economic and demographic capabilities of each country. Is it normal for the least wealthy Arab state in terms of natural resources to have to bear such a burden?

For the Palestinian civilians, these thousands of women and children who suffer the war of their leaders, the Arab world and its riches would provide opportunities for work and financial resources.

This logical solution, long called for by the Lebanese, has nowhere received a favorable response. The Arabs do not want the Palestinians in their countries, and the latter do not want to leave a country where, despite everything, they continue to enjoy considerable room to maneuver, more than anywhere else.

Lebanon calls in vain for its "brother" Arabs, in justice and equity, to simply face up to this thorny problem; Lebanon hopes for a rapid settlement.

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CSO: 4419/11

IMPORT LEVEL DROPS

London MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC DIGEST in English 18-24 Jan 86 pp 29-30

[Text]

A more than 30 per cent fall in imports in the first nine months of 1985 has raised hopes of a substantial improvement in the kingdom's balance of payments. Prospects for the current account, in deficit by more than \$ 24,000 million in 1984, have also improved, thanks to a sharp recent increase in oil production and exports.

Figures released by the Finance & National Economy Ministry on 13 January show that imports in the first nine months of last year fell to SR 64,540 million (\$ 17,680 million) — 31.1 per cent lower than in January-September 1984. The figure is little more than half the 1984 full-year figure of SR 118,740 million (\$ 32,530 million). The fall in the first nine months of this year is even sharper in dollar terms.

Imports showing the sharpest fall were:

- transport equipment — down by 41.1 per cent to SR 10,134 million (\$ 2,780 million)
- food and live animals — down by 36 per cent to SR 3,172 million (\$ 870 million)
- iron, metal products, timber and paper — down by 35 per cent to SR 3,634 million (\$ 1,000 million)
- furniture and clothes — down by 18 per cent to SR 1,555 million (\$ 430 million)
- chemicals — down by 13 per cent to SR 404 million (\$ 111 million)

- tobacco and beverages — down by 30 per cent to SR 155 million (\$ 43 million).

A statement accompanying the figures said the reduction in imports reflected rising local production of various goods, including wheat, eggs, poultry and dairy products, vegetable oil, cement, electrical appliances and canned food. The import figure was also helped by falling commodity prices and the completion of large development projects, which reduced demand for building materials imports, it added.

Other features of import patterns in the first nine months of 1985 include a jump in Italy's position in the league of major suppliers. It moved up to third place, after Japan and the US, with sales totalling SR 3,971 million (\$ 1,090 million).

Saudi Arabia: imports (cif), 1984-85
(SR million)

1985 (Jan-Sep)	1984 (Jan-Sep)	1984 (Jan-Dec)
64,540	93,505	118,736.6

**Saudi Arabia: leading suppliers,
1984-85**
(SR million)

	Jan-Sep 1985	1984
Japan (1)	8,288	12,294
US (2)	7,970	10,606
Italy (4)	3,971	4,765
West Germany (3)	3,722	5,614
UK (5)	2,700	3,614

Note: bracketed figures refer to 1984 position

Exchange rates: \$ 1 = SR 3.5238 (1984);
\$ 1 = SR 3.6450 (1985)

Source: Finance & National Economy
Ministry, Riyadh, January 1986

The encouraging import trends coincide with a marked improvement in oil export revenues, after the summer slump. Crude oil export earnings in October 1985 rose to SR 10,960 million (\$ 3,000 million) – more than 35 per cent above the September figure. This helped to raise the total export figure to SR 11,830 million (\$ 3,250 million) in October.

The increase in crude exports has been maintained; total production is estimated to have reached almost 5 million barrels a day (b/d) in the first two weeks of January.

Rising export earnings, plus sharper than expected import falls, have led economists to reduce current account deficit estimates for 1985 and projections for 1986. Analysts say the 1985 trade balance was probably around SR 9,000 million (\$ 2,500 million) – about the same as the previous year's level. But falling service imports helped to cut the current account deficit to about \$ 20,000 million. A similar improvement is forecast for 1986 (see page 39).

/8309

CSO: 4400/98

ECONOMIC TRENDS SURVEYED

London MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC DIGEST in English 18-24 Jan 86 pp 39-40

[Text] THE slump in OPEC crude oil demand since 1979 has had a tremendous impact on Saudi Arabia's balance of payments and a more modest, but still significant, effect on the domestic economy. Oil exports in 1985 are estimated to have averaged little more than 2.5 million barrels a day (b/d), compared with more than 9 million b/d four years earlier. As a result, the current account moved from a surplus of more than \$38,000 million in 1981 to a 1984 deficit of more than \$24,000 million — the world's second-largest, after the US.

These trends have also caused problems for the government budget. After a surplus of about \$35,000 million in fiscal 1980/81, a deficit was recorded for the first time in fiscal 1983/84 and repeated in 1984/85.

Offsetting these trends has been the strength of the dollar, to which the Saudi riyal is effectively tied. The 30 per cent appreciation of the dollar against most other major currencies between 1982 and mid-1985 more or less matched the reduction in OPEC oil prices in March 1983.

Growth Falling oil output has led to a sharp fall in gross domestic product (GDP) since 1981. But non-oil activity has been buoyant and expanding, according to government figures. Non-oil real growth averaged 5.1 per cent a year in the third plan period, which ended in March 1985; this was slightly lower than the plan target of 6.1 per cent. The kingdom's fourth plan (1985-90) calls for annual average non-oil growth of 2.9 per cent in real terms.

Saudi Arabia: GDP percentage growth rates
(annual averages at 1979/80 prices)

	Third plan (actual)	Fourth plan (target)
GDP	3.2	4.0
non-oil	5.1	2.9
oil	-14.6	5.6

Source: Fourth Development Plan, Planning Ministry, Riyadh, March 1985

Oil production and exports Some recovery in world crude oil demand is predicted in 1986, but there is no certainty that this will benefit either OPEC or Saudi Arabia. OPEC production could be as high as 18 million b/d or as little as 16 million b/d. The 1985 average was 16.1 million b/d.

The Saudi share of the market will depend on a key policy decision. It could raise production unilaterally, but the cost would be a sharp fall in prices that could produce a price war and depress prices to less than \$20 a barrel.

The kingdom is likely to pursue a more cautious policy involving some increases in exports, achieved by pricing its crude closer to market levels. Provided OPEC states agree that the kingdom should raise output and accept that they do not attempt to compete for market share, there should be little change in the overall level of OPEC production in 1986. Assuming this, Saudi output would hold steady at 3.4 million b/d, including 200,000 b/d of Divided Zone crude.

**Saudi Arabia: output of crude oil³,
1983-86
(million b/d)**

	1983	1984	1985 ¹	1986 ²
Crude oil production	4.57	4.60	3.40	3.40
exports	3.70	3.90	2.60	2.60

Notes: ¹ estimates for crude oil production provided by the International Energy Agency, Paris, January 1986. Exports are based on MEED estimates

² MEED forecasts

³ includes Divided Zone output

Balance of payments These trends caused merchandise exports to fall to about \$29,000 million in 1985, analysts estimate. The balance of payments will benefit from rising sales of refined products and petrochemicals in 1986; the highest likely figure for exports is \$30,000 million. Imports are likely to fall sharply during the year to \$15,000 million. The result should be an improvement in the merchandise trade surplus.

However, the current account will have remained heavily in deficit in 1985, because of the kingdom's gigantic services bill. According to some analysts, the current account deficit fell to below \$18,000 million, but MEED takes a more pessimistic view. However, substantial improvement is expected in 1986, reducing the current account deficit to as little as \$15,000 million.

Government spending and income The low level of oil exports has invalidated the government's plan to have a balanced budget in fiscal 1985/86, with spending fixed at SR 200,000 million (\$54,800 million). Government revenue from oil is unlikely to exceed SR 120,000 million (\$32,800 million). Even very generous estimates of non-oil income produces gross government revenue little higher than in 1984/85.

The issue to be decided is how big a deficit is tolerable? Analysts say the 1984/85 figure of almost \$13,000 million represented the upper acceptable limit. A similar deficit in 1985/86 would allow spending to reach the budget level. Because income will show little change in the coming fiscal year, analysts predict that spending will hold at present levels or fall slightly, allowing some reduction in the deficit.

Debt and foreign assets The Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency's (SAMA's) foreign assets amounted to about \$108,000 million in August 1985, compared with the 1982 peak of \$141,000 million. Analysts say the government may be unwilling – and even unable – to liquidate savings on the scale recorded since the beginning of the oil downturn. The kingdom's total indebtedness at the end of 1984 has been estimated by the OECD at \$13,810 million, a reasonable figure compared with gross assets of the private and public sectors.

Outlook The economy faces at least 12 more months of limited growth in the non-oil sector, and shrinking spending on merchandise imports. The depression will be intensified by the predicted fall in the value of the dollar, in which oil exports are priced.

The risk of a sudden worsening of conditions caused by an oil price slump has receded, thanks to cautious OPEC policies in the winter months. A price war in the summer remains a possibility, however. This could wreck short-term plans, but may work to the kingdom's long-term benefit if it helps to price oil back into energy markets.

MEED forecasts largely unchanged trading conditions in 1986, although specific sectors will show divergent trends – with construction continuing to decline, and operations and maintenance work expanding.

The most marked improvement will be in balance of payments figures. With the current account deficit falling to roughly \$15,000 million, pressure for even larger cuts in imports of goods and services will be reduced, but the squeeze will continue.

Saudi Arabia: balance of payments, 1982-86
(**\$ million**)

	1982	1983	1984	1985¹	1986²
Exports (fob)	73,089	45,682	37,386	29,000	27,000
Imports (fob)	34,444	33,218	28,557	20,000	15,000
Trade balance	38,645	12,464	8,829	9,000	12,000
Services deficit	39,692	28,757	32,865	29,000	27,000
Current Account deficit	1,047	16,293	24,036	20,000	15,000

Notes: ¹ MEED estimate

² MEED forecast

Source: IMF International Financial Statistics, December 1985

Saudi Arabia: actual income and revenue, 1982-86
(**SR million**)

	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86¹	1986/87²
Revenue	206,400	169,600	160,000	150,000
Expenditure	230,200	214,800	200,000	185,000
Deficit	23,800	45,200	40,000	35,000

Notes: ¹ MEED estimate

² MEED forecast

Exchange rates: \$ 1 = SR 3.4548 (1983); \$ 1 = SR 3.5238 (1984); \$ 1 = SR 3.6450 (1985)
Source: SAMA Statistical Summary, 1985

/8309

CSO: 4400/98

STIMULATION OF PRIVATE SECTOR ACTIVITY

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 85 p 7

[Article: "Syria: Activating the Private Sector"]

[Text] A striking world phenomenon has been the course that several socialist countries or countries ruled by socialist parties, and indeed traditional communist countries such as China, have followed in relying on the private sector to stimulate the economy in order to achieve the kind of economic growth to which they aspire.

Such a tendency by some socialist or communist bloc countries toward promoting this sector is no less important than the French experience in this area. Barely 3 years after the Socialists assumed power and applied the nationalization theories they had advocated for over a quarter of a century, talk about abandoning these measures (save for those related to public services) began dominating the mass media. Rarely does one read a newspaper or listen to a radio and TV broadcast without coming across the term denationalization.

It appears that Syria, which has adopted socialism as a basic principle of its political system, has adopted the direction to achieve its desired economic growth level. It also appears that this direction has made great headway to the point of legal structuralization through a project that calls for establishing mixed companies, with private-sector participation in most of them, governed by various special regulations different from the legal provisions that protect public-sector companies, which are exempt from certain provisions relating to import bans or restrictions and embargo regulations and from all taxes and fees for 7 years.

Syria's adoption of this direction, aside from its being totally in keeping with the direction of those socialist countries wishing to stimulate their economies worldwide, actually encompasses a long-term economic vision aimed at categorizing capabilities in the service of the national economy, as follows:

1. Gather all special capabilities within a legal framework that safeguards the role and course of private initiative and classify such capabilities by combining them in one financial unit, thus enabling them to go into large projects which the economy needs.

2. Encourage inactive private or foreign capital to go into economic investment projects in the production sectors (industry and agriculture, for example) in a way that safeguards the national interest by achieving the kind of projects the country needs, and protect individual interests by guaranteeing adequate profits, thus guaranteeing the movement of production, on the one hand, and a high return on investments through tax exemptions, on the other hand.

3. Follow the private sector's effective, vigorous, and more profitable system in managing economic institutions. It is noted in this regard that there is nothing wrong with trusting the management of these institutions that provide a public service or a basic commodity to the public sector, even if this necessitates subsidizing them, for the main objective in this regard is to provide such basic services and commodities at a specific cost. It is not necessary, however, to apply this logic to other services and commodities which must be competitive in cost and quality in the interest of the people themselves who obligate producers, whenever they have a choice, to improve their work and production methods in order to provide good-quality merchandise without compromising the principle of profit-making.

4. Stimulate the economy and employment by accelerating the velocity of money in view of the benefits such a measure can realize in the economic field. This is the indicator on which most countries rely, besides the monetary bloc indicators, in developing sound growth. Instead of adopting the limited cycle, state-people-state, which the private sector employs, this cycle can be expanded to include at least those stockholders who redistribute realized profits by spending them on certain commodities, thus stimulating the economies of said commodities or by reinvesting them in economic projects.

5. Prevent the obstruction of production due to red tape, which is a public-sector syndrome. Replacement of equipment, which is a long and involved process in the public sector, is a simple matter for private management.

This principle is reinforced, in the Syrian direction, by the said project which provides for lifting some embargo regulations with regard to mixed companies, thus affording them the flexibility of keeping their foreign currency capital and foreign currency income from their operations and services and spending some of the same on their raw materials and equipment needs.

12502/12951
CSO: 4404/180

CEMENT INDUSTRY SEEKS PRICE, PRODUCTION CONTROLS

London MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC DIGEST in English 18-24 Jan 86 p 34

[Article by Robin Allen]

[Text]

UAE cement producers are planning another attempt to co-ordinate output levels among the country's eight works, in an effort to maintain prices. The move is expected to be made before the end of February; simultaneously, producers will try to step up pressure on the federal government to give preference to local suppliers.

The companies were given some support on 30 December when, in a move described by local business people as a "new year gift," the council of ministers (cabinet) announced a 10 per cent preference margin for locally produced goods, providing they are of similar quality to imported products and are delivered on time. On 9 January, Minister of State for Finance Ahmad Humaid al-Tayer said the measure would take effect on 1 February. However, no detailed list of the products that will benefit has been published, and ministry officials have made no further reference to the scheme.

Cement producers also want an increase in the UAE's 4 per cent tariff on cement imports from countries outside the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC); they are also calling for export "preferences" — in effect, state subsidies for power and transport costs to help producers to win export orders. But they face an uphill struggle in the present economic climate — federal expenditure is being cut, and subsidies that might boost UAE cement exports to other GCC member countries are likely to get a cool reception from the GCC.

This is not the cement producers' first attempt to agree overall — and individual — production ceilings and a uniform price, although the need for these is regarded as greater than at any time in the past three years. During this period, three new works have started up in Ajman, Fujairah and Umm al-Qaiwain, and production capacity at a fourth — in Sharjah — has increased. This has exacerbated an already serious over-supply problem, particularly in view of the cutbacks in government construction programmes.

As a result of the glut, prices for ordinary Portland cement on the Abu Dhabi and Dubai markets have fallen to Dh 7.25-7.50 a 50-kilo bag, against Dh 13-15 (\$3.54-4.08) in 1982. However, producers' and wholesalers' margins are still about Dh 0.25 (\$0.07) a bag. In Qatar, cement prices are about Dh 8 (\$2.18) equivalent; they are "a bit higher" in Saudi Arabia, but one UAE producer says Saudi prices are not high enough to make his company's exports competitive, given the cost of transporting cement to the kingdom.

Production cuts

UAE cement producers — excluding Ras al-Khaimah's recently opened white cement works — have a capacity of about 7.6 million tonnes a year. The breakdown is as follows: Ajman Cement Company and Al-Ain Cement Factory — 750,000 tonnes a year each; Dubai's National Cement Company —

**"The cement industry
could be a goldmine. . .
if the GCC governments
looked after it"**

1.8 million tonnes; Fujairah Cement Industries — 520,000 tonnes; Ras al-Khaimah's Gulf Cement Company and Union Cement Company — 1 million tonnes each; Sharjah Cement & Industrial Development Company — 1.3 million tonnes, and Umm al-Qaiwain Asbestos Cement Industries — 500,000 tonnes of clinker.

For the past 12 months or so, most plants have been working at or below 40 per cent of grinding capacity, with companies "breaking even — or on the brink (of trading at a loss)," according to the Finance & Industry Ministry's director-general of industrial affairs, Jafar al-Fardan. Companies are secretive about their balance sheets, although one representative said: "At least we have no cash-flow losses."

The manager of one works points to the use of bunker fuel to power cement works as a cause of high production costs — it can reach 50 per cent of the total. Gas, which is now being used by Ras al-Khaimah's two works, is half the price.

One industry observer reckons prices are unlikely to fall further if co-ordination efforts among producers succeed in fixing production levels for

each works. But quotas will have to be set — and maintained — at below existing levels. Current production levels of 30-40 per cent of capacity still give the UAE total production of 2.3 million-3 million tonnes a year — well above demand levels of only 1.6 million-1.8 million tonnes.

Accusations of dumping

In the past, UAE suppliers have been able to export large quantities of cement to other GCC countries — "dumping," according to industry officials in Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. In 1984, Oman bought about 600,000 tonnes of UAE cement worth Dh 190 million (\$51.7 million); Qatar took around 100,000 tonnes. But the amount going to Qatar is negligible, and Oman has slapped a 20 per cent duty on cement imports, including those from other GCC member states. An Omani government directive issued in December stipulates that all requests for cement imports be filed on forms issued only by the Commerce & Industry Ministry. In 1985, Saudi Arabia imported 7 million tonnes of cement — but most of this came from Greece, Japan, Spain and South Korea.

The Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting has already recommended that the UAE government should introduce tariffs on imported cement, and should order ministries to specify local procurement (MEED 3:5:85, page 47). Similar recommendations have been made by Emirates Industrial Bank general manager Anis al-Jallaf.

The chances of producers agreeing to fix output levels appear slim. Agreement was reached once before, in November 1984, only to be broken by individual producers when prices rose temporarily. One UAE works manager said earlier in January: "The cement industry could be a goldmine, the largest industry after oil and banking, if the GCC governments looked after it, and if this government could pressure factories to co-operate with each other--and at the same time encourage GCC duties on imports from outside." But only a sustained recovery in the UAE's construction market is likely to solve the problems of the local cement producers.

/8309

CSO: 4400/99

BRIEFS

UAE-GCC TRADE--Dubayy, 7 Feb (QNA)--Dubayy Chamber of Commerce and Industry sources have reported that the value of the UAE non-oil trade--via the Dubai ports--with the GCC countries during the first half of 1985 reached 1.324 billion dirhams, among which 515 million dirhams is the value of imports, 238 million dirhams is the value of exports, and 571 million dirhams is the value of re-exportation. [Excerpt] [Doha QNA in Arabic 0810 GMT 7 Feb 86 GF] /8918

UAE DIRHAM--Abu Dhabi, 7 Feb (QNA)--UAE economic [word indistinct] money exchange sources stressed that the latest developments in the oil prices will not affect the power of the UAE dirham, particularly as the state's financial surplus, its internal and external investments, and the interest it gets from oil will enable it to adapt itself to new economic situations. [Excerpt] [Doha QNA in Arabic 0812 GMT 7 Feb 86 GF] /8918

WITHDRAWAL OF ARAB FUNDS URGED--Abu Dhabi, 6 Feb (WAKH)--A leading business executive called on Arabs to draw a lesson from the freezing of Libyan assets in U.S. banks and start withdrawing their assets to keep their wealth free from the danger of a U.S. freeze or confiscation. President of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sa'id ibn Ahmad al-'Utaybah in an editorial in the chambers magazine issued today said the American move to freeze Libyan assets have established that "U.S. decisions to confiscate, freeze or boycott are not governed by the yardsticks of friendship or freedom as much as they are linked with a craze for hegemony and economic terrorism." American banks are regarded as executive tools implementing American policies which do not refrain from grabbing the assets of neutral or friendly Arab parties, 'Utaybah said. American exercises economic terrorism overtly to impose its political and economic will on the world and the freezing of Libyan and Iranian assets would make clear that an impending danger hangs over all Arab assets in America, he said. [Text] [Manama WAKH in English 1630 GMT 6 Feb 86 GF] /8918

CSO: 4400/101

MUJAHIDIN CAUGHT IN REGIONAL CONFLICT MORE THAN EVER

Geneva JOURNAL DE GENEVE in French 14 Jan 86 p 2

[Article by Jean-Pierre Perrin]

[Text] In Paktya Province, not far from the Pakistani border, Commander Haqqani, who is both a military and a religious leader, directs several well-equipped and partly-underground resistance camps. French journalist Jean-Pierre Perrin visited these camps while his colleague, Alain Chevalerias, made an on-site analysis of the secret war between the resistance and Afghan-Soviet armed forces.

Is this a Soviet base? In Jawar, near the Pakistani border, Commander Jalaluddin Haqqani's camp, almost submerged in a cascade of high hills, is amazing because of the number of shelters and underground depots.

Its hospital and mosque have been dug into the side of a cliff. In a room cut out of the rock, mujahidin fighters can view a videotape of their latest ambush. Farther away, Afghan and Pakistani workers are completing a new hospital for women.

In one underground workshop, mujahidin repair machine guns. In another workshop, mechanics bustle around tanks--10 real Soviet tanks confiscated from the enemy and serviced by Afghan Army deserters.

Numerous cannons and machine guns are well placed on the hillsides. The resistance fighters also have missiles. The base has reportedly been bombed 26 times.

This is not Jalaluddin Haqqani's only base. He has set up others, although smaller, almost everywhere in Paktya Province, which is located on the edge of Pakistan and is the target of numerous Soviet-Afghan offensives because it dominates the border.

Afghan Ho Chi Minh

A military commander, administrator and religious leader all at the same time, 42-year-old Jalaluddin Haqqani is a kind of Islamic Ho Chi Minh. With a huge beard and a holy man's austere face that smiles only for his two

children, the Afghan leader has no taste for public relations. Thus he is almost unknown in the West.

But he joined the resistance in 1971, 8 years after the "Kabul coup." At that time he was in charge of a religious school. Believing that King Zahir's, and then President Daoud's, government was favoring communist infiltration in Afghanistan, he decided to take up arms. One of his followers killed Mir Akbar, former minister of planning and governor of Kabul. Shortly afterwards, he established his first underground unit in the eastern part of the country and has been fighting ever since.

Government troops launched a new offensive during the summer of 1985. The Soviet Army quickly had to come to the aid of Afghan forces. The fighting was terrible, the losses heavy. Haqqani lost his two lieutenants. But if Paktya Province has held fast, it is because Haqqani has managed to unify the various parties in this region. And it is the mobilization of all mujahidin that makes it possible to check Soviet advances.

Pashtoon Irredentism

Pakistan has understood Jalaluddin Haqqani's importance for its own defense needs. And so it helps him. Because the situation in the tribal border areas, populated with Pashtoos, grows worse each year. For several reasons: First, some Pashtoon leaders, like Wali Khan Kookikhel, encourage the latent irredentism of these regions with the aid of Kabul.

Second, the flood of nearly 3 million refugees is starting to arouse adverse reactions among the native populations. Some ecological balances have been upset and water and timber resources are declining. Here again, pro-communist agents attempt to exaggerate antagonisms, helped by Soviet planes, which seek to aggravate anti-Afghan resentment by bombing Pakistani border villages. A large part of the Pakistani opposition, in particular the Pakistani People's Party (PPP) led by Benazir Bhutto, is also trying to exploit the situation for domestic political reasons.

Finally, in tribal areas where politics and trafficking often go hand in hand, the Islamabad government's poppy eradication campaign is not very well accepted, especially since the financial compensation paid by the United States does not necessarily reach the farmers. In December, a revolt broke out in the Khyber region, where 14,000 Pakistani soldiers had to intervene to force 16 "maleks" (tribal chiefs) to drive out "subversive, communist, anti-Islamic and anti-Pakistani elements."

Pakistani Support for Resistance

In this instance as well, Kabul is trying to exploit the situation, particularly through massive arms shipments. In view of the extent of the threats, the Pakistani Government is trying to establish for itself a first line of defense by supporting certain major resistance leaders, particularly those fighting in the immediate vicinity of the border. And Pakistani instructors now even cross the border to teach mujahidin fighters how to use new weapons.

At the same time, Islamabad has lifted its former ban on shipping missiles through its territory.

However, Gen Zia Ul-Haq's government has not yet encouraged the establishment of a united resistance front, or even the establishment of an Afghan Government in exile. His government nevertheless has the power to do so, for it is the Pakistani Army that distributes arms to the various guerrilla parties, sometimes giving preference to one and sometimes to others, in order to make them more manageable. If Islamabad is not trying to unify the resistance, it is out of fear that Kabul might permit the formation of a Pashtoon-Baluchi government composed of several leaders of those ethnic groups, who are at odds with General Zia and have taken refuge in Afghanistan.

More than ever, the Afghanistan war is today a regional conflict. Even Iran has stepped up its arms shipments to resistance members fighting under the Shi'ite banner. Jalaluddin Haqqani, who recently visited Saudi Arabia, is urging the Moslem world to establish a joint strategy to oppose the USSR: "The mujahidin are defending the Moslem world as a whole. If Soviet imperialism is not stopped here, Iran, Pakistan and the [Persian] Gulf states will most likely not be able to withstand its pressures for long."

11915

CSO: 4619/25

KHAD, RESISTANCE REFINING WAYS

Geneva JOURNAL DE GENEVE in French 14 Jan 86 p 2

[Article by Alain Chevalerias]

[Text] "How long were you in the Soviet Union?" "Three years." "What did you do?" "I studied cartography." The man answered in a flat voice, beads of perspiration glistening on his forehead.

"What did you do before?" "I served in the army of the Kabul government."
"What else did you do?"

His eyes desperately sought help. Around him was nothing but the impassive faces of the five mujahidin who had pulled him from his cell, nothing but the walls of the tiny room made of packed earth. The man's terrified eyes riveted on my microphone. In a barely audible voice, he answered: "I transmitted reports on the garrison's soldiers to Khad (Kabul Secret Service)...."

Arrested in Balkh Province, within range of the USSR's guns, Aslam had served the communist cause since he was 18 years old. During 6 years of war, he had never seen his father, a fervent patriot. For a monthly salary of 10,000 afghanis (less than 300 Swiss francs) and productivity bonuses, he chose the invader's side. Discovered by mujahidin of Herb-i-Islami, he had just penetrated the sector controlled by guerrilla forces. Using a distant family relation as a reference, he had managed to work his way into a combat unit. His mission? Using a hidden camouflaged map and radio, he was to provide information on resistance positions, leaders and weapons.

Manipulation Versus Craftiness

This confession demonstrates, better than any commentary, the problems and tactics of the Soviets in Afghanistan. Lacking accurate reports on the mujahidin, they are raising the level of their agents and stationing their best-trained technicians at the secret war's advance posts. This effort is coupled with a subtle approach toward resistance leaders.

Let's ignore tribal rivalries favoring manipulation and focus instead on the independent character of the Afghan people. Only the most educated leaders look on Afghanistan as one country. Too many local leaders limit the concept of their homeland to the borders of their villages. One of Khad's missions is to identify these elements and then, flattering their egos, to conclude a

treaty of nonaggression with them. The victim perceives the secret service's approach as a recognition of his authority and a long-term lease for his power over the population.

The Cement of Faith

But the Moslem faith, the true cement of Afghan society, and the natural craftiness of prominent villagers experienced in the art of negotiation often turn against the manipulators.

A serious problem remains: the length of the war. It will soon be 7 years that the population has lived in the haunting fear of being bombed. And in this rural universe, subject to the uncertainties of climate and sickness, young males are the life insurance and retirement pension of the elderly. In other words, despite the heroism of the Afghan population, the death rate among young men may reach such a level that continuing the war would be perceived as suicidal by family heads.

This level, which is especially psychological, may decline with the establishment of a real alliance among the mujahidin movements, and also as a result of increased aid from the West. But if the agreement among resistance leaders in Peshawar (Pakistan) is becoming shakier, a demand for unity is perceptible in Afghanistan. An axis seems to be forming that could involve the most active resistance commanders, with Massoud as the leader.

Qualitative Soviet Improvement

On the Soviet side, the level of activity is increasing unobtrusively. While being careful not to get caught in the trap of escalation, the Kremlin is improving the quality of its deployed troops and equipment. Believing that time is on its side, the Soviet commander tries only to contain the guerrillas and not to destroy them by means of a major reinforcement of men and materiel.

Thus, in the liberated areas, I observed very high accuracy of aircraft fire. The use of electronic guidance systems has been confirmed by Afghan Air Force deserters. More and more often, pilots are firing long-range missiles at mujahidin bases to stay out of the range of heavy machine guns. Foot soldiers also appear to be more seasoned and are engaging in night combat more often; elite "Spetsnaz" units operate from positions on the edge of major populated areas. Helicopters are being used more and more frequently during night raids. BTR-60 armored vehicles are being replaced by BMPs, which are better equipped for transporting troops.

It remains to be seen whether possible resistance unification can prompt the Kremlin to reconsider its operations. That is, unless it simply chooses escalation during this seventh year of war.

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CSO: 4619/25

BALUCHESTAN'S ROLE IN SOVIET-OCCUPIED COUNTRY EXAMINED

Kunying PACIFIC DEFENCE REPORTER in English Feb 86 pp 18-20

[Article by Brian Cloughley]

[Text]

THE LARGEST of Pakistan's five provinces and having by far the smallest population, Baluchistan contains some of the world's most desolate, rugged and windswept terrain. Its area is some 134,050 square miles (about half the size of Texas) but is occupied by only 4.2 million people, mainly Baluchis but with a significant minority of Pathan tribes.

After forming part of the Mughal Empire in the 16th and 17th centuries, the region was created an autonomous state by the Baluch leader Nasir Khan in the latter half of the 18th century. The British, however, occupied Quetta (the present capital) in 1877 and steadily acquired territories that became British Baluchistan and Tribal Areas some 20 years later. On partition in 1947 the region became part of Pakistan, although the princely state of Kalat deferred accession to the newly created country until the following year when pressure was applied by the central Government. Since that time the province has undergone a name-change (in 1955, to the "One Unit of West Pakistan") but was renamed Baluchistan in 1970. In spite of its small population, divided into many tribes and sub-tribes, the inhabitants are nationalistic and this gave rise to a badly-handled civil insurrection in the 1970s when the then President of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, sent in the Army to restore order. This was carried out effectively, but on occasions brutally, and some of the Baluch still have bitter memories of the period.

Bhutto attempted to destroy the semifederal Sardar system. This archaic form of tribal government still exists, in spite of all efforts to diminish its precedence over the federal and provincial legal systems, and it is perhaps the greatest single drawback to Baluchistan's development because the Sardars or tribal chiefs are intent on maintaining their power.

Although Bhutto declared in 1976 that the Sardar system was ended, it was impossible to

replace it by total Government administration for two main reasons: first the region's tiny population centres are spread far apart and communications with the provincial capital are even now extremely difficult; and, second, it is essential that administrators be for the main part indigenous, which is almost impossible to achieve, given the small population base, the lack of education and the resistance of the Sardars to change.

The Sardars are benevolent enough rulers — provided they are not thwarted in their autocracy — and, on the one hand, they demand more indigenous participation in the affairs of the province; while, on the other, they refuse to co-operate with the Government in any measures — such as improvement in education — that would assist in achieving that aim. Their great fear is that their feudally-directed peoples would begin to question their authority were education to become widespread, and they object even to the comparatively high wages being paid to workers in mining or other projects because such largesse could lead to more independence on the part of their followers.

When General (now President) Zia-ul-Haq came to power in 1977 one of his first actions was to release some 11,000 political detainees, including 353 from Baluchistan. Since that time the Government has dealt carefully with the province and has diverted considerable sums to its development. While this has antagonized the Sardars, there is ample evidence that the ordinary people are not averse to the benefits of civilization — but politically the area remains volatile. This state of affairs has been compounded by long-standing Soviet interest in the region and latterly by the presence of a Soviet army of occupation in Afghanistan with whose tribes the Baluch and Pathans have varying degrees of empathy.

Dangerous flirtation

DISAFFECTED TRIBESMEN in Baluchistan have often shown that they are pre-

pared to indulge in some flirtation with the Soviet Union to achieve their long-term goal of creating an independent state. While it is obvious that Baluchistan — even a “Great Baluchistan” encompassing parts of Iran and Afghanistan that are homes to ethnically similar peoples — could not be a viable economic entity and that Soviet assistance in such a venture would be neither disinterested nor productive of independence, the attraction for some tribals lies in playing off the Government of Pakistan against the Karmal/Soviet regime in Afghanistan. This has been taking place for some years and even now there are several tribal leaders living in Kabul as well as a number of tribesmen undergoing “education” in the USSR. One has, however, the distinct impression, travelling in the region and talking with the people, that the Soviets’ overtures are not altogether welcome. The tribes have witnessed, or heard at first-hand of the destruction inflicted within Afghanistan and are not enthusiastic about the activities of Soviet and Afghan troops. Much as some of them would prefer to be citizens of an independent Baluchistan, the more realistic tribesmen understand that the days of tribal law are numbered and that, in any event, the Soviets would not for a moment permit such decentralization.

There is a potential for disruption should Iran’s internal situation lapse into chaos. This is possible on the eventual and probably imminent death of the Ayatollah Khomeini whose demise would result in the country becoming even riper for intertribal and factional fighting. The tribes in Baluchistan, too, would find such a situation admirably suited to their penchant for mischief-making and could be relied upon to take advantage of the total breakdown of order in Iran to settle old scores and to entice their fellows across the border to join in further demands — or action — to achieve the independence that they manifestly could not sustain.

Given the volatile nature of the region, albeit among only four million people out of a total of 90 million in Pakistan, there is small wonder that the central Government is playing for safety. While development is proceeding, it is essential that its pace is neither too great to offend the Sardars nor too slow for the Sardars to complain that Baluchistan is being neglected. The Government is intent on inducing indigenous people to become administrators in their province, but the results are not satisfactory. Certainly, there are many skilled and dedicated local people in the administration, but the temptation to lower civil service entry standards has not been avoided. This has resulted in some junior and middle-ranking officials having to be propped up by others brought in from elsewhere in Pakistan, and dissatisfaction inevitably arises. Given the Government’s emphasis on education, however, which even the Sardars can resist only on the most tenuous grounds, it is likely that the proportion of indigenous officials will rise to adequate levels in the longer term.

One major problem in Baluchistan concerns

Afghan refugees. While the number is small in the province (about 118,000 of the total of 2.8 million in Pakistan), their imposition on a province with little grazing land, few wells and small chance of employment has caused some strains between the refugees and their hosts. One cause of discontent is the exemption of the refugees from payment of Pakistan taxes. While this decision was made during the early days of the influx, it was considered that the stay of the refugees would be short and that, in any event, they would not be able to indulge in entrepreneurial activity to an extent that might impinge on that of the local inhabitants. The Afghans, however, have begun small businesses, especially in the transport field, and their success has to some extent affected the profits of indigenous contractors. While this problem has not reached serious proportions, it is a matter for concern and it is difficult to see what the Government of Pakistan could do to resolve the invidious situation created by its early generosity.

The *mujahideen* problem

THE BASIC social problems of an enormous refugee population are compounded by the existence of several *mujahideen* groups in the camps. It is impossible for the provincial or general governments to control the *mujahideen* in a manner that would prevent their obtaining arms or ghosting across the border to use them against the Soviets and such elements as remain of the Afghan Army. Attempts to do so would result, inevitably, in the *mujahideen* turning against the Pakistan Government which is caught between the threats of the USSR (as evidenced by the urbane Mr Gorbachev’s ultimatum in early 1985), and the aspirations of those who have fled the invasion of their country.

In Baluchistan refugee camps there are elements of several guerilla groups, including the *Harkat-e-Inqilab Islami-e-Afghanistan* and the *Ittehad Islami Mujahiddin Afghanistan*. They can muster some 2500 irregulars between them, but, as with the other five *mujahideen* groups involved in operations against Soviet/Afghan forces, there is only sporadic co-operation between them. The guerillas do not lack personal weapons (as distinct from crew-served heavier armament) but suffer from political divisiveness that detracts from their efforts in combating their perceived enemy.

The *Harkat-e-Inqilab*, for example, can draw on 1100 volunteers but their leader states that the maximum number that he can command and control on operations is about 350. Given the lack of radio communications (and the inability of most *mujahideen* to operate radios securely, it is guerilla procedure to brief leaders of several small groups — generally not more than 20 men in each — on the details of an operation, then to have them infiltrate to a rendezvous point (RV) at which they concentrate for a short period. From the RV they debouch for the attack, relying entirely on a timed program for a “silent” attack, or on

flares or the opening of fire for a "noisy" attack. While this battle procedure lacks the sophistication of that of modern armies, it does ensure surprise. Its deficiencies are obvious, but in the context of low-level conflict and given the attainable standards of training of the guerillas it appears to work — in operations in which intelligence about enemy strength is adequate. When the guerillas are committed against a greatly superior enemy because of faulty information, then the result is a debacle that costs many casualties. The lack of a speedy evacuation system for the wounded results in the loss of a higher proportion of lives than was normal, for example, with the Viet Cong in the Vietnam War.

The refugees and *mujahideen* in Baluchistan are but a part of the total in Pakistan — and Iran — but provide in microcosm an overview of the total picture. They tend to continue their intertribal differences even while in the camps, and they carry these over to their feuds with Baluch and other tribes within Pakistan. These manifestations provide problems for the long-suffering district commissioners and the units of the Pakistan Frontier Corps.

In Baluchistan there are 11 units of the Frontier Corps, which enjoy such romantic titles as the Loralai Scouts or the Zhob Militia. In far western Baluchistan the units tasked with keeping the peace in association with Police forces and the "Levies" — quasi-Police elements — are the Chagai Militia and the Kharan Rifles, each about 2200-strong. Their officers above the rank of captain serve on attachment from the regular Army. Although it is policy that their soldiers should be recruited from the local areas, the population base is inadequate to provide such numbers. Recruiting is therefore spread throughout Pakistan and, in spite of the harsh conditions of service, there does not appear to be a shortage of manpower. The soldiers are well-trained and demonstrate impressive marksmanship with the Pakistan-manufactured G-3 rifle. They can cover, on average, some 24km a day carrying combat equipment and their forts (see photograph) are established at about day-patrol distance from each other. They maintain communication between patrols and their bases by the medium of Pakistan-made HF radios weighing about 8kg which are capable of manpack or vehicle operation.

The Rifles and the Militia are at the moment commanded by forceful and knowledgeable lieutenant-colonels who regard their detachment from the regular Army as a rewarding — and novel — experience. They are well-aware of the sensitivity of their task, particularly in regard to how they should treat the various peccadilloes of the tribes — both indigenous and Afghan. But their patience, and that of their soldiers, is strained on occasion by the fact that the Afghans can, after a little blood-letting, withdraw to their camps with the certainty that local law — Pakistani law — cannot be enforced. Such incidents might involve simple intertribal feuds (although these might re-

sult in murder) but some may be pure dacoity or banditry in which Pakistan property and nationals may be at risk. In such cases the combination of the district officer and the latent threat of force can achieve justice, but not always.

Lack of military strength

THE FRONTIER Corps, as exemplified by the Kharan Rifles and the Chagai Militia in western Baluchistan, is not designed to perform in the manner of regular troops. Such units have neither the heavy weapons nor the training to, for example, conduct tactical manoeuvres at above platoon or, at a pinch, company level. Should they be engaged by a sizable enemy they would have to call on regular forces. And this is where Baluchistan lacks military strength.

The corps commander in Quetta has no more than a division (minus some important elements) and parts of an independent brigade. Should there be a major incursion by Soviet or Afghan troops along the enormous border the Quetta Corps would be hard-pressed to meet it. As it is, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) finds it difficult to react to the many violations of airspace that take place.

The rules of engagement for both ground and air forces are precise: the body/aircraft **MUST** fall in Pakistan territory.

In the case of the ground forces this is almost impossible because the Soviet Spetnaz troops have precise intelligence and enjoy helicopter support that ensures instant clandestine insertion and withdrawal. In the cases of attack by fighter-ground-attack aircraft, or even helicopters, the stand-by flights at Quetta PAF base cannot be scrambled in time to ensure that intercepted intruders would fall inside Pakistan. While Pakistan radar cover has improved enormously over the past four years, the PAF lacks look-down radar that could cope with such infringements. (It is possible that India deflected the US from provision of the Hawk-eye system to Pakistan because of fears that it might be used to detect Indian aerial movements.) So bombings and rocket attacks on refugee camps inside Pakistan (which manifestly contain some elements, at least, of *mujahideen* groups) continue unabated.

Baluchistan could be described as, perhaps, a front-line province in what might be accepted as a front-line state. Its peculiar problems should be no more than might be expected in any other spartan, waterless, desert, mountain area — were they not compounded by the influx of an enormous number of people whose existence is anathema to a hostile presence across an ill-defined and historically porous border.

The Baluch, Pathan and other tribes and subtribes in Baluchistan are presented with divisions and alternatives with which they are ill-equipped to cope. Neither the indigenous tribes nor their unwelcome guests wish to accept the inevitable march of progress.

The answer may lie in part with destruction — finally — of the Sardar system in Baluchistan. But, as with the major problem in Pakistan, the final solution might rest with the Soviet Union which could easily make it plain that it would refrain from interference in Pakistan's internal affairs as well as continuing the recent Afghanistan "withdrawal" dialog between their junior representatives. ■

/9274

CSO: 4600/212

EXPEDITIOUS LAND, WATER REFORM DIRECTED

Kabul HEYWAD in Dari 20 Nov 85 p 2

[Text] In view of the great significance which the execution of the land and water reform have on the revolutionary transformations benefiting the toiling farmers and their other effects on the economic foundation of our country, not only before the advent of the victory of the revolution the PDPA stressed the necessary execution of these reforms and started some comprehensive struggles in this area, but the national and democratic Sawr revolution which became victorious under the leadership of our party has always considered the execution of a democratic land and water reform as a fundamental objective and a major necessity.

With the issuance of decree number eight of the revolutionary council of the DRA, the implementation of the democratic land reform based on limiting large land holdings and distributing government land gratis--over and above the specified allotment--to the farmers with little or no land throughout the country was begun.

However, in the first phase, the implementation and continuation of the democratic land reform was faced with certain serious flaws and mistakes which impeded the proper progress of the democratic land reform. But the same way that the victory of the new and evolutionary stage of the Sawr revolution re-directed the revolution from its deviationary path on to its orderly road, it also created favorable conditions for the implementation of the democratic land and water reform and with due consideration to past mistakes and flaws in the execution of the land reform, profound transformations took place. For instance, the water law and pertinent regulations for the use of water in agriculture became effective, the Ministry of Irrigation and water Resources came into existence as an independent organ and with due respect to the customs and traditions, the first supplement of decree number eight was issued. With the issuance of the order by the Board of Director of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA, on 14 December 1983 all the necessary adjustments and coordinations in decree number eight and the law pertaining to land affairs were included which not only helped farmers protect their interests on a more extensive basis during the process of the execution of the democratic land and water reform but it also provided the proper ground for their active and extensive participation in the execution of the democratic land and water reform through the medium of the village farmers' councils.

Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, in his speech to the grand session which was

held to honor the 20th anniversary of the party stated: Recently, the government of the DRA ratified a series of legal documents which pay closer attention to the issue of land and water reform and duly reflect the interests of the farmers with little or no land or those with moderate land holdings and the clerics... From the standpoint of politics, it is very important that the farmers through the medium of the farmers councils play a more active and extensive role in the implementation of the reform projects. All such participation and cooperation have helped to eliminate the delays in the matter of land reform execution.

The appropriate measures and other necessary steps which have been taken by the revolutionary party and the government have not only helped to eliminate the unnecessary delays and expedite the affairs of the democratic land and water reform in the country, but at the same time they have provided the proper grounds for the situation of the land and water reform to improve and progress with each and every passing day and attain better and worthier successes accordingly. The victorious progress of the land and water reform during the past year and the first quarter of the current year can properly testify to the truth of this assertion. For instance, 10,110 farmers' families with little or no land received free government land totaling 48,000 acres last year. In comparison, in 1362 [21 March 1983 - 20 March 1984] only 310 farmers' families received free land and the total area of distributed land in that year was eight times less than that of last year. In 1363 [21 March 1984 - 20 March 1985] more than 300,000 acres of land were distributed among 37,000 farmers' families, which shows 4.5 percent increase over the year 1362. Likewise, in 1362 only 11,000 land deeds were distributed among farmers, while last year this figure rose to 55,000 land deeds.

Similarly, the activities of the first quarter of the current year in the area of land reform have made more improvements and 2,361 farmers' families received a total of 2,040 acres of new land, while during the same period the land disputes pertaining to an area of 13,147 acera belonging to 8,097 farmers' families have been settled and 10,296 land deeds were distributed among other farmers. This all indicates the ever-improving and rapid progress of the implementation of the democratic land and water reform in our dear revolutionary country of Afghanistan.

12719

CSO: 4665/26

PEASANTS JOIN COOPERATIVES, BOOST HARVESTS

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 28 Nov 85 pp 1, 2

[Text]

their problems by themselves, therefore, the only assisting agency to solve the problems of peasants timely and easily are agricultural co-operatives.

Question: Could you please say the number of members at the time of establishing your co-operative and at present? Also would you add what other duties you perform besides being a member of the co-operative?

Answer: At the beginning we established the co-operative together with some other peasants. Since the peasants obtained some aid from the agricultural co-operative, therefore, they were encouraged to join it.

At present, there are 385 members in our co-operative. They are all members of the group for defence of the revolution, as well. They always defend security in the village, locality and on their farms valiantly.

Question: How much the amount of your pro-

ductions have upgraded after establishing the co-operative?

Answer: Before the establishment of the cooperative we used to get 30-40 seers of wheat (one seer equals to 7 kg) from one hectare of land but now we are able to collect 100-120 seers of wheat from the same plot of land. We also collect two harvests a year from the same land.

Before establishing the cooperative the peasants used to sell their surplus production to the brokers who came to our villages. The brokers bought our products very cheap or we took our products to the center of the province. The transportation cost was very high but at present we are able to supply our production to the nearest market through the co-operative. The peasants receive all their profits themselves.

Question: Do you have any good impression in your life?

Answer: Yes, of course, I

have got two very nice impressions in my mind. First, because our co-operative stood first among the other co-operatives during the current year, so two other peasants and I, as members of the co-operative, were accepted to visit our dear leader, Babrak Karmal, and we were awarded medal of devotion.

Second, I have become the owner of land as a result of the keen attention of the government to small-scale and landless peasants. I will always have these impressions fresh in my memory and I am ready to defend the homeland and the revolution till the last moment of my life.

With the victory of the April Revolution, besides the extensive and systematic measures undertaken by our revolutionary state aimed at raising the level of living standard of the peasants and boosting agricultural output, the peasants of our country also try, with patriotic spirit, to increase their ag-

ricultural production through setting up agricultural co-operatives and in this way to take an active part in restructuring our society.

A correspondent of the KNT had an interview with one of the peasants of Shabdeyani village of Batti Koat sub-district of Nangarhar province with regard to the co-operative movement. Here is the interview with Abdul Yaktan, the president of co-operative in that region:

Question: Please tell us how many jeribs of land you have.

Answer: Before the triumph of the April Revolution I did not own any land but I was a peasant. Of course, I used to work on the land of another person who himself did not work on his land. He was a feudal, he used to come on the farm at harvesting time to take away the largest part of my products for getting which I spent my energy throughout the year. I felt disappointed to obtain a small share of the production. Therefore, I was obliged to borrow some money or some cereal crop from the feudal and landlord. I was always at the service of the landlord. I also was permanently in debts. This was my life prior to the Revolution.

Question: What was the reason for establishing a

co-operative in your locality.

Answer: When the Department of the Democratic Land Reforms distributed land to small scale and landless peasant in our village we also became the owners of land. At that time we badly needed material and spiritual assistance. There should have been a source to help us in this regard. It was for the government too to render assistance to every individual. Thus we peasants of Shabdeyani village, set up an agricultural co-operative in our locality. It attracted the attention of the government authority and subsequently the authority concerned gave wheat, chemical fertiliser and agricultural tools and implements to our co-operative. Then we distributed them to the members of the co-operative in our locality. The assistance encouraged our peasants to work harder and more than ever before.

Because I was the founder of the co-operative and also a wellknown and old peasant in the locality therefore, I was elected as the president of the co-operative.

Question: What is your opinion on the benefit of the establishment of peasants' co-operatives in your region?

Answer: I have already mentioned that the peasants are not able to solve

BRIEFS

NANGARHAR PROVINCE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION--Kabul, 2 February, BAKHTAR--Over 30,000 hectares of land was used for the cultivation of wheat, barely, vegetables and industrial crops and more than 330,000 tons of agricultural products were produced in Nangarhar Province of the DRA, during the past ten months. Likewise, cereals and vegetables were cultivated in 33 demonstration farms for the production of improved seeds and training of the farmers of that province in scientific methods of farming during the same period. In order to boost the level of agricultural production, over 13,000 tons of chemical fertilizers, 53 tons of improved seeds and pesticides and insecticides worth more than one million afs were distributed to the farmers of that province. Similarly, the state of the DRA rendered over 4 million afs to the peasants of Nangarhar Province as easy term credits. [Text] [Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0424 GMT 3 Feb 86 LD] /12913

MECHANIZED AGRICULTURE STATIONS--Kabul, 3 February, BAKHTAR--The state of the DRA has taken great measures towards the mechanisation of agriculture in the country and the process is continuing. The establishment of a new agricultural mechanized department within the framework of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reforms can be cited as an example. Presently nine agricultural mechanized stations are functioning in eight provinces of the country. In order to expand agricultural mechanisation two new stations will be established in the provinces of Takhar and Nangarhar, north and east of the country respectively during the next 5-Year Plan. [Text] [Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 4 Feb 86 LD] /12913

HELMOND PROVINCE LAND REFORM--Kabul, 3 February, BAKHTAR--As many as 2,500 land ownership documents were distributed to the landless peasants of Helmond Province, south of the country during the past nine months of current Afghan year (ends March 20, 1986). About 36 council of peasants along with 27 committees have been set up in order to further accelerate the process of democratic land and water reforms in the province. The peasants have also access to the cooperatives which render technical and financial assistance such as distribution of fertilizers, insecticides and improved seeds to the peasants. Right now 17 peasantry cooperatives are operating throughout the province. Since the beginning of the land reforms in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan more than 237,090 landless peasants families received 695,405 hectares of land. [Text] [Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0427 GMT 4 Feb 86 LD] /12913

CSO: 4600/215

PRESS REPORTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN PUNJAB, HARYANA

Haryana Congress-I Backs Bhajan

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Jan 86 p 1

[Text] Chandigarh, January 7--An emergency meeting of office-bearers of the Haryana Pradesh Congress committee, party MLAs and MPs as also presidents of district units held here today, fully endorsed the "bold and unambiguous" stand taken by the chief minister, Mr Bhajan Lal, and the PCC chief, Mr Birendra Singh, regarding the implementation of the Punjab accord with regard to the transfer of the Fazilka and Abohar areas of Punjab to Haryana in lieu of the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab and the completion of the Sutlej-Yamuna link (SYL) canal in Punjab territory.

The participants said the time schedule provided in the accord regarding the implementation of various clauses symbolised the very essence and soul of the Punjab accord. Any delay in the implementation of one clause was bound to have an adverse effect on the time schedule for implementing the other clauses.

Besides, it would have a direct bearing on the very character and complexion of the whole settlement which, as was commonly known, was in the nature of a package deal.

The meeting noted with deep concern that construction work on the SYL canal had remained at a standstill for the last three months. This, it said, had resulted in serious apprehensions in the minds of the people of Haryana whether construction work would be completed by August 15, as provided in the Rajiv-Longowal accord or even thereafter.

Under the circumstances, it would be violative of the spirit of the Punjab accord if, while the completion of the SYL canal by the due date was in doubt, the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab was insisted upon by the other side, as was actually being done at the moment.

Talking to newsmen later, Mr Bhajan Lal said the resolution adopted at the meeting would be sent to the Prime Minister for necessary action.

Asked whether some Hindi-speaking villages in Patiala district would be acceptable to Haryana, Mr Bhajan Lal said--"no." He pointed out that the wording of the accord was very clear that only Hindi-speaking areas of Abohar and Fazilka were to be transferred to Haryana.

Answering another question, Mr Bhajan Lal said that even if the Abohar and Fazilka areas were given to Haryana, they would not accept the decision till the SYL canal was completed and "water starts flowing in it and reaches Haryana villages."

Asked whether he would be satisfied if the Centre took up the construction of the canal, he said it would be acceptable if "the people of Haryana were satisfied that the canal would be completed by August 15 next."

Answering another question Mr Bhajan Lal indicated that it was not possible to transfer Chandigarh to Punjab on January 26, as the Mathew commission had to meet on January 13.

Asked whether he would meet the Punjab chief minister, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala in the next few days in Delhi, Mr Bhajan Lal said: "I have no such information." He, however, added that he was going to Delhi tomorrow evening after visiting Sirsa.

Regarding the opposition's "rasta roko" programme on January 23, he said the challenge would be met both at the political and administrative level.

Answering another question, Mr Bhajan Lal said it was really unfortunate that in the absence of an accord, about eight million acre feet (MAF) of water was flowing into Pakiwtan. This wastage could be prevented only when both the Indira Gandhi (Rajasthan) canal and the SYL canal were completed.

Statute Bars Transfer Ordinance

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 11 Jan 86 p 4

[Text] New Delhi, Jan 10--A legal hitch has developed in the way of a smooth transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab with experts in the field sharply divided in their opinion on whether the Union territory can be transferred through an ordinance at all.

Legal experts have pointed out that Article 3 of the Constitution relating to the formation of new states and alteration of areas and boundaries is tempered by the mandatory provision in the Constitution that the necessary Bill has to be referred by the President to the state legislature for its views.

This provision, according to the experts, clearly puts the transfer of Chandigarh on January 26 beyond the scope of an ordinance. They also pointed out that an ordinance promulgated by the President cannot be referred to state legislatures for their views.

Another section of legal experts while admitting that there is a "technical" hitch, has said that if the ordinance is challenged, the Supreme Court can still uphold the transfer of Chandigarh by rising above the technicalities of law. The other experts on the subject have dismissed this said view and that under the existing constitution the President cannot promulgate an ordinance to increase or diminish the area of a state.

Article 3 of the Constitution states: "Parliament may by law form a new state, increase the area of any state, diminish the area of any state, alter the boundaries of any state, alter the name of any state provided that no Bill for the purpose shall be introduced in either House of Parliament except on the recommendation of the President and unless the Bill has been referred by the President to the legislature of that state for expressing its views thereon within such period as may be specified..." The last clause makes it clear that the views of the state Assemblies, in this case Haryana and Punjab, have to be sought.

This again reopens the question of how Chandigarh will be transferred if the Centre makes up its mind to implement the first part of the Punjab accord on January 26. A minimum period of 14 days is required to convene a session of Parliament and time has almost run out. Besides, even after Parliament passes the Bill, it has to be referred to both the state Assemblies for their views.

The only option is for a defacto transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, which has no legal validity and can be nullified through a stay order by any individual.

Promulgation of an ordinance had till date been accepted by all circles as the only feasible method for transferring Chandigarh, but the new information thrown up by legal experts puts an entirely different light on the situation.

'No Settlement Outside Mathew Commission'

Madras THE HINDU in English 14 Jan 86 p 9

[Text] Chandigarh, Jan 13--The Punjab Chief Minister, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala, today categorically ruled out any settlement with Haryana out of the purview of the Mathew Commission, appointed under the accord to determine the Hindi-speaking areas of Punjab to be transferred to Haryana in lieu of Chandigarh.

"There are no talks going on either with the Centre or Haryana in this regard," Mr Barnala told newsmen at Mohali near here after laying the foundation stone of the country's first Rs 60-crore TV colour picture tube project. He had no such indication from the Centre for such a dialogue, Mr Barnala said.

Enumeration: He also denied report that the Punjab Government had agreed to enumeration in the Abohar and Fazilka areas in Punjab to identify the Hindi-speaking villages along the border.

The representatives of the Punjab Government had made it clear to the Centre that such enumeration at this stage could generate tension and even create law and order problem.

"Moreover, it would set a bad precedent. We feel that the 1981 census figures should be relied upon for determining such areas," he said. When asked what would be the reaction of the State if the Mathew Commission itself favoured the process of enumeration, Mr Baranala said "then we shall see."

His Government had no indication to the effect that the Mathew Commission was planning to send enumerators. The Government lawyers before the Commission had opposed the move.

Asked if the Punjab Government had offered 40 villages in Patiala district in lieu of Chandigarh, he denied that any such offer had been made. He said since there were no Hindi-speaking areas on the basis of "contiguity" the Punjab Government had offered 13 villages in Patiala district.

Punjab's claims: When asked if this number could be increased to satisfy Haryana's demand, Mr Barnala said Haryana should specify areas other than Fazilka and Abohar. On the other hand, he said Punjab had its claims on about 225 villages in Sirsa district of Haryana.

Workings of Linguistic Census

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 18 Jan 86 p 1

[Article by Subash Kirpekar]

[Text] Kandu Khera, January 17--The linguistic census ran into serious problems in 25 of the 54 disputed villages in Fazilka and Muktsar tehsils and could not be started at all in this key village.

Though a new team of some 45 enumerators reached here from New Delhi this afternoon, the contingents of the Assam Rifles who were to provide them security had not reached till 5 p.m.

In the neighbouring village of Bazidpur, the enumerators had to content with re-verification of the data collected yesterday following objections that the number of members in Hindi-speaking families had been inflated.

While some discrepancies were reportedly found, a number of Bishnois living in the village shut their doors and decided to boycott the census teams creating a piquant situation for the authorities. A similar situation prevails in about 24 other villages.

Kandu Khera presents the picture of a village besieged by the Punjab police. Two Punjab ministers, Mr Balwant Singh and Mr Amarinder Singh camped here almost throughout the day "to supervise the law and order machinery." Senior officials and top police officers also remained in attendance.

While four Haryana Lok Dal MLAs were turned away from the outskirts of Kandu Khera and Bazidpur, the police beat up a team of reporters and photographers from the "Ananda Bazar Patrika" group of newspapers. They also seized and exposed the film from the cameramen after keeping them in "illegal confinement" for nearly three hours.

Mr Amarinder Singh has apologised to the journalists, Seema Mustafa, Sondep Shankar, Sankarshan Thakur and Praveen Jain, and promised to inquire into the unfortunate incident which took place after the team came out of the village to inquire from the police on the whereabouts of the sarpanch, Mr Hanuman Dass.

Meanwhile, so deep-rooted are the suspicions on either side that every move is ought to be assessed and evaluated for its mischief potential. The Lok Dal legislators from Haryana were resentful of the fact that no Haryana minister had come to the key village today to see for themselves "the intimidation and pressure tactics being adopted by the Punjab government."

Eight Haryana ministers were said to be camping in nearly Dabwali. Incidentally the small township of Dabwali presents a most ridiculous picture of territorial division as half of it lies in Punjab and half in Haryana. Indeed, as a wag put it, it might happen that if you sit in a restaurant, half the tables may be in Haryana and half in Punjab.

One of the most strident attacks on Mr Justice Mathew came from Mr Balwant Singh, Punjab finance minister who dubbed him "another Jinnah." "Unfortunately," says Mr Balwant Singh, "there is no Mahatma Gandhi to heal the wounds. The Mathew commission is not going by the laws of the country. It is creating new laws which will create turmoil and tension all over the country which will hang over our heads for the next 100 years."

Voicing the embittered feelings, Mr Balwant Singh said that this one single act of conducting a linguistic survey had undone the good work done by the Barnala ministry in mellowing down tension in the last few months. He accused the Haryana ministers of building up communal propaganda over the last three months.

In Bazidpur, this correspondent saw the enumerators being accompanied by a Punjab government official and two Punjab policemen each as they went from house to house asking the inmates what language they spoke. The state government official made his own notes leading the Hindi-speaking population to allege that 'a parallel census' was being undertaken.

The finance minister and the Akali MP from the area, Mr Shaminder Singh took a group of newsmen to Kandu Khera village. "We are violating the law for your benefit," the minister said.

Inside, Harijans claimed that there was no pressure on them. But the overwhelming presence of Punjab police prompted Haryana legislators to say that all replies would be given under duress and that the census would be unfair.

In view of the disputes arising in different villages, the commission's fresh instructions are to use three indicators to resolve such differences. These are ration cards, voters' list and the last census figures. Moreover, the new enumerators airlifted to Kandu Khera are Tamils, Bengalis and Muslims.

These last minute concessions given by the Centre have been welcomed by Punjab. Even now, Mr Balwant Singh suspects there is a conscious design behind the fumbling by enumerators. He regrets that "in our own state, we are the complainants."

Analyst on Concern in Delhi

Madras THE HINDU in English 17 Jan 86 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text] New Delhi, Jan 16--The Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, appears to be quite determined to go ahead with the implementation of the Punjab accord, which is proving to be the severest test of his capacity for political management since any vacillation on his part is facing this grave challenge with firmness and fortitude will have very adverse repercussions.

So all is set for the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab on January 26, but in what form this should be done to keep up some degree of balance in the fulfilment of the commitments made to Punjab and Haryana is still a subject of intense debate in the inner circles of the Government.

Feelings in both these volatile States have been inflamed by the provocative pronouncements and rigid postures of the hardliners among the Sikhs as well as the Hindus who are bent on needless confrontation. The big problem that the Centre is facing is how to meet in some form or the other the expectations that have been aroused in both Punjab and Haryana about the territorial aspects of implementation.

Compensation to Haryana

The current mood in Delhi is that since Chandigarh has to be transferred to Punjab, it should be done on the due date of January 26 with adequate territorial compensation to Haryana. But there is also the realisation in high Government circles that the Centre has faltered badly in letting the Mathew Commission prolong the uncertainty until the last moment about the

nature and extent of the proposed territorial compensation, thereby giving an excuse to the opponents of the accord to repudiate the award if it does not come up to their expectations.

The Prime Minister and his advisers, who are almost in daily session reviewing the Punjab situation and preparing for the transfer of Chandigarh seem to be reasonably confident that they would be able to implement this first phase of the accord without any danger of serious disturbances. At the same time no chances are being taken in the sense that the fullest possible security arrangements have been made to deal sternly with any threat of violence.

Foes of Barnala active

The real concern is about the fate of the Barnala Ministry if large chunks of Abohar and Fazilka are given to Haryana as a result of the linguistic survey ordered by the Mathew Commission with the Centre's acquiescence. His opponents in the Akali camp are up in arms against the Chief Minister for not protesting enough in time against the wider terms of reference given to the Mathew Commission that have been the subject of differing interpretations.

The political implications, not the law and order aspects, of the controversy over the scope of the proposed territorial transfer to Haryana that have, therefore, been worrying the Centre. At the administrative level the Home Ministry is taking the steps to cope with the threats of violence while the Prime Minister is concentrating on the political aspects to ensure that the Punjab accord is not repudiated by the hawks in the Akali camp who would like to see the downfall of the Barnala Government.

Transition measures

The Centre is also working out appropriate transitional arrangements in consultation with the Punjab Government for permitting the Haryana offices to remain in Chandigarh for some time after the transfer of the capital region. The Prime Minister is also keen on announcing simultaneously adequate financial compensation to Haryana for building a new capital in due course.

The more immediate Central concern is to strengthen the hands of Mr Barnala and enable him to implement the Mathew Commission's award on territorial transfer to Haryana without much embarrassment. The primary objective, therefore, is to ensure that the Punjab accord is not repudiated under any pretext in the wake of the implementation of its first phase.

Enumerators fan out

Chandigarh, Jan 16--About 350 teams of investigators and supervisors today spread out from Abohar town in Punjab to 53 villages of Fazilka taluk and Kandu Khera village of Muktsar taluk to determine their linguistic status as directed by the Mathew Commission. The investigating teams are listing the households with the help of the district administration of Ferozepore.

The number of members of each household is being checked with the ration card issued in the name of the head of the family. The head of each family has been asked to stay at home today and tomorrow. The actual enumeration of speakers of Hindi and Punjabi will start tomorrow morning and be completed by the evening. The heads of family will be asked about their mother tongue and the language spoken by the others at home. Adult members may also be asked about their mother tongue. They will also be asked how long they have stayed in their village.

The information will be compiled on printed forms brought by the investigators from Delhi who are undertaking the task. No employee of the Punjab or Haryana Government has been included. A sizeable number of investigators are from South India.

Interest Among Neighboring Countries

Madras THE HINDU in English 18 Jan 86 p 9

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text] New Delhi, Jan 17--An interesting feature of the Punjab imbroglio is that countries like China, Sri Lanka and Pakistan are waiting to see how the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, rides this storm to draw their own conclusions whether he would display the same sort of strong nerve in implementing any agreements reached with them on bilateral issues.

The Chinese are reported to be closely watching the way in which he is handling the Punjab situation because they want to satisfy themselves that he would have the capacity and courage to cope with domestic criticism of a comprehensive settlement of the border dispute that might be reached on the basis of a balance concessions by both sides.

The Sri Lankan Government wants to feel equally reassured that if a satisfactory solution to the ethnic problem is evolved by utilising India's good offices, Mr Rajiv Gandhi would be firm enough to compel the Tamil militants to accept the concept of autonomy within the framework of the present unitary constitution without insisting on complete separation.

Pakistan's hope: The so-called civilian Government in Pakistan is expecting him to adopt a more cooperative attitude in his dealings with it to help strengthen the democratic aspirations of the people there. The protagonists of this process of democratisation in Pakistan who realise that the involvement of the military regime in the Punjab crisis has been a major stumbling block to better Indo-Pakistani relations, would like to see this hurdle removed soon through a quick implementation of the Rajiv-Longowal accord to isolate the extremists and eliminate the opportunities for such outside intervention.

The Chinese realise that any border settlement with India involving cessation of territory could not be implemented without an appropriate amendment of the Indian Constitution. As there is bound to be some degree of opposition

to it, the agreement can be carried through only by a strong and determined Prime Minister who has the capacity to seek the cooperation of all concerned in implementing it.

The Rajiv-watchers in the Western world too, are waiting to see how he handles the Punjab situation and what all he does to avert the danger of a lurch back to square one with disastrous consequences. It was, therefore, not without significance that the young Prime Minister who met some fabian intellectuals from Britain yesterday made some reassuring observations to them to get his message across that he was all set to implement the Punjab accord both in letter and spirit.

The Soviet bloc diplomats in Delhi who are no less concerned about the wider internal and external repercussions of a failure in Punjab, want Mr Rajiv Gandhi to succeed in controlling the inflamed passions in both Punjab and Haryana with an even-handed implementation of the agreement. The internal stability of India is viewed as an essential prerequisite for the expansion of Indo-Soviet relations without giving a chance to the country's detractors to fish in the troubled waters of linguistic chauvinism or religious fanaticism.

Credibility: The Prime Minister's advisers are taking due note of all these factors in formulating his responses to the implementation of the rest of the Punjab accord even after the transfer of Chandigarh and the territorial adjustments that go with it. In their view the credibility of Mr Rajiv Gandhi has to be preserved at all costs by demonstrating adequately the strength of his Government in honouring the solemn commitments made in the larger national interest.

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CHANGES IN CONGRESS-I, GOVERNMENT ROSTER NOTED

Political Correspondent's Report

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 20 Jan 86 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, January 19--In a sudden and dramatic move characteristic of him, Mr Rajiv Gandhi today dropped Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Naval Kishore Sharma and Mr T. Anjiah from his council of ministers and gave them posts in the Congress Party.

The ostensible purpose of the changes, as explained by Mr Rajiv Gandhi this afternoon, is to strengthen the party. Indeed, Mr Gandhi is apparently keen that the people take this proposition at its face value. That is precisely why he announced the changes at a press conference specially convened at short notice for this purpose at the AICC headquarters.

In view of the tension between the Punjab and Haryana governments on the implementation of the Punjab accord, the impression could have gained ground that Mr Arjun Singh, who mainly negotiated the deal with the late Sant Longowal had attracted the Prime Minister's displeasure. On Sunday Mr Gandhi was keen that such an impression did not gain ground. He reaffirmed that the accord would be fully implemented, which meant that Chandigarh would be duly handed over to Punjab on January 26 and some Hindi-speaking areas now in Punjab would be duly transferred to Haryana "in lieu of Chandigarh" on the same date.

Reports have been circulating that Mr Arjun Singh, who was included into the cabinet only two months ago, was not paying much attention to his assignment as commerce minister. If this was indeed the case, it would indicate that he somehow knew that his stay in the government was likely to be short-lived. But that would raise another question: Why was he asked to, and why did he agree to, seek election to the Lok Sabha from south Delhi, a constituency wholly alien to him?

Despite the build-up given to Mr Arjun Singh's appointment to the newly-created post of party vice-president, his position in the organisation remains ambiguous because in terms of today's announcement he will function under the direction not only of Mr Rajiv Gandhi but also Mr Kamalapati Tripathi who continues as the working president.

Whatever the factors responsible for the change in Mr Arjun Singh's assignment, Mr Gandhi will find it hard to sell the proposition that Mr Naval Kishore Sharma and Mr Anjiah can serve as instruments for the rejuvenation of the Congress Party in their capacity as two of the eight general secretaries.

Indeed, greater importance must attach to the shifting of Mr Oscar Fernandes and Mr Ahmed Patel from the general secretaryship of the AICC to presidencies of the Karnataka and Gujarat Pradesh Congress committees. Both are lightweights who owed their influence during the last 12 months to their propinquity to the Prime Minister. Back in Bangalore and Ahmedabad, they cannot be taken seriously by master politicians such as Mr Gundu Rao and Mr Madhavsing Solanki.

In sharp contrast to the promotion of Mr Fernandes and Mr Patel, Jitendra Prasad, who acquired considerable prominence in recent months as the AICC spokesman, has been dropped as general secretary and like his predecessor, Mr Srikant Verma, not given any new assignment.

Mr Tarun Gogoi has also lost his secretaryship, perhaps as a fallout of his electoral defeat in Assam.

The other new general secretaries, apart from the two dropped ministers are Mr Ghagwat Jha Azad, a former minister, Mr Ram Dhan, once general secretary of the Janata Party in Parliament during Mr Morarji Desai's time as Prime Minister, and Mrs Najma Heptullah, deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

The most prominent sufferer in the party changes is, of course, Mr Pranab Mukherjee. He was dropped from the cabinet on December 31, 1984 and has now been dropped from both the party's parliamentary board and the working committee.

As if to rub salt into his wound, his once arch rival, Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Chaudhury has been elevated to the parliamentary board. His promotion perhaps reflects a desire to win back Muslim support, conspicuously lost in the recent Assam elections. Incidentally, the former chief minister, Mr Hiteswar Saikia, a known opponent of the Assam accord, and Mr J.B. Pamaik, Orissa chief minister, have been retained in the working committee. Dropped from the CWC are Mr Gundu Rao, former chief minister, and Mr B. Shankaranand, water resources minister.

Another entrant into the working committee to deserve notice is Mr Veer Bahadur Singh, U.P. chief minister, though it is difficult to say whether this development is a confirmation or a contradiction of recent reports of his impending replacement. Almost equally intriguing is the sudden elevation of Mr Ramanand Yadav, MP, as a member of the CWC.

And while men may come and men may go staying on are Mr G.K. Moopanar, AICC general secretary and Mr Sitaram Kesri, AICC treasurer.

Composition of Panels

Madras THE HINDU in English 20 Jan 86 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Jan 19--The Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, today pulled out three Ministers, Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Nawal Kishore Sharma and Mr T. Anjiah from his Council of Ministers and inducted them in the Congress(I) organisational set-up.

Mr Arjun Singh, who was appointed Commerce Minister a few months ago, will now hold a newly-created post of Vice-President in the party while Mr Anjiah and Mr Sharma will be general secretaries. Mrs Najma Heptullah, another new General Secretary, will resign as Vice-Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Mr Kamalapati Tripathi continues as Working President of the party.

These changes as also the composition of the reconstituted Working Committee and the Central Parliamentary Board were announced by Mr Gandhi at a hurriedly-summoned press conference at the AICC (I) office in the afternoon. It was called in his capacity as Congress(I) President and, therefore questions and answers were generally confined to the party affairs. According to Mr Gandhi, the party Vice-President will function under the Working President "with greater autonomy and authority."

(A late evening report said Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Anjiah and Mr Sharma have submitted their resignation from the Cabinet).

Cabinet reshuffle coming?

Today's decision will obviously necessitate a reshuffle of the Union Cabinet. While conceding this, Mr Gandhi did not like to disclose, despite persistent queries, the extent of timing of Cabinet changes. "You should have something to write about" or "I will let (it) know when it comes," was all that he said.

From among the present general secretaries Mr Oscar Fernandes has been appointed Karnataka PCC (I) President and Mr Ahmed Patel chief of the Gujarat State party. Some other State units were also intended to be "revitalised," but Mr Gandhi smiled away queries whether any of the Chief Ministers in the party-ruled States would be drafted for party work.

Only three out of the eight general secretaries--Mr G.K. Moonapar, Mr A.K. Antony and Mr R.L. Bhatia--are retained. Those dropped are: Mrs M. Chandrasekhar, Mr Tarun Gogoi, Mr Jatendra Prasad, apart from Mr Fernandes and Mr Patel. The new appointees in this category include Mr Bhagwat Jha Azad, who was dropped from the Council of Ministers some time ago, and Mr Ram Dhan, a Janata activist, who joined the Congress(I) in 1984. Mr Sitaram Kesri continues as treasurer.

A significant omission in the new Parliamentary Board is Mr Pranab Mukherjee, a former Finance Minister, who functioned for a while as West Bengal PCC (I) President. Mr Arjun Singh replaces him.

The new Parliamentary Board consists of Mr Tripathi, Mr Arjun Singh, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, Mrs M. Chandrasekhar, Mr K. Karunakaran, Mr Darbara Singh and Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Chaudhary.

Mr Mukherjee's name did not figure in the new Working Committee. Apart from the general secretaries who were dropped, others excluded from the Committee are: Mr B. Shankaranand and Mr Gundu Rao. The new entrants are: Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Azad, Mr Sharma, Mrs Heptullah and Mr Ram Dhan.

The new Working Committee comprises the following: Mr Tripathi, Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Narasimha Rao, Mrs Chandrasekhar, Mr Karunakaran, Mr Darbara Singh, Mr Ghani Khan Chaudhary, Mr Anjiah, Mr Antony, Mr Azad, Mr Sharma, Mrs Heptullah, Mr Moopanar, Mr Ram Dhan, Mr Kesri, Mr J.G. Patnaik, Mr Bir Bahadur Singh, Mr Ramanand Yadav, Mr Hiteshwar Saikia and Mr R.L. Bhatia.

Mr Gandhi would not like to call the changes another Kamaraj plan. That was, he told a questioner, because better people who had given up Cabinet posts were drafted for party work. Last time they were not inducted in the organisation. He described today's decision as a follow-up of his plan, spelt out at the Bombay centenary session, to galvanise the party. His resolve, he noted, had received the unanimous support of the rank and file.

According to Mr Gandhi, the new office-bearers would have considerable autonomy. He would decide on the delegation of authority and other details in consultation with them. The idea was to involve them in the thinking process for formulating programmes.

Will he continue to hold the post of party President, in addition to his responsibilities as Prime Minister. "Wait for the party elections," was his reply. Will he apply the one-person-one-post rule? When democratic processes were strengthened within the party, such rules would not be necessary, he said. The party poll would be held according to the timetable already announced and be completed by July.

However, it was generally believed that he would retain the dual charge.

'Perplexing' change

The "transfer" of Mr Arjun Singh seemed perplexing for he was inducted in the Cabinet late last year in what was interpreted as a reward for his performance as Governor of Punjab. Mr Gandhi was asked about it at the press conference. His reply was general--when Mr Arjun Singh was sent to Punjab, the press talked of the way he was pulled out of his home State, Madhya Pradesh, but later gave him a good chit for his role in regard to the Punjab accord. He thus sought to remove the impression that it was a case of promotion.

The party set-up in Karnataka may undergo a drastic change. This was the interpretation given to the change of PCC (K) President and the exclusion of Mr Shankaranand and Mr Gundu Rao from the Working Committee.

Surprise in Bangalore

Our Bangalore Special Correspondent writes:

Mr Oscar Fernandez will be the third president of the Karnataka PCC (I) in less than one year. His appointment came as a surprise to party quarters in Bangalore tonight, though there have been reports for some time now that a section of the party was trying to seek the removal of the incumbent, Mr K.H. Ranganath, MP.

Mr Ranganath took over only a few months after his predecessor, Mr K.H. Patil, MLA resigned in atonement for the party's rout in the March 1985 State Assembly elections.

Text of Rajiv's Press Conference

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 20 Jan 86 p 6

[Text] The following is the text of Congress president Rajiv Gandhi's press conference:

In Bombay I have said many things. One of them related to Congress. We thought there was a need to rejuvenate and revitalise the Congress. Congress Party elections are due and we have to ensure that these elections are carried out properly and according to time that was announced in Bombay. It will be our attempt to bring the party back to its supreme position that it once had, vis-a-vis the government wing of the Congress. And for this I am appointing people to the Working Committees, Parliamentary Board, new office-bearers and some PCCs now and some PCCs after consulting with the office-bearers.

In the Working Committee we have Kamalapati, Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Narasimha Rao, Mrs Chandrasekhar, Mr Karunakaran, S. Darbara Singh, Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhry, Mr Anjaiah, Mr Antony, Mr Bhagwat Jha Azad, Mr Nawal Kishore Shama, Mrs Najja Heptullah, Mr Moopnar, Mr Ram Dhan, Mr Kesri, Mr Patnaik, Mr Vir Bahadur Singh, Mr Ran Nand Yadav, Mr Hiteswar Saikia, and Mr L. Bhatia.

Out of these members on the Parliamentary Board we have Mr Kamalapati Tripathiji, Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Narasimha Rao, Mrs Chandrasekhar, Mr Karunakaran, S. Darbara Singh and Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhry. In the office-bearers to get more light and dynamism in the party, I am creating a new post of vice-president that will function with much more autonomy and authority and will be under the working president. Mr Arjun Singh will be the vice-president. For the general secretaries we have Mr Antony, Mr Bhagwat Jha Azad, Mr Moopnar, Mr Nawal Kishore Sharma, Mrs Najma Heptullah, Mr R.L. Bhatia, Mr Ram Dhan, and Mr Anjaiah. Sita Ram Kesriji will continue as treasurer.

I am sending two of our general secretaries who were working very well as PCC chiefs--Mr Ahmed Patel as PCC president, Gujarat, and Mr Oscar Fernandes as PCC president Karnataka.

Question: Does it mean that Mr Arjun Singh will resign from the Government?

Answer: Yes, I have talked with them. We needed senior people to come into the party and I talked with three or four people. They volunteered to come into the work in the party.

Q: Who else are resigning?

A: I just read you all the names. Surely you know who the ministers were. Three ministers and one deputy chairman. Mr Arjun Singh, Mr Anjaiah, Mr Nawal Kishoreji and Mrs Najma Heptullah. They will resign now.

Q: There are power groups in the party. Have you thought about them and what action are you going to take about it?

A: Well, hopefully in the coming elections these problems will be solved.

Q: How this syndication of power will be done after new appointments?

A: Well, I will have to sit down with the new office-bearers and decide how to delegate the power, what they want. But the idea is that the party should run on its own.

Q: The point is that for a by-election in a legislative council in some State, they have to come to you and they have to wait till the last moment. Are you going to change this process?

A: The process is that it has to come to CPD and that is the system which has been functioning in the last 40 years and that will not be changed. But the process of selection will be pushed down much further.

Q: For final selection it has to come to CPD, I can understand. Here everything is dependent on just one person.

A: That is the whole point of putting senior people here. So they will have the authority. They will have the freedom of action to deal with such problems.

Q: Not clear.

A: I thought we will restrict this press conference to subjects relating to the party. It does not give you something to talk about for a few days.

Q: Mr President, about the bogus membership in the party. Has there been any follow-up or have you given specific instructions.

A: Bogus membership is not a new problem, like I said at, I think, the closing session, that this has been a very old problem dating back from the days of Gandhiji and Subhas Bose and even before that. And the only way to really check it is to have a very active membership and to have good scrutiny

at the time of membership. This will be done in the election process and the new office-bearers will look after this.

No, elections will not be postponed.

Q: Now the Congress has lost in the South and recently in Assam and Punjab. And the new argument coming to the scene is that the future belongs to the regional parties and not to the national party because they are not able to understand the aspirations of the people. Now would you subscribe to this theory and how do you foresee the future. More and more regional parties, in that case what is the impact of overall political solution of the country.

A: No, I do not see the future is more and more regional parties. I see the future as much stronger Congress starting with the process that we have started now; gathering momentum with the elections which should finish by the end of July and really picking up from the gap that has been there because of lack of Congress activity as the party in the field.

Q: Mr Gandhi, what is your idea of revamping your party? To what extent are you gearing your party?

A: This is precisely what we are doing. We have now got a new set of office bearers who will have much more autonomy and freedom of action not just in the question of selecting candidates and appointment to various posts. But also in actual functioning of the party, gearing it up, carrying Congress ideology, first to our own workers, and then to all the people. And that will really be the basis on which it will work.

Well, the Congress has always been a bit of mixture of cadre and much more mass and a very small cadre in the sense of a cadre. But never a fake cadre like some other parties when we do not envisage the State cadre in the Congress.

We do not think that Congress should be a cadre base party. Congress is a mass party and it should remain as such.

Q: Mr Gandhi, I refer to your address at Bombay. You seem to have prescribed a very formidable agenda for yourself as regards the Congress, as regards public life. Now do you think this first step is good enough or sufficient to deal with the problem of the party, the vested interest, or do you have some other steps in mind...

A: It is a starting point and as I take further steps I will come to you and let you know about them. Let us wait till July.

Q: One man-one vote.

A: Well, as the party becomes more democratic and elections take place, then we would not have to lay down guidelines like this because democratic process will function on its own.

Q: Does it indicate lack of confidence in the existing office-bearers?

A: No, that is not true. It is a question of getting more senior people into the party who were so far generally involved in Government only. In fact, it is almost reverse in a way. I have taken whom I think better people among my senior party members and cabinet members and ask them to operate and get the party fully operative.

Q: As Prime Minister, Mr Gandhi, going back to the Kamraj Plan those who were pulled out from the government then...

A: But many of them were not appointed in the party. I have taken out four people and appointed all four in the party. Three plus one.

Q: As Prime Minister, how do you relish the prospect of weakening the government...

A: We will get more good people. We can take more juniors also. We can get a mix. We have a lot of people in the Government. Maybe I would not need to take any. I do not know. I will let you know just before.

Q: The frequent changes in the Government weakens it considerably and creates an uncertain situation in the Government administratively because the next three days the joint secretaries will be talking nothing else but who will be the next minister and who will be the next secretary. Do you think the situation is good for the administration?

A: How do you think it will be three days later.

Well, there are many aspects to organising of preliminary session. Some aspects were talked well. Some did not function as well as we expected them to.

Q: Has Mr Bhajan Lal represented that Haryana interests are not taken care of?

A: No, we have not any such news. Well, we signed an Accord and we will stand by that Accord. There is no question of deviating from that report.

Q: Mr Gandhi, you have signed an Accord and that Accord has been adjudged by your partymen in one State as slightly wrongly. The question is when they openly defile your Accord, it is not in the interests of your party to take a disciplinary action. Do you propose to take it or not?

A: Let us watch what happens. What the result of the survey is. Let us not jump the gun and be too much in a hurry.

Well, I told you and I make my position very clear that I have already supported the accord and I have said on a number of occasions that we stand committed to the accord and there is no question of going back from that.

Q: What will be the allocation of duties between the acting president and the vice-president?

A: When I said we will give you the allocation of work and the dissemination of responsibility, you will get this.

Q: In Haryana, do you agree that Mr Bhajan Lal added fuel to the fire in Punjab?

A: Well, he has some problems in Haryana. Haryana has a particular position. They feel that they have certain rights, certain claims. That does not change our position on the accord.

Q: I am talking of intervention on the part of the party...and are you thinking of collaborating with other Opposition parties in Punjab...

A: Let us watch for the next few days.

Q: Because the tension is building up, quite far. You must take action...

A: One must not believe everything on Press because if you believe the Press you would have said that no enumeration could have taken place. There would be tremendous violence. The fact is it happened peacefully.

Q: Going by your report on question, do you share the assessment that the accord is in jeopardy as a result of recent development.

A: No, why should it be in jeopardy because of recent developments. I do not understand the logic in that.

As we are talking about the Punjab, of course the best example I can give is that of Punjab elections. If we go back to what the Press said, the Opposition leaders said, or what the other people said, you will remember what type of atmosphere was created. But the fact is it went off smoothly. And I am confident that even this will go smoothly.

Q: I am saying on the basis of what Bhajan Lal and Mr Barnala has said, on the basis of their...

A: Well, they have their own problems. But when it comes to the accord, I am sure the accord will go through smoothly.

Q: In Bombay at the time of Centenary celebrations, Mr Bhajan Lal expressed you to intervene in the matter of canals, Yamuna and Sutlaj canal. Are you going to intervene in the matter because...

A: Well, we have looked into this and there has been some slippage on the schedule. We are trying to find out why and how the slippage has taken place and how to rectify that.

You have to wait for the report Justice Mathew is giving. I cannot. We hope so. If Justice Mathew's report is very clear in what it says, I see no reason why there should be a problem. Because he has been given a specific task under those two or three clauses and if he gives us an answer for each of the points in those clauses, I see no reasons why it should be a problem. We have to wait till Justice Mathew gives the report.

Q: You have just referred to a change in AICC and in the Cabinet. Do you visualise any such change in UP.

A: There is no scope for that in UP. There may be some changes at the level of PCCs. Let the new committee consider itself what is to be done. Then they will discuss with the States.

Q: What are you going to do with Parliamentary Party? Are you going to make some changes there too?

A: In the last session there was a lot of election and other problems and lot of members have been sent out deliberately by us to do some work in election areas and other areas also.

The Congress Parliamentary party has an elected executive and an elected office bearer. But once they are elected they will carry out their term. But if the Party finds them satisfactory, they will re-elect them, otherwise they will lose. That is the whole point of having a democratic process.

I do not think there is any valid basis for it. You look at the names, the CWC and CPC and officer bearers DCCs presidents, you will see that overwhelmingly they are the people who stood with the party and stood with the ideology of the party.

I will not comment on what has been said. But we have full faith in Justice Mathew and I am sure Justice Mathew will do the task that has been given to him, in the very best manner that is possible.

Q: The Soviet Communist Party has said that it will have some specific relation with Yuva Party.

A: Well, we have not got any relation at the moment.

Well, the action will come with election in the party and the new office bearers that we have appointed will look after the rejuvenation and bringing in the right type of people to the top.

Q: Mr Gandhi, the Congress at the moment has president in you, and working president in Mr Tripathi and vice-president wide powers. Do you think it makes your party top heavy?

A: No, I do not think so at all.

No, I am not changing my style at all. If the country is to run smoothly, they have to carry everyone with us and more specially in the opposition states, the governments that are there. And there has been no change. If I tell something about the opposition parties in Bombay, I said much more about the Congress Party.

Firstly, I do not know whom you call my special adviser, and what report you are getting from them. So I do not know how you feel that report from certain people are contradictory to what has been the actual facts. Let me correct again. You might have something on record said by someone. I have no personal adviser, I take my advice.

We have worked something out but I would rather not elaborate it here. I would like to talk to the opposition parties, opposition leaders about it and then let you know more.

Q: Bogus members...

A: Like I said this is not a question which is new today. It has been there for many, many years. And we will do our best to see that a very minimum manage to. We will try that nobody will get through. But I am sure, even if some do it will be very, very small minority.

If the charge is substantiated, we will take action. Thank you.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1390

ANALYST DISCUSSES IMPORTANCE OF 'QUEEN BEATRIX' VISIT

Madras THE HINDU in English 14 Jan 86 p 9

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text] New Delhi, Jan 13--After a two-day stop-over in Goa, Queen Beatrix and her consort, Prince Claus, arrive in Delhi tomorrow on a week-long State visit to India to set the right tone for increased Indo-Dutch economic cooperation.

A high-power Dutch business delegation is also visiting India at the same time for detailed discussions with Government departments and industrial organisations on the possibilities of higher trade, technical collaboration and investment in joint enterprises.

A former colonial power, the Netherlands has proved to be an eloquent example of how well a highly industrialised western power can progress even without the natural resources of its empire. It has also emerged as one of the leading aid givers, devoting as much as 1.5 percent of its gross national product to foreign economic assistance, outstripping even Sweden.

Main recipient of aid: As the main beneficiary of Dutch economic aid programmes, India has received over the years more than a billion guilders in grants, soft loans and other forms of assistance. But the volume of two-way trade is so low that Dutch exports to India and imports from it constitute less than one percent of its total foreign trade.

A notable feature of Dutch aid is that its grants to India are not intended to be export subsidies, for part financing of the sale of its industrial products, as in the case of other western countries. India is at liberty to use the pledged sums in many manner it likes in the bilateral sphere. So, in terms of the grant element and the softness, India regards Dutch aid as perhaps the best form of foreign assistance.

The Queen herself will not be engaging in any political or economic talks but her husband, who takes a keen interest in his country's foreign economic relations, has been encouraging Dutch banks, multinational corporations and business houses to invest in India, which he believes is destined to become a major economic power by the turn of the century. He visited India

in 1981, accompanied by a Dutch business delegation, to create a better awareness of what the Netherlands could do for the country's development.

MOU on science, technology: Apart from signing several agreements on economic, technical and agricultural cooperation, the Netherlands has also concluded a memorandum of understanding on science and technology with India besides establishing a limited defence supply relationship. It is now all set to help dredge the Ganga and clean up other river systems through its experts in water management.

A highly industrialised country, the Netherlands is also well advanced in agriculture and animal husbandry, producing some of the best fruit, vegetables, flowers and dairy products in Europe.

High regard for India: As an economic adviser to the Dutch Government, Prince Claus has travelled widely in the third world and he is known to regard India as the best example of a developing country which has made rapid progress despite many limitations.

The Dutch Foreign Trade Minister, Mr F. Bolkestein, led an economic delegation to India last month to prepare the ground for the Queen's visit.

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CSO: 4600/1389

KHAMENE'I INTERVIEWED ON MAJOR ISSUES BY PAKISTANI RADIO-TV

Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 13 Jan 86 pp 13, 9

[Text] On the eve of his trip to Pakistan, President Hojjat ol-Eslam va-ol-Moslemin Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces from Afghanistan. He said: The only way to solve the Afghanistan problem is to value the people of this country. We protest aggression in Afghanistan by foreign powers, and we believe that the oppressed people of Afghanistan, all the territory of that country, and the independence of its people are endangered.

The president made this comment at a press conference held in Tehran by Iranian and Pakistani news correspondents. A Pakistani correspondent asked the president for his view on a solution to the Afghanistan problem. He said: If we wish to compensate for that bitter event today (the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet forces) and push the water that has gone under the bridge back, the people of Afghanistan must be valued. The people are undoubtedly the primary pivot point for talks, decision-making, the form of the future government, and the organization of Afghanistan's domestic and foreign relations.

If we give attention to the people of Afghanistan, who are a Muslim believing nation with an interest in Islamic criteria and values, the problem will undoubtedly be solved. The president then stressed: We have vigorously avoided taking steps to solve the Afghanistan problem out of sight of the people of Afghanistan and without their knowledge and desire, and we have never accepted this.

Proposal for Resolving the Imposed War

The President answered another question from a Pakistani correspondent concerning Iraq's war with Iran and Iran's proposed solution. He said: From the first days of the beginning of this imposed war, which began with Iraq's aggression against Iran, we have given our own constructive proposals. Since these proposals were logical, and since we have heard no convincing answers to any of them in any bilateral or multi-lateral talks with the parties with an interest in this matter, we continue to insist on them. These proposals are very clear. They include an end to the aggression, punishment of the aggressor, and securing the aggressor's repentance and promise not to repeat this act.

The president discussed trips by delegations from the Islamic Conference Organization sent as peace delegations to Tehran, and their talks with him. He said: They acknowledged that Iraq is the aggressor, so the solution is perfectly clear. Now that the aggressor is identified, he must be punished. Today, by applying pressure on Iraq, the Islamic nations can make Iraq accept this

logical and natural result. If this pressure had been applied by the Islamic nations in the first year of the war and if this position had been justly taken and shown, the war would not have continued this long.

Today also, no matter how late it is, the current positions of the Islamic countries on the aggressor Iraqi regime can still prolong the war.

He added: The aggressor has been identified. This is not something we are claiming, it is something known to all people with close knowledge of the war who have not confined their study of it to the self-interested Zionist and Western newspapers and news agencies, and they also know what its solution is. They know who the aggressor is, and therefore, if the aggressor is known, the solution is obvious and definite. This is our message today to believing and sincere countries, those countries who believe in peace and who are disturbed by such an event. They must concentrate all their forces at the center of the sickness; they must pressure the Iraqi regime and persuade it to accept the inevitable and logical results of its own aggression. In our view, this is a basic matter.

Relations with Arab Countries in the Region

In another part of the press conference, the president discussed the Islamic republic's relations with Arab countries in the region. He said: Our relations with neighbor Arab countries are good and becoming stronger. There have been ups and downs since the start of the revolution, sometimes dark and cold, sometimes good and hopeful. These days our relations are good, and of course this situation has come about through the sincere efforts of ourselves and some Persian Gulf countries. We see sincerity between ourselves and our Arab brothers in the Persian Gulf area and beyond. Of course some Arab countries have taken completely friendly positions toward us from the beginning.

These countries include Syria, Libya, Algeria, South Yemen, and our brothers in the Western Sahara. Of course we ourselves, for various reasons, did not want relations with some Arab countries such as Morocco and Egypt, and we broke with them. During Nimeiri's tenure we cut off relations with his regime, but our relations with Sudan are good today. In general, our relations with Arab governments and countries are good and improving by the day.

Aims of Trip to Pakistan

Continuing his talk, Hojjat ol-Eslam va-ol-Moslemin Khamene'i discussed his trip to Pakistan and its aims. Noting the historic and geographical commonality between the two countries, he said: It can be said that in some respects no other Islamic country is as close to us as Pakistan. The people of Pakistan are brothers who have great commonality with our nation in history, culture, language, literature, and art. On the other hand, since Pakistan was formed as an Islamic country, this is another distinction that connects us with this country. Other factors in this relationship are our long common borders and common interests. Therefore, Pakistan is a neighbor and a friend and fraternal country to us. It is a great, sincere, and dear nation. There have been great religious scholars, writers, and thinkers in Pakistan, and there still are, all of whom do work and research on Islamic issues. We feel brotherhood with the people of Pakistan, and this trip can make this brotherhood closer and make for warmer and sweeter relations.

Topics of Talks

The president discussed the topics of his talks with Pakistani officials. He said: At first we will discuss matters pertaining to the two countries and their relations from various perspectives. We will evaluate ways to raise the level of these relations, so that God willing we will be able to raise relations higher and make them deeper economically, politically, and culturally.

The president said: We will also discuss world affairs with our Pakistani brothers, the adoption of common positions and bringing our positions closer. There are also important regional issues which we must discuss, such as the Afghanistan question and matters pertaining to the extremely sensitive Indian Ocean region. We will also discuss joint efforts in international organizations. As you know, both ourselves and Pakistan have participated in the United Nations, the Non-Alignment Movement, UNESCO, and many international groups, and we can play an important role in those groups, provided our positions are as close as possible.

At the press conference, a Pakistani correspondent asked the president: The Islamic revolution has earned a worthy position. What are your hopes for establishing this Islamic republic as a successful Islamic country in the world?

The president answered: We actually have great hopes for the future, and so far everything has bolstered these hopes. We have established our country's government on the foundation of Islamic regulations, and we believe that Islamic regulations guarantee welfare, security, and peace in society. Our experiences since the beginning of the triumph of the revolution have been good, even though the events of the past few years, mainly imposed on us, have been difficult and burdensome. Chief among these events is a war that has been imposed on us for more than five years. Despite the burden of these events, and in view of the fact that the war naturally destroys and consumes many resources, we have had many successes in various economic, technical, and human areas. Of course it is still too early for the results of these successes to appear to foreigners as a tangible phenomenon, but clearly there will be such a future and we now feel that our country's stability and growing activities in various areas have created a good image in the minds of the world and those watching us, some of whom are our friends and some of whom are not. In general, as I have said, we have great hopes.

Dealings with Materialist Societies

A Pakistani correspondent asked: The perspective of Islam is a world-encompassing perspective. Do you think these very high Islamic values can coexist and co-mingle today with the world's materialistic societies?

The President answered: The societies you are calling materialistic are composed of human beings, and we have great hopes for human beings. This is the teaching of the Koran, and it is a lesson Islam has taught us. If I were to choose a name for the people of the world, and to use to refer to the world's societies, I would say "societies under domination." This includes progressive, industrial, and advanced societies as well as America and Europe. They are also people under domination, but under the domination of wrong cultures imposed on the people of these societies by a group of profiteers who place no value on human beings and humanity.

Human beings are human beings everywhere, and we believe that people can understand the truth. If you are saying that all of this progress is moving towards materialism and the devaluation of high human values and forgetting the truth, this is the work of those domineering circles and networks who try to drive the popular movements of human beings in the direction of

undesirability and error. With this analysis and with this perspective, which is an Islamic and Koranic one based on an optimistic view of human beings and human nature, we can see that to move in the direction of the human beings living in those societies is not so difficult and illogical. We must give the world an example and a pattern. If the Islamic republic can give the human beings of the world suitable patterns in the areas of security, non-discrimination, peace, freedom, conscience, high spirituality and material welfare by attaining the highest human aspirations, they will undoubtedly be attracted. It has never been our intention to deal with other people, even those who have other beliefs, with hostility and harshness. We believe that that valuable merchandise which is in the hand of Islam and which we understand and perceive today and move towards in order to advance is something that has many customers among human beings. Since the beginning of the formation of the Islamic republic we have built our relations on a foundation of optimism towards human beings. There is no doubt that many people have become our enemies and will do so, but much of this is based on ignorance, although some of it is also based on enmity and self-interest arising from indifference to human values, and every human being in the world accepts this. What I have said is true and based on the desire to reach ideals and aspirations. We have built our own foreign policy on this policy. We have good relations today with many countries, and these relations will assuredly help to build and complete those foundations which we want, based on Islam. Ultimately, God willing, we will provide the societies humanity with the necessary patterns.

9310

CSO: 4640/164

KHAMENE'I ADDRESSES AIR FORCE PERSONNEL

LD081633 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Feb 86

[Report given by Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed 'ali Khamene'i, Iranian President, to Air Force personnel at Ayatollah Khomeyni's residence at Hoseyniyeh-e Jamaran on 8 February, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Air Force--recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful; I must begin by congratulating our dear leader and our eminent commander-in-chief, on behalf of the commander and personnel of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and our active and hard-working clergy brothers of the political-ideological departments of the Armed Forces, on the occasion of the Ten-day Dawn anniversary--the dawn of victory by the oppressed over the arrogant, and the heralding of the dawn of live-giving sun of the freedom days throughout Islamic quarters.

I must say in the presence of our dear leader that thanks to divine will, the Air Force personnel have been successful in their years of test. I am happy to announce that the call for self-reliance in the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran was, for the first time, responded to by the Air Force personnel. Today, there active, selfless, intelligent, and learned brothers who are conducting their duties with competence and care. They are all trying to make this gigantic and very technically complex force free and independent of the enemies of our revolution, Islam and country. They have achieved successes.

Our dear brothers in the Air Force and everybody in the Islamic Republic, responded, side by side, to the divine words, and, enjoying divine succor, have by now continued for seven years their attacks and advances. We will advance further with the blessings of the God. I must also congratulate you, the Air Force brothers, on this very proud day. You could place yourselves at a special rank among the Islamic combatants, having begun your movement inside the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Our beloved Imam has asked me to say, to you brothers that our Imam loves you all and has affinity toward you. You dear ones have been able to draw the attention of this symbol of belief and this center of piety and virtue by your sacrifices and your quest for righteousness and your courage. The nation has absorbed and accepted the nature of the truth-seeking and selfless movement. You are yielding your lives while hitting at the heart of the enemy, and for

the defense of the religion, the revolution, the homeland, Islamic values, and the dignity of this nation. This is the essence of a free human, and what we need to comprehend is the sensitive nature of the times we are in. I must declare this before you and the Imam. We have uprooted the reactionary monarchic rule with its rotten, oppressive, and inhuman apparatus from this country. But the grace of the revolution does not end here and is not bound by this. Our great revolution enjoying its popular momentum is about to topple the 400-year old empire of the industrialized West with the guidance and aid of God. For centuries, a number of regimes and nations--some of capitalists, a few who constitute a minute fraction of the world population--have been oppressing nations only because of their advanced technology and their illicitly-gained wealth. You have observed what they have done to African nations and what they are doing in Latin America, in the Middle Eastern region and Aisa. We have proved, after seven years of resistance and fighting, that a nation can stand against this empire. Other nations have learned this from us.

At this point I think I should convey to you the message which our eminent Imam just expressed to me, addressed to you. He asked me to tell you dear military personnel that the most important thing which you must bear in mind in your military career is the feeling of unity; unity among the combative forces. Today, you represent a strong clenched fist; what the enemy is plotting to do is to expose it in order to smash it. Do not let him. There exists no difference or polarity between you and other members of the armed forces or between the Armed Forces and the Islamic revolution Guards corps.

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CSO: 4640/191

AIR FORCE COMMANDER ADDRESSES KHOMEYNI, OFFICERS

LD081536 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Feb 86

/Report by Col Houshang Seddiq, Iranian Air Force commander, addressed to Ayatollah Khomeyni and a contingent of air force personnel at Khomeyni's residence in Hoseyniyeh-e Jamaran on 8 February on the occasion of the anniversary of the air force--recorded/

/Excerpts/ In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I must inform his eminent commander that we know well the value of these divine offerings and graces and in order to protect them, we are standing steadfast to the last individual and the last breath. Today, the personnel of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran have come to identify closely the real enemy of the Islamic ummah, which is the world-devouring United States and world blasphemy, and looks with contempt on those who commit treason against their country and those who have escaped it due to weakness of faith and lack of human integrity, and who took refuge in the laps of these scroungers and have given in to baseness and degradation. We look upon them as people who are an embarrassment to humanity.

Today, it is quite clear to us that the United States, the USSR, Britain and France, during the length of history and through the actions of an ignorant and stupid Iran, took our Islamic culture away from us and imposed shameful agreements on us such as Golestan, Turkamanchay, CENTO and thousands of other shameful agreements. And even now, they are engaged in efforts to try once again to dominate the Islamic country of Iran through their satanic powers and their mercenaries such as the Aflaqite Saddam and those abject and base escapees. But, after 7 years of continuous struggle and the imposition of an unwanted war on our Muslim ummah, they have now fully realized that, until the time that the rule of the jurist has the pulse of affairs in his /Khomeyni's/ hands, and until the time that the edicts of the Koran are the models for our society, they will not be able to dominate the Islamic country of Iran.

Therefore, by equipping Saddam in order to continue the war, and through the economic blockade and North Sea oil, they are trying to prevent us from building our country and hope that, with the passage of time, we will become tired and give up the struggle. But, oh, Beloved Imam, be certain that your children in the air force, together with other army, guard and popular Basij brethren, accompanied by the Hezbollah ummah, by implementing their high ideals

in the path of construction and achievement of self-sufficiency, will neutralize this doomed wish of world arrogance. And just as up to now, thanks be to God, they have been able to deploy their equipment and facilities against the intruding forces of Saddam, and have been able to become less dependent, day by day, technically, on Western countries, we assure Your Eminence that even if this war lasts for another 20 years, not only are we prepared to continue it but, day by day, our technical power and training, and our belief in the justness of the Islamic Republic of Iran will increase.

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CSO: 4640/192

RADIO IRAN BROADCASTS BAKHTIAR'S MESSAGE

GF070430 (Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian 1330 GMT 6 Feb 86

[Message by Dr Shapur Bakhtiar, leader of the National Resistance Movement in Iran; date and place not given--recorded]

[Excerpts] Dear brothers and sisters, As you are aware, we have made a categorical decision to overthrow the current decadent regime. Around the clock we concentrate all of our efforts on this endeavor and do our best to take account of all forces in this respect. However, this is not possible without the complete unity of internal forces and their coordination with extraterritorial activities.

As we have repeatedly stated, when you have denied yourselves the right to defeat, you should also distance yourself from indifference and despair. A living nation does not yield to whims of fate. The closer we come to the overthrow, the more you should increase the level of sacrifice to avoid any further delay in the collapse of the inhuman regime of a handful of criminal illiterates. We should return the freedom and honor of our country hand in hand. I am not talking about a return to the corruption and dictatorship of the past. Our aim is to construct an Iranian society based on nationalism and national sovereignty. This will not be possible without the help of all the people of the nation.

All of the efforts of the people of Iran over the past six years has had two aims: first, to continue efforts to save our national culture and identity in the face of the anti-Iranian regime of Mullahs whose main goal has been to destroy this culture and identity; and second, to struggle for freedom and the establishment of freedom for each person in the country.

The Mullahs have been unable to destroy our ancient culture and national pride. Thus, Iranians have been victorious in this respect. Clear proof of this is the increasing level of publication of philosophical, historical, and other beneficial research about the great figures of Iran. Irrespective of the repression of the corrupt machinery of the illiterate Mullahs, over the past six years the people of the country have become attached to their national culture more than ever before.

As far as freedom and national sovereignty based on the constitution is concerned, we need more sacrifice and coordination between the forces at home

and the strugglers abroad. As for me, I have not rested for a moment in this respect and for as long as I live, irrespective of problems, obstacles, backbiting, and shortsightedness, I will adhere to the principles of national sovereignty and the Constitution. Anyone in any position and at any time, who wishes to harm the Constitution and national sovereignty will find me opposing him. No honorable and free Iranian, especially after suffering such misery and chaos, can make a deal over such principles.

The future army of Iran should be a nationalist army with clear (?duties) which, in the manner of all democratic countries, should serve the country. We have learned, as 11 February has taught us, that past mistakes and discriminations were the main reasons for the blight of Khomeyni, besides other lessons. As far as I know, our brave officers being used in a stupid war under difficult and inhuman condition are, under no circumstances, prepared to accept conditions that existed before 11 February [1979].

The youth of the country who, for many years, did not have any political knowledge or freedom of discussion and debate, were gradually absorbed by two anti-national movements from 1963 on. These are the movements of the secular Mullahs and international communism. Both sides took the freedom of ideas and the right to criticism from our youth. All issues and problems of the world were offered to our youth by a group of Charlatans who supported Velayat-e Faqih as the only medicine for eternal success. The [words indistinct] youth put their power at their disposal. What useless sacrifice and self-denial were not committed by these innocent youth to bring about this present regime of oppression and harshness? Because their mental vacuum was filled by a load of garbage, they resorted to any crime and sacrifice to bring a bunch of profiteering Mullah prostitutes to power.

The new group, which are among the capable organizations with a history, became the champions of the masses. They have been (?racing) the previous group in treachery and the destruction of Iran. The only point in common has been their hatred for Iran and the freedom and sovereignty for its people. The policies of each group were determined by its commanders. However, what brought the two groups close together was a lack of thought and free ideas.

This immense force, knowingly or unwittingly, was put at the disposal of Khomeyni's blight. All of us have witnessed the rest of the story.

Iranian tribes should not be ignored nor mistreated. I am personally in a position to clearly understand their pain and tribal issues. Almost one quarter of the people of Iran are from tribes. For long years they have been ignored or harshly treated with impunity and a lack of understanding for the special needs of their life. A responsible and just government must not look down upon people who live in the mountains because of their poverty or distance from centers of wealth.

The workers of the country have been a toy of the political Charlatans and groups that misused them in various ways to gain power over the past 40 years. They gave power to parties and syndicates in the form of varied revolutions. However, since such parties and syndicates lacked a popular and nationalist base and were formed on the orders of a group of political brokers for the

sake of implementing an antihuman policy, the workers finally realized that they are only the toy of policymakers. When the curtain of [words indistinct] and lies fell the [words indistinct] of these organizations remained. This situation is horribly plain in Iran today.

The achievements of the class that creates the wealth is neither distributed justly nor does anyone believe in the social justice of the Mullahs. The wealth of the country is produced by industrialists, engineers, technicians, and workers. Thus, wealth should be distributed on the basis of the value of their work and their abilities. The spirit of initiative should not die. A country that does not produce wealth will end up an international beggar and prisoner. If the wealth of the country is not based on worth and justice, not only will it cause the disappointment to those involved, but also create unrest among them. What should be policy in a progressive society and above the interest of owners and workers, is the success of the productive system. Wealth should be first produced, then justly and accurately divided among the producers.

We have been talking about justice. If you think about it, maybe you will realize that the tissue of justice and its independence with respect to other organizations of the country is one of the most important and necessary duties of a nationalist and democratic government. In my view, nothing will last in a country unless the country has a true judiciary which acts independently to ensure the rights of its people.

The bitter experience of the current inauspicious regime has awakened and informed the unsoiled clergy of the country. The silence of those who are constantly thinking of amassing wealth, taking bribes, and trying to help the continued existence of the inauspicious and cruel regime has separated them from the true and pious clergy. We have repeatedly noted this point for the benefit of the aware clergy unsoiled by the crimes and murders of Khomeyni. It is not just to consider aware and just clergy as enemies or the opposition. The pure in the country should be respected no matter what their creed or dress.

Before finishing my remarks, I should like to say a few words about Azarbayjan. Every time I look at the lovely and great map of Iran, and whenever I look at the values and issues of each Iranian group, I cannot forget the bravery and nationalism of the majority of the people of Azarbayjan. The brave people of this area, a very sensitive and complex geographical region, have shown admirable behavior and patience since the start of Khomeyni's blight. I was very worried about agitation and unrest in the two Azarbayjan provinces. Thank God the people of the area used the honor of being Iranians as a shield against the pressure of a lowly gang and thus passed with honor in the test of their nationalism. Following their freedom, the people of Iran should honor the heroic people of Azarbayjan in any manner possible.

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CSO: 4640/190

EMIGRE PAPER DISCUSSES TIES WITH ALBANIA

GFO41552 London KEYHAN in Persian 30 Jan 86 p 16

[Text] Albania has sent a number of military experts to the Islamic Republic. This report from Iranian military sources in the country is more proof of Ayatollah Khomeyni regime's policy of "also east, also west" gaining a fresh success. After the widespread military cooperation of the Islamic Republic with DPRK, Syria, Libya, PRC, Pakistan, Israel, Chile, and South Africa, the survivors of Comrade Enver Hoxha have also been added to the list of supporters of the Islamic regime. By sending military experts Albania is trying to keep the republic of the Ayatollah at its feet.

The Islamic Republic and the Islamic Republic of Albania, by establishing diplomatic relations five years ago, began cooperation amid the amazement of the supporters of communism. Mohammad Hashemi, the former minister of industries, and 'Abbas 'Ali Zali, the minister of agriculture, were among the members of the Islamic regime who visited Tirana. Albania also sent several delegations to Tehran, and in 1984 the Islamic regime shipped to Albania some oil on cheaper terms.

Now with the announcement of military cooperation between Tehran and Tirana, it seems that 1 and 1/2 years after the death of Anver Hoxha, his successors are thinking more in Islamic terms. It may be on this account that by sending military experts to the Islamic Republic they have hastened to give it support.

The arrival of a military delegation in a country which acts as host to the prime minister of Turkey and calls President Ziaul Haq the leader of Pakistan as a sincere friend of the Islamic Republic should not be a surprise.

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CSO: 4640/186

PROSECUTOR GENERAL ON LEGAL PROBLEMS IN BALUCHESTAN

GF080648 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 8 Feb 86

[Text] The national prosecutor general who had travelled to Sistan va Baluchestan Province to review the judicial issues of that province returned to Tehran last night.

Mr Kho'iniha, after his arrival in Tehran, took part in an interview with our correspondent and talked about the results of his trip to Sistan va Baluchestan Province which lasted several days. He said:

[Begin Kho'iniha recording] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate. According to the reports reaching the prosecutor general's office a while ago, in both reports from some brothers in the revolutionary courts or those coming from the respected Friday Imam of Zahedan or from other organizations, there were complaints about the many problems that exist in this province. For example, the problem of the difficulties faced by the farmers and the innocent villagers in the face of some of the laws which have been left over from previous times, which were unfair. In some cases, these were causing some harrassments even now.

Another issue is the important problem of the bandits and the smugglers, the dangerous band which has widespread activities in the import and distribution of narcotics throughout the country. This has brought about a disaster. Following these reports I saw that it was necessary to review these issues first-hand during a trip to this area, to get acquainted with these problems a little better. During this four day trip we were successful, thank God, and we managed to travel to some of the towns such as Zabol and Chahbahar. We saw much of the border areas and the border strip and the situation of the roads and methods of infiltration of the bandits from the eastern borders into the country and the methods used to bring in the drugs. We also saw our needs to confront these people, such as providing enough security personnel to face this issue.

We also reviewed the many shortages we have in this area with regard to not having enough judicial personnel. In this province, which has so many problems, unfortunately in the sensitive areas such as Chahbahar, we still do not have a revolution court. In Zahedan, the capital of the province and with the importance that it has, for a long time we did not have a revolution prosecutor, and right now we do not have a permanent Shar' magistrate. In

Iranshahr, we have some shortages. In Saravan we do not have anything. In many areas, including Zabol, we are facing the same problem. The shortage of judicial personnel in these areas has caused these problems to be more noticeable and to come to the surface. As a result of this the public has had enough.

During this trip we saw these issues first-hand. We had meetings and talks with the various officials of the province, including the respected governor general and the different governors, and many of the judicial officials who discussed their problems in these meetings. We also met with other forces and officials in other places.

All in all, what I can tell you at present is that we received the necessary background information and we got to know the issues that the judicial power had to know about in this province. This trip had this result from me. I now hope that by conveying this matter to the Supreme Judicial Council there can be quick decisions made with regard to solving these issues and to alleviate the shortages. [end recording]

/12913

CSO: 4640/189

ROLE OF CLERGY DISCUSSED IN TEHRAN ROUND TABLE

GF030656 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 3 Feb 86

[Text] According to our correspondent, on the second day of the 10-days-of-dawn celebrations, which has been named "the day of the revolution and the clergy," a round table discussion was held entitled: "The clergy and the Islamic revolution." Philosophers and sages from Iran and from abroad who are participating in the celebrations for the 7th anniversary of the Islamic revolution, took part in the round table which was held in Tehran's Laleh Hotel.

According to our correspondent, during this round table one of the foreign guests read a poem praising the Islamic revolution and Imam Khomeyni. Then Mr Mahallati, the Imam's representative in the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, gave a speech on the role of the clergy in the Islamic revolution. He stressed: If it were not for the leadership of the Imam of Ummah and the clergy, the Islamic revolution would not have been successful.

Then Mr Emami-Kashani, a clerical member of the Council of Guardians, discussed the mission of the Islamic Ulema in the present day and, using verses from the Holy Koran and quoting the respected Imams--peace be unto them, stressed: Politics are inseparable from Islam.

In another part of his speech he commented on the role of the Islamic clergy in freedom movements in the recent history of Islamic countries, especially in the Islamic revolution of Iran. He said: The Islamic Ulema must underline the truth of the Koran and must emphasize the spiritual qualities of Islam and must take in hand the leadership of more than one billion Muslims throughout the world who are under the control of the oppressors and they must guide these people toward a path of liberation from the claws of colonialism and oppression.

Then Ayatollah Jannati, a clerical member of the Council of Guardians, discussed the special qualities of the Islamic revolution and outlined its differences with other Islamic movements. He said: Imam Khomeyni, by making the right decisions at the right time and by aiming at the sensitive and weak spots of the enemy, was able to bring the Islamic revolution to success in 15 years. This is one of the most significant and unique aspects of the Islamic revolution.

The round table discussion continued with a speech by Hamid Zanjani [not further identified] who said the main reasons for the success of the Iranian clergy in bringing Islamic culture to the Iranian masses were the leadership of Imam Khomeyni, and the proper utilization of mosques, theological centers, and universities.

/12913

CSO: 4640/188

BUDGET FOR 1986 TO BE PRESENTED TO MAJLIS

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 24 Nov 85 p 2

[Excerpts] KEYHAN Political Service - The Islamic Consultative Assembly [Majlis] held an open session presided over by Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani this morning. In this session, the representative of Kahnuj, Najafabad, Qa'em Shahr and Savad Kuh made statements, as pre-agenda speakers, on the prevalent issues of the country. Gholam-Hoseyn Nadi, the deputy from Najafabad and member of the Plan and Budget Commission in his pre-agenda speech announced that the budget bill for 1365 [21 March 1986 - 20 March 1987] will be presented to the Majlis the day after tomorrow [26 November].

Thereafter, Pursalari stated: It is imperative that the Islamic Consultative Assembly announce its support for the government by approving such fundamental laws as the new administrative laws, the tax laws, the laws regarding lump-sum compensation for the services of surplus or nonessential government employees, the laws regarding the transfer of the surplus work force from one organization to another, the amendment of the regulations regarding the development budgets in an effort to create a beneficial output, preventing the wasteful discussion of time-consuming bills and improving the process of approval of bills and proposals in the Majlis. While pointing to the recent measures taken by the judicial authorities, he said: I fully support the confiscation or seizure of 17,000 hectares of land in the township of Kahnuj and truly appreciate the decisive confrontation of the guards corps and the security and intelligence forces of the region against the major armed smugglers and other bloodthirsty insurgents.

Najafabad's Representative's Speech:

Gholam-Hoseyn Nadi, Najafabad deputy was today's second pre-agenda speaker. He said that on November 26, namely Tuesday of the current week, the budget bill for 1365 will be presented to the Majlis by the prime minister.

While evaluating the budgets of the years 1363 [21 March 1984 - 20 March 1985] and 1364 [21 March 1985 - 20 March 1986] he stated: The ratified budget of 1363 was 2.87 trillion [2,870,000,000,000] rials which was predicted on an income of 3.87 trillion rials for the year. With a loan of 364 billion rials while the total revenues of that year reached 2.82 trillion rials, it showed a 1.1 billion rials deficit from the ratified amount--the resulting deficit could be attributed to a decrease in the revenue from oil of 500 billion rials and the rest could similarly be attributed to the decrease in the tax revenues and other such income-generating means.

According to the bill ratified by the Majlis, the revenues for the year 1364 are set at 3.52 trillion rials which is predicted that in actuality only 2.577 trillion rials will be generated with a deficit of 920 billion rials. Even if we look more closely we will see that according to the ratified bill by the Majlis, the oil revenue for 1363 was set at 1.8 trillion rials, while in actuality its revenue did not exceed 1.373 trillion rials with a deficit of 430 billion rials.

In 1364 the ratified bill calls for a 1.867 trillion rials revenue from oil while it is foreseen that this figure will reach only 1.2 trillion rials-- which will show a deficit of 660 billion rials. Now, while we have complete knowledge of the situation of the year 1363 and the past eight months of the current year, which has so far not met with our ratified figures, how are we going to plan or arrange our 1365 budget? The budget of 1365 calls for a general revenue of 3.107 trillion rials and a total expenditure of 3.804 trillion rials with a 450 billion rials deficit from domestic income-generating means, yet are we going to still think that all the revenues will be truly met?

The figure of 1.6 trillion rials of income from oil seems to have an uncalled for increase of 300 billion rials with no good reason, and furthermore the allocation of 100 billion rials as a special fund to meet particular war situations without consideration to its peculiar mechanism seems to only increase the figure with no practical purpose. If we go on ratifying our budget without paying attention to the proper means of income-generating mechanisms, the unfavorable resultant outcome will affect our development budget and relevant plans. For instance, we see that in 1363, instead of 1.186 trillion rials of ratified revenue, the actual figure reached 800 billions with about a 400 billion rials deficit while in 1364 instead of a 1.135 trillion rials revenue the figure will not go above 800 billion rials and thus there will be a deficit of 335 billion rials.

Nadi went on to add: Such budgetary planning which does not meet our ratified goals means that we will have current expenditures without proper means of production, thus causing a decrease in the gross national product. With a decrease in production the incidence of corruption, unemployment and prostitution will increase. If we continue without a proper rate of growth in our production and go on with our development and production sector in a contractile fashion-- such as has been going on over the past two years--the resultant outcome will be nothing except a lack of proper growth and movement, thus we will see that inflation and a rise in the prices of goods will take an upward swing and instead of being able to control its rampant effects, nothing but the opposite results will ensue.

Nadi further added: The fact that we see the private sector's money supply has increased and still continues its growth bespeaks of the reality that our production in comparison to the year before has decreased. While presenting the budget bill of 1364, the prime minister stated that with due consideration to the voluminous increase in the money supply in comparison to the growth of

our production during recent years, any inadvertent or negligent planning can turn the power of this constructive force into a destructive means and thus give rise to superinflationary prices and play havoc on the oppressed, indigent and wage-earners of the country. The above statement is nothing but a fact. Why should we let the money supply increase to such high levels, which could be likened to nurturing a dragon in one's sleeve, and cause us ever-present worry and consternation! It is a kind of horror and dismay which constantly worries us as to its untimely awakening that will burn the oppressed people with its fire. It is obvious that when the foundation of production is not based on added-value and domestic productivity but on the sale of oil and borrowing of loans from the domestic system willy nilly, our money supply and cash volume will be increased. And with the passing of every day the danger from this dragon will become ever more life-threatening. Since the sale of oil does not generate any added-value means domestically, and since for its equivalent value we have to pay in rials and since the rials thus generated from this source are spent to meet the current budget expenditures, thus this means of revenue automatically enters the free trade sector without being changed to a means of an added-value system. Likewise, while we borrow money, money is printed and injected into the economy without any means of production. These are the main and important factors which cause an increase in the money supply. Nadi also said: The result of continuing such budgetary policies has been an increase in the money supply in 1357 [21 March 1978 - 20 March 1979] which stood at 2.613 trillion rials to reach eight trillion rials in 1364. This means that this amount of money and scrip is available in the private sector without us having any control or access to it and that any movement by such powerful means could be dangerous. If we want to be more clear, for example we can cite the added-value in the agricultural sector in 1362 [21 March 1983 - 20 March 1984], which was 429 billion rials, that of oil was 526 billion rials and that of water, power and gas was 59 billion rials, while at the same time the added-value from the service sector, which is not a production one, had an added-value of 7.375 billion rials. Even if we deduct a highly generous expenditure for each family from this sector, we still will have a net amount of 2.3 trillion rials, and if we merely consider five percent interest on this amount, we will have over 450 billion rials, while what in actuality is received from this sector is a mere 25 billion rials.

Raising the Budget Ceiling:

Najafabad's deputy, while expressing his opposition to such budgetary policies, stated: Every year our budget ceiling increases while the number of our development projects decreases and nothing is done to remedy the situation. In fact, all of us have sat on our hands and have been waiting for a mysterious hand to come from nowhere and do something for us. The continuation of the present situation is not possible under any circumstances and is not advisable either. One of the messages of these past years, particularly the last three years, tells us that the war has not or must not occupy the first and foremost place in our policy and you and I sit here in the hope of solving the country's problem while with every passing day our problems keep increasing.

Those who are not accustomed in sitting at lavish dinner tables and those who have been brought up in a society with an unbalanced distribution of wealth and those who follow the line of the imam have the ability to go to war and fight and they can become victorious in fighting the enemy. It is but natural that those who are not blessed with the above-stated characteristics cannot be expected to reap the benefits of those blessings.

It has to be noted that the continuation of the present situation is detrimental to the oppressed strata, particularly the salaried and administrative cadres. In the budgetary allocations, especially after the advent of the revolution, the main stress has been put on the current expenditure budget, in actuality the development budget has been given a cold shoulder, so much so that the ratio of the current budget to that of development budget is 75 percent to 25 percent respectively. This ratio means that the growth of GNP falls below the current budget and on the other hand, since we have to meet the minimum payment of salaries, as a result there will be an increase in the prices and thereby the purchasing power of the people will decrease. If we were going to have a current budget concordant with the growth rate of inflation and maintain the purchasing power of the salaried employees at the same level as 1357 [21 March 1978 - 20 March 1979], now we should have a current budget ceiling of more than seven trillion rials and if we have not been able to increase this ceiling it is because it is something which has been out of our control. To put it more aptly, it has been the result of our gross product and the result of our limited revenues. However, we could have had no limitations and could have not relied on the sale of a commodity like oil over which we have no control of its price or consumption in the world. At the end of his speech, Nadi pointed to the uneven distribution of income and said: Our current budget and its composition has not yet resolved the issue of uneven distribution. Of course it is true that the rate of uneven distribution after the victory of the Islamic revolution has been five percent better than that of 1356 [21 March 1977 - 20 March 1978], yet it is still more than the rate of uneven distribution of the years 1347 [21 March 1968 - 20 March 1969] to 1351 [21 March 1972 - 20 March 1973]. That is to say, in 1361 [21 March 1982 - 20 March 1983] 65 percent of all the families throughout the country appropriated 33 percent of the total revenues of the country and of the total share, 40 percent of the low-income families throughout the nation in the same year were below that of the equivalent share of similar families in the years 1347 to 1351.

The Agenda:

After the conclusion of the pre-agenda statements and reading of the recommendations of the representatives, the Majlis began the agenda and continued discussing and investigating the budget bill and the method and limitation of the private sector's production activities which had been left unfinished from the previous session and thereafter the proposals of the 4th article of the said bill was discussed.

Movahedi Savoji proposed the inclusion of a new note to this article as follows:

The government can determine the minimum wage, salary, benefits and the condition of the work place.

In opposition to this proposal, Ha'eri-Zadeh said that no matter how hard we try to fix this bill, we will never be able to make it any better by such proposals. I don't know whether Mr prime minister ever listens to the Majlis discussions or not; if he does listen, he should know that this bill was prepared in a particular situation and under peculiar circumstances where they do not meet with reality and the government ought to withdraw this bill.

Movahedi Kermani in support of this proposal stated that according to a contract agreement, which is entered into with the workers, their wages can be determined and the government can set the minimum wage. Similarly, the government can offer certain benefits to the workers in such a form where, for instance, according to the contract the worker is eligible to share the profits when production exceeds a certain level.

Salamati, deputy minister of labor, while giving some explanations, stated his agreement with Mr Movahedi Savoji's proposal, although he believed that the proposal in itself was not adequate and needed further improvements. Thereafter, Movahedi Savoji's proposal as a note to the aforementioned article was put to a vote and was duly approved.

Subsequently, the principal part of article 4 was read and put to a vote and was approved in the following fashion:

Fourth Article--The share of every production agent in industry will be as follows.

A- According to a contract agreement the work force deserves to be awarded with cash payments for services rendered. Likewise, according to a contract, which specifies the sharing of a certain amount of benefits by the employees, such provisos are completely enforceable. Note: The employer or owner of a production unit is responsible for managing or running such a unit, unless in the contract according to a certain proviso it is specifically stated that the government representative or the workers themselves can interfere in the matter of managing the unit in question.

B- The proprietor of production raw materials will be the owner of the product and he is obligated according to the conditions of a contract to pay any other share of the production factor accordingly.

C- The land owner, or a building or other similar institution proprietor is entitled to receive restitution or compensation for their use and has no share in the profits or losses of the unit in question, unless otherwise stipulated.

Note: The government can determine the minimum wage, salary, benefits and the condition of the work place.

Thereafter, Mohammad Mo'ezzi proposed a new article as the 5th article to the bill which specifies that the private sector's activity should also include that part of the agricultural, stock-breeding, industry and commercial services which are complementary to the government and cooperative production activities.

Salehi and Movahedi Savoji spoke for and against this proposal and duly expressed their own views. Moreover, Isma'il-e Shushtari, judicial affairs commission correspondent, and Behzad Nabavi, minister of heavy industries, gave explanations as regards this specific proposal. While pointing to the contents of this bill, the minister of heavy industries said that 107 various changes have been made in this bill and that it is a worthless bill which is totally dangerous and detrimental. This bill was presented to the Majlis in 1361 [21 March 1982 - 20 March 1983]. In reality, this bill has fundamental flaws and I personally agree with the proposal of Mr Mo'ezzi as far as this bill is concerned.

Subsequently, Mohammad Mo'ezzi's proposal, as article number five was put to a vote and was approved as follows:

Article 5 - The private sector's activity include that part of the agricultural, stock-breeding, industry and commercial services which are complementary to the government and cooperative production activities.

Thereafter, the 5th article, which had been proposed by the judicial commission, was read and discussed. Hoseyn Kamali and other Majlis deputies suggested the elimination of this article.

Moreover, Qanbar Kabiri and Ezzatollah Dehqan spoke for and against this proposal and the minister of heavy industries gave some explanations while expressing his opposition to this proposal.

Thereafter, the elimination of the 5th article was put to a vote and approved.

Subsequently, a proposal by the Mines and Industry Commission as a note to the 5th article was discussed and Seyyed Kamaloddin Nikraves, correspondent of this commission, gave some explanations and the proposed note was put to a vote and was not approved.

Henceforth, the 6th article was read and discussed. Ha'eri-Zadeh suggested the elimination of this article and said that at the present time the 5-year plan is under study in the special commission and it will soon be presented to the Majlis. He went on to say that in the 5-year plan the activity of the private sector has been properly determined and there is no need for the inclusion of this article.

Ruhani-Far and Movahedi Savoji spoke for and against the proposal for the elimination of 6th article and the commission's correspondent and the minister of heavy industries gave some explanations and it was put to a vote and was approved.

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CSO: 4640/147

MAJLIS DEPUTY COMMENTS ON RELATIONS WITH SYRIA, LEBANON, USSR

Beirut AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 28 Dec 85 pp 10-11

[Interview with Mohammed Rachidian, MP, by Randa Takieddine]

[Text]

You have one ally in the Arab world: Syria. Iraq has another: Jordan. Jordan is aiming at a rapprochement with Syria and King Hussein is going to visit Syria in the weeks to come. How does Iran view this development?

Of course, for Syria this is an internal matter. But we do not think it is a good idea for the people of Syria to receive King Hussein of Jordan, a puppet of the UK and other superpowers. These kinds of developments will be short-lived and will not be permanent.

We have very clear paths and goals based on Islamic principles and a belief in the necessity of maintaining our own independence. We try to be friendly with nations that agree with our principles. We keep distant from countries that distance themselves from us.

During a debate in the Iranian parliament, four Iranian deputies questioned Iran's supplying Syria with discounted and granted oil. Does this mean that relations are cooling between Syria and Iran?

At the present time, relations between Iran and Syria are very warm and very strong. Both countries have enemies. They want to fight Zionism and other threats together.

We are going to continue helping countries that continue their struggle against our enemies. A majority of our parliament holds that belief.

Our parliament is free to hold debates and some members of the parliament may criticise policy. What should draw your attention is that the parliament did approve a bill calling for assisting a country like Syria, be it in oil discounts or other means.

As long as Syria is fighting international Zionism and is in the front line in this struggle, the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be on its side.

A French parliamentary opposition delegation visited Tehran to talk about the French hostages in Lebanon and a possible improvement of relations between Iran

and France. The latter development is reportedly conditional on France's paying up its debt to Iran. Can you confirm this?

You are right, France owes us some money and we plan to find ways and means to settle this debt. Any nation, any country can choose ways to get what is rightfully its own. France has understood that it has made a mistake by assisting Iraq in its war against us.

Members of parliament have mentioned that the French government has made many mistakes in its position vis-a-vis Iran and that it was high time it remedied this mistake.

What are your relations with the various Shiite factions in Lebanon, such as Amal and the Hezbollah?

We are following an independent line. Our main policy is to assist and help deprived people and any group standing against the arrogant powers and superpowers. We will offer our assistance to them. Some of the groups are in the front line of the struggle against Israel and Zionism.

Our principal aim is to have unity between all Muslims, whether Shiites or Sunnis. This is the belief of our Imam, president, government and people.

But I would like to warn against opportunists trying to reach compromise. As a Muslim brother, I would like to say to the Muslims that they should stand against arrogant powers.

This does not mean we agree with everything the factions mentioned here do. There are some unimportant disagreements. The main thing is unity between Muslims everywhere. I hope they can achieve it in the future.

How, in your view, can the situation in Lebanon be resolved?

We saw and experienced in Iran that the people succeeded in overthrowing the Shah and pushing out the USA. This happened because more attention was paid to the people. The majority in Lebanon is Muslim. Although the [Lebanese Muslims] have some differences, they can solve them. The ideal for Lebanon is the independence and rule of Muslims.

In other words an Islamic republic for Lebanon?

"Insh'allah". This is our aspiration.

The Iranian foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, visited Saudi Arabia recently. How would you describe relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Have they improved?

The cold relations were created by some satanic power in the region. But now there is a new understanding that Saudi Arabia is a Muslim country, very close to Iran. The Saudis have come to understand that the Islamic revolution is not going to undermine their rule and they have chosen to have better relations with us.

They have understood that what happened in Iran was a revolution, by the people, against oppression. Iran wants coexistence with its neighbours. Saudi Arabia is a

Muslim country. It is where the holiest Islamic sites are.

These are realities that the Saudis have come to understand. This is why this visit has taken place. Just like France, the Saudis have realised they have made a mistake in the past.

The USSR wants to improve relations with Iran. Where does Tehran stand on this?

At the beginning of the revolution, the Soviet Union's policy was not based on realistic assumptions. Now the Soviets are becoming more realistic, they are changing their policies. Of course, we are ready for an improvement.

Why has Ayatollah Montazeri been chosen as a successor while Khomeini is still alive?

Any fledgling revolution goes through a dangerous phase which might tempt its enemies to undertake some actions. Our constitution calls for the successor of our leader to be an expert in theology and to be known for his piety. This spiritual leader is the guide of our revolution and hope of our people for the future. This is why this matter has been settled now.

The Iranian constitution says Ayatollah Khomeini's successor should be chosen unanimously by the expert assembly. If the vote is not unanimous, there must be a council of tutors. Ayatollah Montazeri is reported to have been chosen only by a majority of the assembly of experts.

According to Article 107 of the Islamic Constitution, consensus is not necessary. The majority of the assembly of experts is necessary to choose the leader of the council of tutors and the majority was reached. Two-thirds of the experts voted for Ayatollah Montazeri. This reflects the aspiration of 98 percent of our people.

Is there any chance that the Iraqi-Iranian war will stop?

Iraq has imposed an undeclared war on us. Iraq has attacked us, occupied Khorramshar and devastated many cities in the north-eastern part of Iran. Iraq claimed that Khuzestan was part of Arabestan. We have a right to defend ourselves. That is what the Koran instructs us to do.

We succeeded in pushing back the attack. Now Iraq comes asking for and pretending to want peace. The US and other superpowers do not want any country in the region to be independent and survive.

Since we wanted to prove to other countries in the region that Iran wants to be an independent country, we followed the policy of no East, no West. Our conditions to stop the war are as follows: 1) The one who started the war should be tried in a fair Islamic tribunal and should be extradited to Iran, 2) Iraqis should be free to choose their own government.

MUSAVI COMMENTS ON 'CONSPIRACIES' TO REDUCE OIL PRICES

LD071803 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 7 Feb 86

/Excerpts/ Prime Minister Musavi attended today the glorious Friday prayers in Qom and delivered a speech prior to the Friday sermons.

Referring to arrogant countries' conspiracies and the collaboration of some of the region's reactionary countries to bring down oil prices, the prime minister said: During the early days of the Islamic revolution when the export of 6 million barrels of oil per day was halted we managed to sell oil at \$40 per barrel at the cost of our martyrs' blood. Today, however, according to the available evidence the agreement reached between the big capitalists, United States, Europe and Japan, to smash oil prices is aimed at harming the Islamic revolution and at rescuing their own economy. If the lower oil prices are approved, then the rate of inflation in Japan will be reversed, that is, the prices of a great many goods will fall. This would then culminate in economic expansion for them. Moreover, the interest rates for European currencies has been lowered in order to attract more capital investment.

It may appear that Britain, which suddenly reduced its oil prices by \$10, is making a loss. However, it should be borne in mind that Britain's oil exports constitute 8 percent of its total exports. Consequently, it cannot be compared to those of the oil-producing countries whose oil exports total up to 90 percent of their exports.

Referring to the role of some of the region's reactionary countries in the conspiracy, the prime minister said: Unfortunately we are witnessing the cooperation of some countries which, by exporting 6 million barrels of oil per day, are trying to further aggravate the situation. However, they must not believe that their devious games, detrimental to Muslim interests, are overlooked by the region's peoples.

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CSO: 4640/194

IRAN

PRIME MINISTER INTERVIEWED ON OIL PRICES

GF070754 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 7 Feb 86

/Text/ Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi gave an interview to the IRNA correspondent and commented on the countries whose policies have caused the drop in oil prices. He warned: If these countries do not match their policies with the interests of their people, in the future they will face grave dangers. They will have enormous problems with those people and the entire Islamic nation.

The prime minister said: Some oil-producing countries who are OPEC members, as much as they feel responsible to see the United States achieve its goals and to help U.S. industries and European countries, feel no responsibility toward the deprived people of their own nations, the fate of the Muslims, and the struggle against Zionism. To safeguard the U.S. and the industrialized world's capitalism and to bring up the employment figures in these countries, they are ready to stoop to any level.

The prime minister then commented on the economic and political results of the drop in oil prices in oil-producing countries. He said: Almost all oil-producing countries, because of their almost 100 percent dependent economy and because they do not depend on the power of their people, are unable to be flexible in the face of severe economic difficulties. This is why the recent drop in the oil prices could bring ups and downs in these nations.

He added: The pressures that were put on the Islamic Republic of Iran during the past 7 years have caused the Iranian economy to abandon its totally-dependent state. By using the dedicated and revolutionary forces, the Iranian people have been able to achieve the necessary flexibility in the face of the various problems that come up.

Mr Mir Hoseyn Musavi continued the interview by saying: If one of the goals of Great Britain and other aggressive powers in lowering the price of oil was to deliver a blow to the Islamic revolution, I announce that the Islamic revolution is not going to receive a blow with such issues.

The prime minister stated that only the United States, Europe, and Japan benefit from the lowered prices of oil. He added: If OPEC countries can keep their unity, with the current trend in the non-OPEC oil-producing countries to stabilize the oil prices, it would be possible to keep the price of oil up, despite the wishes of the old colonialist power, Great Britain.

He added: Iran, to confront the plot of the lowered oil prices, has only honored its long-term oil contracts and has not sold cheap oil.

Mr Mir Hoseyn Musavi concluded the interview by stressing: Iran, despite its capability to produce more than its quota assigned by OPEC, will never go above that quota. He said: There are plans to diversify the principles of Iran's oil exports. These are progressing and the first steps of this plan are about to be implemented.

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CSO: 4640/193

BRIEFS

PAPER COMMENTS ON REFUGEES--The presence of 1.2 million Afghan refugees in Iran has created great difficulties for our compatriots. These Afghan refugees, contrary to the Afghan Mojahedin in Pakistan, have been scattered all over the country. They have married widows of the guards killed at the battlefronts and at some points they have taken possession of the houses and livelihood of the inhabitants by force. Some of them indulge in smuggling and some have formed themselves into groups to cause difficulties for the public on highways and streets. In some of the cities they have caused so much trouble that people have risen in defense. In addition to the clashes now taking place regularly between our countrymen and the so-called Mojaheds, in some cities like, Yazd and Kashan, they are forbidden to leave their camps between 8 pm and 5 am. It must be remembered that the Afghan Mojahedin do not consider the Afghan refugees in Iran as a part of them. It is believed that the Islamic Republic makes use of them for its own ends, like making them take part in its battles in Kordestan and forcing them to go to the help of the baton wielding Hezbollahis within the country. [Text] [London KEYHAN in Persian 30 Jan 86 p 9 GF] /12913

CSO: 4640/187

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