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JPRS-NEA-86-054

28 APRIL 1986

Near East/South Asia Report

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28 APRIL 1986

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

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ALGERIA

PRESS SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT'S CRISIS MANAGEMENT

What If There Were No Oil

Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE in French 27 Feb 86 p 11

[Editorial by H. Tedjini]

"The entire nation is involved in the exercise of economic discipline thrust upon us by the global economic crisis."

At the latest cabinet meeting, the president raised the issue of assigning urgent priorities in order of importance. And indeed these times call for high seriousness, vigilance, and attention. We have all heard talk of economic crisis on the radio, or on TV, or read about it in the press. But, in the quintessential defensive reaction to bad news, we tend to say "That happens to other people"-- or "That happens only to other people..." There is nothing unusual about this attitude: Algerians are not given to fretting excessively about the impact on their country of events in faraway places. Well, then, we had best lay it on the line: the economic crisis is upon us, and Algerians cannot simply shrug it off. Furthermore, they must understand the extent of sacrifice and effort demanded of them. Let everyone grasp this quite clearly. The crisis is not inherent in the structures of our economy or that of our productive system; rather it is the consequence of maneuvering by the great powers of the world, most of them Western, and of fluctuation in currency exchange-rates. One might even say that in the Third World it is rare, if not impossible, to find economies sturdy enough to stand up to this very day against the economic-financial shocks and counter-shocks of the twistings and turnings of the capitalist world.

In our country, prices for basic essentials are low. That is a fact, and it is not demagoguery to say so. If they are low, it is because the government stands ready to support the real prices. On the other hand, if food and vegetable prices are rising, the increase is attributable to a law as old as the world, which applies everywhere: supply and demand. If the land were properly worked, there would be plenty, and prices would drop. Of course, the state could step in financially. But then there would be choices to be

made. Would we rather have that than maintain our commitment to free education and free medical care? Of course not, we would all reply. And what about meat? True, meat prices are high right now. Whose fault is it? If citizens, far more of them than you think, persist in roasting a whole sheep in celebration of no matter what trivial occasion, our sheep herds will dwindle in the space of a few years to a scrap of shagreen. Meat would be available and the state would be spared imports and save billions in hard currency. Look at just one figure: of 4,800 billion old dinars spent on imports, food products account for 1,000 billion. Take another figure that will drive home to each citizen the scope of the impact of the global economic crisis on Algeria: Oil brings Algeria about \$60 to \$65 billion dinars. The drop in the price of a barrel of oil, combined with the erosion of the dollar, is going to cost us, according to an early estimate, something like \$25 billion in 1986.

To put it another way, that is a little more than a third of our total revenues. How can Algeria hope to maintain its present standards of living? A state is quite similar to a household. In the lean years, what are you going to give up: bread or meat? Meals on the table every day, or a vacation in Paris? There are choices to be made. And the same applies to a state. We are now in the midst of a crisis. There are choices to be made and discipline to be imposed. In matters essential, the state will play its role. The fact remains, however, that every one of us is going to have to practice some self-discipline. To begin with, get rid of bad habits. At the top of the list comes the hurtful habit of believing that the crisis is somebody else's problem, and that, come what may, the state will be there to take care of everything. The state, however, is no miracle-worker. And what if there were no more oil? One reader recently wrote us to suggest that that eventuality might just be the best thing that could happen to us. If it did happen, he argues, we should be compelled to roll up our sleeves and turn our attention to the land that feeds us, because there is not going to be any other solution if we want to eat our daily bread in dignity.

It is no exaggeration to say that we are going to be living in a state of economic war. The political leadership has decided to take the necessary measures. They will be painful, but necessary, because the interests of all the people are at stake. The report we present below will help Algerians to understand.

State of Economic War

Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE in French 27 Feb 86 p 11

[Article by: Rachid Khiari]

[Text] We are going to try to bear in mind a finding that will be more lasting than a transient feeling that the situation is serious. We are directly under attack. This is open warfare declared on Algeria, among others. Not hot, not cold. This is war, all-out.

relentless war declared against us. It is certainly not a "conflict of powerful interests, to be settled by bloodshed," but its aim is our economic annihilation, which amounts to the same thing.

That is where we are, and we look for no "help." The countries that could or would stand by us are themselves too wrapped up in their own problems to be able to go any further than statements of solidarity. There is no question of waiting for help to come, from whatever quarter.

Do we really need outside help to cope? And first of all: is it in the Algerian tradition to go begging for help? In any case, in this pitiless world that surrounds us, asking for help would be tantamount to joining the chain-gang of those who, in exchange for a crust of bread, let fall their arms, bowed their backs, and hastened to welcome the onslaughts of the "benefactors" who are the very same people who have us by the throat right now. Put another way, it means backing down on the essential: freedom of decision, sovereignty.

Always, and with all due respect for the countries that are our brothers and our friends that stood by us and still stand by us in our battles, turning to others is foreign to our nature. It is as alien as fatalism.

In fact, if resignation or counting on others were part of our personality, we should not be what we are: a people, a country, a revolution with which the whole world must reckon. That the premier Western power and its local puppets do us the debatable honor of attacking us clearly proves that Algeria is what it is. If this bothers others, we cannot help that.

Those who have been plotting for decades to recapture the world, economically and politically are currently zeroing in on the country that gave the signal for decolonization in Africa, as Vietnam did in Asia and Cuba in America...

Thanks to the maturity of its peoples, to the clear-headedness of its leaders, to its political, economic, and social organization, to its foreign trade monopoly, to the power of its public sector and to its planning, Algeria has managed thus far to weather, without too much damage, the recurrent upsets of a world as troubled physically (Echlef) as politically and economically.

Today, though, we are not concerned with an ordinary disturbance, but with a real cyclone. Given this, those who would be aggressors against us are merely shifting to overt attack after having besieged us for years.

Why do they attack us?

Because we are not and do not wish to be among those who "make a virtue of necessity" by agreeing to subjection and/or poverty?

Because our country has reaffirmed its faith in the revolutionary ideals of October and its devotion to the principles of the National Charter? Because they have calculated that now would be a propitious moment? Because the chosen terrain (the economy) was the most "suitable"? Because Algeria has a truly independent economy? Perhaps, too, because on Algerian territory, Islam flourishes without let or hindrance? No matter. Having tried all the blandishments and enticements, they have taken the initiative in an attack on what is certainly a tender point, the economy. So much the better. Algeria is not about to sit with its arms folded. It has the means to respond, and some unsuspected potentialities as well. What we must do is to shift our thinking from goals and targets to mandatory goals, away from the "good enough" to getting it right, away from easy-going attitudes to discipline freely accepted and assumed.

What we need are seriousness and brains rather than self-pity or hurling insults at a great power. What awaits Algerians in 1986 is an active, difficult, real life. The heroes of the November epic see us now, ready for new sacrifices. Their example summons us. It is for us to take Algerian measures to preserve our freedom of choice and, in the last analysis, our independence.

It will very surely be the privilege of the current generation to shoulder its responsibilities and accept the inevitable sacrifices they entail. Those sacrifices will affect only the extras, the imports (which we do not produce ourselves -- or at least not yet). National solidarity will be heightened to the utmost. Social justice is too deeply rooted in our customs for any disturbance in that area to occur.

"From orderly to high official, everybody has got to be part of the necessary austerity policy. Each of us has got to produce more than he has until now, to manage better than he has been doing. General mobilization cannot be relegated to the status of a campaign slogan. By fighting against waste, and by abiding by the financial restrictions that must be obeyed, we can not only make sure that we will have the necessities of life: food, clothing, education, health care, but also pay our debts and push on with our investment efforts.

This war that has been declared on us, is, in the cogent words of one political leader, the equivalent to the impact of several "Chiefs" put together. It spurs us imperatively to work better and work more; it leaves no place for dilettantism in planning, production, management, or control. Individually and collectively, we are all involved. The party and the state will continue to do their duty. Citizens, men and women alike, must do theirs as well. Besides, we no longer have any choice. Either we deal with the effects of the aggression spawned by the silicon chips in North American computers, or we simply let go, and risk finding ourselves adrift on the desert sands.

A little bit of belt-tightening, readier rolling up of sleeves, and showing moderation and social discipline: these are the strategems that will confound the strategies of the experts who were so certain that, aside from oil, there is no such entity as Algeria.

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CSO: 4519/88

EGYPT

HAYKAL COMMENTARY DISCUSSES POLICE RIOTS

Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 1 Mar 86 pp 1, 4

[Commentary by Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal in "Frankly Speaking" Column: "The Authority of Investigation and The Power of Truth. Mubarak, a Depository of Trust in The Conscience of Every Egyptian"]

[Text] The subject, "Political Decision-Making Process in Egypt," which was the subject of my last two editorials--with a third and last one yet to come--may be postponed. When emergencies arise, priorities are changed and sudden developments take precedence over routine matters.

Cairo lived through four long nights of darkness that was interrupted only by the flash of bullets. It was enveloped in silence that was only broken by crackling flames, and was hit by a feeling of apprehension that was only staved off by keeping its wits about it and by its faith that gave it hope, confidence, and certainty that this was just another passing crisis taking its toll and leaving behind it one more experience to be added to other experiences. Nations are made great by their experiences; nations survive through their ability to endure.

Under such circumstances, all nations stand behind their leaders who bear the responsibility and enjoy legitimacy. These leaders become the ultimate authority, the foremost vanguard and the historic symbol.

Under ordinary or natural circumstances, dialogue with leaders is a right. Under emergency circumstances, standing behind them is the only duty.

Standing behind the legitimate leadership in emergency circumstances is not a rowdy party sounding its hysterical drums or tambourines. Rather it is participation with all the responsibilities and consequences that it entails.

Participation in emergency circumstances has three and only three means: participation through active hands; participation through feelings that react with empathy, even to the melting point of consumption; or participation through thought that can open a door or point out a way.

Participation through active hands is for a certain group of people; participation through feelings is open to all; and participation through thought is for those who dare do it, provided that they do not exceed the

limit or do not let their imaginations run away with them, thus wasting their time and their listener's time.

If I allow myself to dare something--in an effort to stand behind a legitimate leadership that holds its country's trust with sincerity and honesty--I would say that there is a need calling us to look at what happened from a political perspective without allowing this perspective to influence the legal one, including the criminal responsibility for the events and their consequences.

To put it more clearly, the legal aspect of what happened is important, but the political aspect is no less important. Therefore, it is appropriate to present for discussion the idea of forming a special investigation committee to look into the political side of the Central Security riots.

What I want to say is that criminal investigation is important, for it is the right of the law. But political investigation is more important, for it is the right of society, and society is the lawmaker and not vice versa.

In other words, the law has the authority to indict and punish, but society has the broader and greater power of the truth.

In the foregoing, I have in mind a number of observations about the "riots" that broke out in a number of Central Security camps, which I will present as follows:

1. Central Security is the largest civilian security agency. For such events to have occurred means that they were triggered by a breakdown in discipline, a very serious matter.

2. A breakdown in discipline in this fashion in the biggest security agency as a result of what was described as "false rumors" is a phenomenon worth considering. Rumors are started usually in a small limited circle, but under the strict discipline of a security agency in particular, they need time to circulate and to interact with an environment ready to believe them.

According to what we have heard, the situation came to a head unexpectedly. The explanation for this is not very clear unless there are other factors of which we are not aware.

If the situation did not come to a head unexpectedly, but rather escalated gradually, what happened at the first point of escalation, at the second point and the point after that? This is an important question.

3. Central Security is in charge of internal security. For its soldiers to leave their barracks, for whatever reason, and go on a rampage, while their primary task is to stop these very actions, is a matter much larger than a breakdown in discipline or unexpected action or escalation of a crisis because of a rumor.

4. It is not easy to accept an explanation that places the responsibility on provocateurs who instigated and agitated these events. We are talking here about a security agency trained and armed to confront such provocateurs who

infiltrate the broad masses. That such an agency succumbed to the same predicament which it has been trained and armed to counteract is a problem that goes to the very core and could not have been the result of a few hours or minutes!

5. It is not necessary, in my opinion, to direct suspicion at internal or external provocation unless there is proof. Had these events broken out in a youth or mass gathering, suspicion would have been well palaced. Had the circle been limited to a handful of people, it would have been possible. But for the outbreaks to have occurred in the largest security agency where thousands of defendants were picked up (and hundreds of people were killed or wounded,) prudence is of primary importance and caution is necessary.

6. No one can ignore the possibility that Egypt has enemies, some of whom may feign friendship. Of course discord is the first thing that comes to mind. This notwithstanding, it is difficult to imagine that one of these enemies could penetrate an agency the size of Central Security to undertake such actions. It is not easy to "choke on water" in this fashion, as Ibn Khaldun put it in his penetrating insight!

7. It may be observed that these events were actually more than a riot. Perhaps they were more of an outburst than a riot. Things were happening one after the other: soldiers leaving the barracks and setting them afire; attacks on the nearby hotels in an attempt to destroy them; aggression against public and private places, making them fair game for pillage; breaking into a prison and releasing the inmates; and, worst of all, using weapons to return the fire of obedience with fire of insurrection, all of which are actions that exceed the bounds of customary riots (demonstrations, rock throwing, etc.)

When matters reach such an explosive point, they are much deeper and much more serious than a riot.

8. The mass media, all throughout the last few days, appealed to the public conscience under the motto "in whose interest?" This, I believe, is a misdirection of responsibility. Central Security is an agency of the government which is solely responsible for its obedience or insurrection. While it is true that this agency draws its members from the people themselves, it is also true that those are young men in the charge of the state for a certain number of years in a specific framework and for a specific service determined by the government which sets their goals, methods, and means, including the logic of not getting emotionally involved in their job with a public they have to confront at a moment of evil or malice.

(In the interest of fairness, we note that the official media was more enlightened this time around.)

9. If the purpose of the motto, "In whose interest," was to mobilize the people, insofar as they had nothing to do with the matter, against whom and for what purpose can such a mobilization be? And what would happen if the people were to lose confidence in one of the most important internal security agencies, keeping in mind that it is still commissioned to do its job? And whereas the armed forces were sent to the capital to maintain law and order,

this was a necessity of the situation, but one that must not be turned into a daily habit, because the armed forces have other tasks related to the honor of the entire country.

10. Anticipating possible official resignation, I may add that the essence of the question goes much farther and deeper than that. Resignation means an acceptance of direct responsibility, duly or voluntarily. Society, however, has causes that transcend all responsibilities and go beyond any law.

At any rate, the resignations of some officials is an executive way out at a time when there is an urgent need for a political way in, so that we may fully comprehend what happened.

These ten points I have enumerated are not easy or simple phenomena. Their meaning and significance are more important than their incidents and events.

Here, before the outcome of the investigation, we must find the truth, not through the prosecution alone, but through diplomacy as well, and not through the law alone, but also through society as a whole.

I may add here that the system of political investigation committees is one that is observed in all democracies in cases of emergencies that may have a legal aspect to them, but whose scope reaches farther than the well-contrived articles of the law. The United States, for example, follows the system of special presidential committees which the president forms to look into extraordinary emergency cases that extend beyond the laws and bylaws.

In the American experience, these special presidential committees are usually comprised of a small number of public personalities of various expertise who are usually given what is referred to as "terms of reference" and a deadline to present their findings to the president.

This framework is different from the parliamentary fact-finding committees for in such committees, partisan interests may come into play and visions may be blurred between a majority and a minority, while presidential committees, commissioned from the top and directly responsible to the top, have a national, scientific and objective framework.

I said at the beginning of this editorial that this was a crisis that took its toll and went on its way. However, crises that do not leave "a lesson to be heeded" are like taxes on capital and profit that do not exist. Furthermore, a society that does not study its crises is destined to go through them again.

Finally, the person on whose shoulders the people have placed Egypt's past, present and future responsibilities is in turn a depository of trust in the conscience of every Egyptian and we must all look to him above all crises, all differences and all judgments.

Under these circumstances, he is the rule more so than the ruler.

And may God be with him.

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CSO: 4504/229

EGYPT

OPPOSITION COMMENTARY EXAMINES POLICE RIOTS

Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 6 Mar 86 p 16

[Commentary by Mustafa Shardi: "A Final Word"]

[Text] It is clear that we have hurried, or rushed, to use the word "riot" to describe what happened last week in Egypt. It is also clear that we have begun to use another expression, "the deviant minority," in all of our commentaries and reports to indicate those who caused or manufactured these events and enveloped us in the strangest crisis and the most grave situation that can be faced by a nation and a people. The word "riot" and the expression "deviant minority" do not at all apply to the bulk of the events. Insistence on using them is just like insisting on wearing the long, wide gown, the clothing of a nursing infant; it simplifies matters in a very harmful manner. It minimizes something that is a disaster by any measure. If we would stop this simplifying and minimizing, we would all cooperate and stand together to extinguish the fire that has broken out in our house. Careless use of expressions that do not represent the truth exactly carries in its folds unacceptable national neglect and dereliction.

I have a great number of descriptions of what happened, but I do not want to impose them on the people. Someone else might be more correct and more precise. However, these questions will actually be settled after announcement of the results of the investigations into the events, their causes and background, which will be carried out by the public prosecutor. These established facts, which we await impatiently from the office of the public prosecutor, will speak for themselves, with precision, concerning the true description.

The attempt to convince the people of Egypt that what happened is common in this era and happens in many states also falls within the scope of simplification and minimalization. It is acceptable, indeed, it is demanded, when confronting fire, to try to contain its spread and its psychological possibilities, and to seek to fortify the situation against agitation. But the reality is different than this. The guardians of security and protectors of the system have not revolted in any country, and if they have, they have directed their insubordination against their commanders. At this point their problems remain, however complicated and serious, inside the walls of their

camps. But when the guardians of security become ferocious beasts and open fire on peaceful, unarmed citizens, they stir up unprecedented alarm in the nation's capital and in both the south and the north. They are to blame for a curfew put on one quarter of the residents of Egypt. I do not think that anything of this sort has been witnessed by Britain or other countries.

I do not mean by this that I am demanding abolition of the Central Security Agency all at once. This step would be very rash. The sudden disappearance of an agency like this would guarantee the occurrence of a very dangerous security vacuum. It is not reasonable for the Egyptian army to leave the borders of the country, turning its back on the many foreign dangers that threaten us, to devote its attention to guarding installations and protecting internal security. Rather, the demand, for the most part, is to shrink this huge agency gradually, while at the same time strengthening the regular police force as quickly as possible in accordance with a studied, scientific plan, on the basis that we treat all negative aspects of our security agencies in one general way. The foremost of these negative aspects is the reexamination of the social and experiential circumstances of the policemen of various levels and ranks. These events have made us wake up to the fact that the simple, ordinary policeman, with a family and handful of children clinging to his neck, is a citizen who is burned by the fire of high prices, and strangled by the pressures of life and the collar of government. His wide belt is not sufficient to fasten around his belly.

We want the old military police to return to the streets of Egypt, and we want to see the policeman as he walks down the steps at night, and we want to hear his cry, "Ha ... who goes there," again. When we heard them in the past we would fall asleep in peace and tranquility.

12780

CSO: 4504/248

EGYPT

NEW INTERIOR MINISTER DISCUSSES CHANGES FOR POLICE DRAFTEES

Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 14 Mar 86 p 8

[Article by Hasan Abu-al-'Anin: "The Minister of Interior at the Security Forces Training Center in Al-Darrasah: Development of the Training Curricula for Police Draftees"]

[Text] Maj Gen Zaki Badr, minister of the interior, has declared that he has decided to develop the curricula and methods for training police draftees, treat them properly, provide them with cultural education, eliminate their illiteracy and provide them with health care by periodically examining them and discovering diseases afflicting them at an early time. The minister referred to the recent events and said, "We appreciate the position of the tens of thousands of draftees who refused to reply to people calling for sabotage and strife, in spite of the insistence on stirring up their feelings."

At the festivities held on the occasion of the termination of the first 4-month training period for 6,000 draftees in the security forces training center in al-Darrasah yesterday, the minister stated that the coming stage would witness a reduction in the number of people drafted into the police, non-indemnification of people whose service is terminated, the raising of performance competence and advancement of the level of services.

The minister praised the police draftees' national role throughout the history of the police, especially in the police battle in al-Isma'iliyah and the tripartite aggression against Egypt and their role in support of the armed forces in the October war. He also praised the draftees' sacrifices in the ferocious security battles confronting the people violating the law and in providing the nation and citizens with security.

Maj Gen Zaki Badr said, "The police are a military body founded on discipline and commitment before all else."

The minister of the interior said "The painful events which a few aberrant persons perpetrated lays a shadow of sorrow, pain and feeling of inadequacy and error on you and the whole police system. We are not belittling the outrageous nature of the crime and the grievousness of the acts committed by numerous police draftees, who deserve just retaliation and deterrent punishment."

On this occasion, the minister observed military and sporting displays with weapons represented by skirmishes and self-defense operations. The minister also became apprised, on his own, of the special skills the draftees had acquired in various crafts during their training period, including vehicle and motorcycle driving, traffic regulation and work in the tourist police where the recruits' illiteracy was overcome and groups of them were taught the principles of the English language in order to establish understanding with tourists.

Observing the festivities were Maj Gens 'Abd-al-Karim Darwish and Faruq al-Hayni, the deputy minister, a number of his assistants and police commanders. Maj Gen Muhammad Fu'ad Shukri, director of the general security forces training department, also observed them.

11887

CSO: 4504/240

EGYPT

KUWAIT NEWSPAPER DISCUSSES ABSENCE OF HAYKAL COLUMN

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 8 Mar 86 p 1

[Commentary by Muhammad Jasim al-Saqr in the "A Word" column: "Priorities"]

[Text] The absence of "Frankly Speaking" from today's and perhaps following issues of AL-QABAS might stir up initial questions and explanations because of the feverish events witnessed recently in the Egyptian capital.

Some have found justification for a connection between these events and the absence of "Frankly Speaking." Others have inclined to speculation, including some which obscures the situation, and some have classified it as a dramatic scenario that did not happen.

The path to a hasty deduction is blocked by the need for an objective explanation that puts the matter in its simple factual framework.

When Prof Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal decided to return to writing "Frankly Speaking," he explained that he did not want to write on a daily or weekly basis, as most of his readers had become accustomed to his doing. It was his idea to take up the return of "Frankly Speaking" in a new form. A topic is chosen, he discusses it in one article or a series of articles and then interrupts his writing, only to return with a new topic.

Professor Haykal inaugurated the return of "Frankly Speaking" in just this manner, writing on the topic of "Who makes political decisions in Egypt?" He broke it into three parts, and actually published the first and second parts.

It had been decided to publish the third and final part this past Sunday. However, due to the unexpected emergency that convulsed the Egyptian capital recently, Professor Haykal requested postponement of publication of the third part, and wrote an article titled "The Strength of Accomplishment and the Power of Truth." He opened it by saying, "The subject of political decision making in Egypt is a subject which I have treated in two previous articles. There is yet a third and final one which may be postponed. When emergencies occur, priorities change, and the emergencies assume precedence over that which continues."

In his last article, Professor Haykal suggested the formation of a policy committee composed of diverse public figures to study what happened and to present the facts to the people.

Accordingly, he is postponing publication of the third part of the topic "who makes decisions in Egypt" to a later date.

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CSO: 4504/247

EGYPT

ISRAELI PROPAGANDA NOTED AT TRADE FAIR

Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Mar 86 p 1

[Article: "Israel Promotes Zionist Ideas at Cairo Fair"]

[Text] Israel has tried to distribute many of its publications promoting Zionist ideas after officially opening its pavilion among those of the other nations participating in the Cairo international trade fair that is currently under way.

A number of documents and other publications were issued, including "Ancient and Modern Israel," which called on the Egyptian people to increase cooperation with Israel to realize progress and development because they, like the Israeli people, possess a culture that is 4,000 years old. In another book the Egyptians were apprised of the news of the discovery by an Israeli company of new ways to detect pregnancy, of "family planning," and of helping women who desire to have an abortion. In another area, the Israel pavilion displayed some agricultural products, such as strawberries, peppers, tomatoes, bananas, eggs, lettuce, and celery. Some electrical and electronic products were also displayed, which were comparable to those in the Egyptian pavilion and which were cheaper than the Israeli products. In the days since the international exhibition opened its doors to businessmen and company representatives, a lack of interest on the part of Egyptians in the Israeli displays has been noticed.

It should be mentioned that all of the nations [as published], with the exception of the Sudan, declined to participate in this year's exhibition. Further, all of the Islamic nations were absent, with the exception of Turkey, which has established diplomatic ties with Israel.

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CSO: 4504/247

EGYPT

TV COVERAGE OF ASSEMBLY DEBATES DISCUSSED

Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 12 Mar 86 p 14

[Commentary by Mustafa Amin: "A Thought"]

[Text] Public opinion was amazed when it saw the vehement debate in the People's Assembly between 'Alawi Hafiz, the Wafd deputy, and Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub, the chairman of the People's Assembly, on television. This was the first time that Egyptian television has carried faithfully what happened in parliament. In the past, the instructions were to carry falsified or contrived pictures of the sessions, the applause, but not the criticism, omitting the core from opposition speeches, and broadcasting the speeches that had no meaning. Not just television did this, but also some of the newspapers, which intentionally abridged the speeches of the opposition deputies, leaving out the speeches of any deputies partisan to any criticism or opposition to the government.

But what television did this past Sunday is a big step in the direction of democracy. It is a big change in the methods of information. We hope it continues to show the people the truth, without falsification and deception, and that television changes from an apparatus of applause, acclamation, and shouts of support into an independent apparatus that gives the nation a picture of democratic life.

The National Party will increase and its strength grow when it does not monopolize for itself television, radio, and the major newspapers, and when we see the leaders of the opposition parties speaking on television and the radio just as the ministers do. People are bored by a monologue when one person speaks for a long time, but like dialogue when conversation circulates among more than one person. We hope that the series that we had done for years in which we invite government representatives to meet with opposition representatives on television will be renewed. That day the people were as interested in this dialogue as they were in the soccer game between al-Ahli and al-Zamalik. But, unfortunately, the opposition triumphed over the government, and it was decided to cancel the dialogue and to remove the minister of information, who had the idea for the dialogue, from his post as punishment for this terrible crime!

In my opinion, the Egyptian opposition has passed the test by the position it took during the events. I do not agree with those who suggest that we reward the opposition by taking it into the ministry or by forming a national cabinet. This is not reward, it is punishment. The post of minister in this difficult time is hard labor and a back-breaking responsibility. It is in the national interest that part of the people be in the government and part in the opposition, being watchful, criticizing, addressing, and being supportive in national crises. A national cabinet is formed when we face a war, and when the war ends the task of the national cabinet ends. We welcome meetings of the president of the country with opposition leaders, and we hope that one of the first jobs of any new prime minister will be to begin his term by visiting the leaders of the opposition in their homes, and by that we can escape the rupture that took place before and after the revolution between the leaders of the opposition and the government.

Politics is a game of tennis, not a game of cards.

12780

CSO: 4540/248

EGYPT

NOTED WRITER SEEKS TO EXPLAIN SOURCE OF ARAB CONFLICT

Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 13 Mar 86 p 7

/Article by Ihsan 'Abd-al-Qaddus: "At a Cafe on the Political Street: The Basic Problem in the Arab World"

/Text As if he was conversing with himself, the young man said:

"The events that have taken place in the Arab world drive me to the ultimate in despair and this despair pushes me to try to strip myself of my Arabhood and the ideology of Arabhood. A violent scream that I am not Arab, but only Egyptian, arises within me. This scream soon weakens and is suffocated, and I find myself drawn toward my Arabhood, or I pass through stages where I cannot define my personality in a decisive way. Am I an Egyptian or an Arab? Finally, the learned professor and scholar whose knowledge can encompass the highest horizons, Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali, told me that I am an Egyptian who has been Arabized by Islam: that is, Islam does not negate my Egyptian nationality, but extends to the pillar of the Islamic world, which is the Arab foundation, through it. Since I am a Moslem Egyptian, I am an Arab Egyptian. That is the state of affairs which brings all the Arab peoples together--Egyptian Arabs, Algerian Arabs, Syrian Arabs, Saudi Arabs and so on and so forth--because the Arab state of affairs was realized only after Islam. I relaxed after I heard this from Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali, and then felt with equanimity that I was an Egyptian who had been Arabized by Islam"

The old man inhaled deeply on the smoke of his water pipe as if he was drawing in his thoughts, then said:

"There is no doubt that Shaykh al-Ghazali's expression "each of us is an Egyptian who has been arabized by Islam" is an expression which concerns the existing, ongoing state of affairs, it is an expression which can accomodate all citizens who are Christians or Jews, that is, those who are not Moslems but nonetheless are Arabs who acknowledge their Arabhood and whose Arabhood we acknowledge. That is, you can be an Arab without being a Moslem. You were not Arabized because you became a Moslem, but were Arabized by the state of affairs Islam imposed. That is a situation which does not consummate the power of the Moslems alone but also consummates the power of the personality of all citizens of different religions."

The young person, lost in his befuddlement, said:

"Maybe all the waste and fragmentation the Arab world is suffering from has come about because the world contains these non-Islamic factions. If there had been a world belonging to Islam alone, its unity would have been realized and it would have experienced tranquility and stability."

The old man's voice rose in assertion:

"Not at all. All the countries of the world draw people together from various religions and religious sects and in spite of that most of them are countries which experience tranquility and stability."

Interrupting, the young man said:

"The basic problem in the Arab world, the problem of Palestine, is based on a struggle between Islam and Judaism."

The old man shouted:

"No! It is a problem whose motive forces are not belief in a religion. Instead it is founded on the attempt of a group of Jews to exploit religion. They are a group from outside Palestine who were driven by their greedy ambitions to establish a country which they would settle in the name of the Jews so that they would be able to impose greater force on the world. From the beginning, in choosing the site for this country, they continuously said that they had settled on the choice of Palestine, that is, that their motives were based not on a specific national right to territory they consider theirs but on the mere establishment of a country which would realize their colonialist goals. They are like the group of white Europeans who colonized the land of blacks in South Africa by means of settlement and established a country in which they are still fighting even though they do not represent a religion or a national right, but merely the right of settler colonialism. That is the same right on which the state of Israel is based. Therefore the Moslems are not the only ones who are fighting the Jews in Palestine; indeed, Christians are fighting with them. The Jews are not the only ones who are fighting the Moslems; indeed, factions have joined them which belong to Islam, such as that of the faction, as well as the groups of Christians. That is, the situation in Palestine is founded not on religious claims but on motives of exploitation of settler colonialism."

The young person, as if he was refusing to be won over, stated:

"Perhaps the unending fighting in Lebanon would make you more convinced that what the Arab world is suffering from is the proliferation of religions, despite the establishment of Islam, that is, that Islam is not alone so that the Moslems could become stable and tranquil. Rather, all the newspapers and radio stations monitoring the events in Lebanon continue to attribute every event to the faction that carried it out, indeed are content to attribute it to Islam or Christianity."

The old man said, rapidly and heatedly:

"Not even the fighting in Lebanon is provoked by every religion's right to defend itself and its appeal, or even the right of factional defense. Rather, it is based on the motive of bringing a people's government into being which is based on recognizing the status of the majority of the people relative to the minority of the people. The current system imposes rule by the minority--that is, it is a system founded on fraudulent democracy. Wars take place in the effort to realize true democracy, as if they are merely wars which break out among political parties which are not connected to a religion, and each party tries to get to power. The proof is that the Moslems are divided and are fighting among themselves in Lebanon. The Christians are fragmented and fighting among themselves. Mere parties are fighting with weapons. Even the majority of the Lebanese people, Moslems and Christians, have fled the nation altogether and have left it to the professional politicians, who gather populations of professional killers around themselves. The only goal is to get to power, not to consummate a religious appeal but to realize party ambitions."

The young man fell silent, lost in his bewilderment.

The old man inhaled from the mouthpiece of the water pipe then said, out of compassion for the young man,

"In order to find peace from your bewilderment and the confusion of your appraisals of the motives for what is going on in the Arab world, you must first of all recognize that no event takes place because a number of sects exists among Moslems and non-Moslems; rather, the most violent of these events occur among Islamic countries. Islam has the utmost power and stability in every one of these countries. In spite of that, wars take place among them."

As if he had arisen from his bewilderment, the young man said:

"That is true, but what are the motive causes of these events which are taking place among countries which are all Islamic? Islam is not threatened in them to the point where they should be prompted to fight one another in defence of Islam."

The old man shifted in his seat as he made a modest smile, as if he was a professor involved in giving a lecture. He said:

"You might be surprised at the view I will present to you, because that is not a view which circulates among most of the patrons of the political cafe. It is a view which considers that the basic problem among Arab countries, the one on which the other problems and all events are based, is that of the borders drawn up geographically among all Arab countries. It is a problem which no country is able to speak about openly and frankly, out of concern over present circumstances which are imposed on their existence; They are satisfied with relations of diplomatic hypocrisy and fraudulent displays

to the point where the problem becomes intensified in one way or another, making frank talk necessary, and a dispute which could lead to fighting is declared. The situation that exists between Syria and Lebanon is one that arises from the problem of the borders separating them. Just as there is pride that the state of Lebanon has been established, there is pride in the hope of realizing the establishment of a greater Syria which will bring Syria and Lebanon together in a single country in which there are no borders. It is an old problem which began when the Syrian state and the Lebanese state were established, and all rulers faced it, including Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, when he ruled Syria in 1958 and was compelled to enter into negotiations with the ruler of Lebanon, Fu'ad Shihab-al-Din. The two men could solve the problem, or defer it, without Syrian forces entering into Lebanon's territory. The rulers who came after them were unable to do this. Syria went into Lebanon--indeed, the Syrian situation today in northern Lebanon around the city of Tripoli is considered attainment of the preliminaries in establishing the state of greater Syria. President al-Qadhafi previously stated that the only solution to the problem of Lebanon is for it to be annexed to Syria as part of a single country. That is a frankness for which only President al-Qadhafi has enough boldness--the frankness of recognizing reality. And more than that: if Zionism had not colonized Palestine, there would be a problem between Palestine and Syria, because Greater Syria includes Palestine; in addition, there is the problem of the borders with Jordan. Then the problem between Syria and Iraq is basically no more than a problem of borders. When the greater Arab revolution was held, to bring about the state of the fertile crescent, at that time the King of Iraq reached Damascus; Iraq considers that the state of Kuwait was established within its own borders, to the point where the Iraqi ruler, 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim, threatened one day to annex it by force. The war going on between Iraq and Iran is in reality only a war over borders between two countries, except that Iran is a non-Arab country, although it is an Islamic country. Then, if we move over to the Arabs' African side, we will find that that also is based on a fundamental problem--it is the problem of borders among Arab countries. Morocco's problem with Algeria is a problem of borders. The problem between Algeria and Libya is one of borders. Libya's problem with Egypt is one of borders. The problem of borders between Egypt and Libya arose a long time ago in the past, over Jaghub, and ended when British colonialism, which ruled Egypt, relinquished the oasis to Italian colonialism, which ruled Libya. At that time a rebellion broke out in Egypt against this relinquishment, on grounds that Jaghub was an Egyptian oasis. Then the disputes between Egypt and Libya expanded further, to the point where President al-Qadhafi started to demand the incorporation of the whole Egyptian Western Desert within the borders of Libya. Moreover, perhaps you do not know that there is a border problem between Egypt and the Sudan to this day, part of which is the border incorporating the Halaib area in Egypt. Have you heard about this problem? It was one of the subjects Sudanese political parties raised in their meeting with the ruling National Party in Egypt a few days ago. And so on and so forth. I can count many border problems that all Arab countries have with one another. Although they are considered the main problems on which all relations among countries are established, we are (not) facing them frankly and

claiming to ignore them, satisfying ourselves with fraudulent, crooked diplomacy, although it is a problem which exists deep within ourselves and dominates the definition of our positions and movements."

As if he was astonished by what he was hearing, the young person said,

"But how was it the lines of these geographical borders were set out, considering the problems they might stir up among Arab countries?"

The old man, going on in the tone of the professor, said:

"These were lines which were not based on the definition of a natural state of affairs all Arab peoples would unanimously acknowledge. Rather, they were lines drawn up by British colonialism and French colonialism before the Arab countries existed. They were not set out on the basis of the actual state of the geography or population because colonialism was not concerned with any given state or borders. It dominated the whole area, without borders, but drew up these borders as administrative areas which it needed. Even upon acknowledging the presence of a number of Arab peoples so that they could be divided by the presence of a number of borders, it was not concerned with all the details by which the geographic situation and the composition of the population of every country would be fully met, or perhaps it deliberately left borders behind which would provoke disputes and wars among Arab countries, so that it would derive its strength from their weakness and fragmentation, as was the case when colonialism defined the borders between India and Pakistan and left an open, severe dispute between the two countries, especially over the region of Kashmir, which both countries claim lies within their borders. The dispute reached the point where armed conflict has been ongoing between them."

The astonished young man said:

"But why did the Arab countries start to accept these borders and recognize them?"

The old man said, in a tone of assertion:

"They did not accept them at the beginning, but gave in to them under pressure of their need to get rid of British and French colonialism. There was unity among the people in all the Arab countries in resisting colonialism, a unity so strong that Arab thinkers imagined that it would be possible to redraw geographic borders through agreement among Arab countries after colonialism had left. However, they have not reached agreement to this day, because the unity which existed collapsed and fell apart."

The old man drew more deeply from the mouth of the pipe, then went on to speak, as he exhaled smoke:

"Colonialism left traces in forming the opinions and tendencies of Arab thinking. For example, colonialism was able to bring the Arab countries and peoples it led together only through unity of administration, unity of forms

of government and unity of laws. That situation was perhaps what had previously led to the unity which came into being in the time of Salah-al-Din al-Ayyubi, the time of Muhammad 'Ali, indeed the time of the Caliphate of Islam and the time of the Fatimids, that is, a unity of government and unity of administration. Therefore, Arab thinking, after the evacuation of colonialism, shrank from realizing Arab unity through the unity of government, and this thinking has continued to dominate the Arab state of affairs, to the point where Syrian thinking has imagined that it was possible to establish the actual state of Greater Syria by realizing unity of Arab government, even if it was not Syria which took charge of the government. Therefore, earlier, it proposed to King 'Abd-al-'Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, the king of Saudi Arabia, that unity be achieved by having him take charge of governing Syria, or sending his son, Prince Faysal, to assume charge of governing in his name. King 'Abd-al-'Aziz refused and Syria turned around and realized this goal by persuading Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir. However, this united government was a failure. In spite of that, this mentality continued to harbor this image of unity and gave it the name "merger union" without acknowledging that the Arab peoples had naturally evolved to the point where each people was independent and had a personality existing in its own right in spite of the unity of religion and the unity of language, so that it was not possible to bring them together under a single government and a single administration. God be praised, the call for merger union has started to weaken and a unity has appeared which is founded not on unity of government and unity of administration but on the complete alliance among Arab countries. This is the unity which has taken place among the countries of the Arab Gulf, even if these are just tribal states. This unity has managed to solve the problem of borders which remains the basic motive force of all disputes among the other Arab countries and the basic motive force of the foreign world's dominance of the Arab world."

In irritated despair, the young person said,

"There is no solution to the problem of borders. More than one organization has been established which brings Arab countries together, such as the organization of the Arab League; in spite of that no organization has addressed itself to the problem of borders. Perhaps for that reason they are all considered organizations which have failed and meet out of diplomatic hypocrisy, deceit and political maneuvers without openly stating the actual state of each country's national hopes."

The old man said, calmly,

"The basis for a solution is to have the Arab countries meet to draw up a new geographical map of the Arab world which will transcend the problems of borders and realize the fact of acknowledging them. The Arab organizations will then be able to confront Israel--a remote hope."

The old man tossed the mouthpiece of the waterpipe out of his hand and stood up, withdrawing from the cafe and apologizing to the young man for his extravagance and noisiness in prattling on and talking at length.

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CSO: 4504/241

EGYPT

OIL MINISTER DESCRIBES STATUS OF PRICE DROP CONFLICT

Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 18 Mar 86 p 9

[Interview with Oil Minister 'Abd-al-Hadi Qandil by 'Adil Ibrahim: "The Oil Minister, in a Special Interview with AL-AHRAM: Our Goal Is To Coordinate with Producing Countries Sharing Common Interests"]

[Text] Yesterday the petroleum minister left Cairo for Geneva to participate in meetings of the expanded conference of the oil-producing and exporting countries in order to discuss coordination to cope with the current conditions in the world oil market, which have witnessed an unprecedentedly severe collapse in prices.

While Egypt's interests call for participation with all oil-producing countries in restoring stability to the oil market and learning about all viewpoints in order to cope with the confusion the international oil trade is witnessing, some people raise a number of questions which we brought up in a conversation with Mr 'Abd-al-Hadi Qandil, minister of petroleum and mineral resources, before his trip to Geneva yesterday.

To begin with, what are the reasons behind Egypt's acceptance of the official invitation to attend this conference, after Egypt had refused to continue with the OPEC meetings last year, while Egypt has also refused to attend the current OPEC meetings which started last Sunday as an observer?

The minister: Current conditions prompt are to learn the views of countries in the OPEC organization and other oil-producing countries outside of it regarding what is happening in the oil market at the present time, especially since the behavior of some OPEC countries has caused this situation which OPEC has warned against and expected for a year to occur. These countries are seeking the continuation of the situation for unknown, undeclared purposes. Therefore, I considered it suitable to accept the official invitation sent me since it was not to attend the OPEC conference itself, which I had previous refused to keep attending as an observer, because what is going on inside this conference is considered the special business of OPEC members alone. Perhaps the OPEC countries can find solutions to the internal rifts and disputes in their ranks.

[Question] What subjects will the expanded oil-producing and exporting country conference, which consists of 18 oil-producing countries, discuss?

The minister: I agreed to attend this conference because it should be considered a sort of coordination among oil-producing countries with common interests outside the OPEC organization which are trying to raise oil prices so that these countries' revenues can now increase and they will be able to stimulate exploration and oil-drilling operations in the future. Among the important subjects which the conference will discuss are the means by which it will be possible to restore stability to the oil market since the trade cannot take place without stability, and this is what is now leading to confusion in oil sales throughout the world. The group of middlemen who live off every crisis and the group of forecasters who predict illusory prices for illusory, nonexistent oil cargoes has appeared. Such forecasting is punishable by law. In some countries speculation in the oil market has even appeared. This is concentrated on middlemen-forecasters who claim that crude oil sales in the month of April, for example, will be such-and-such. It is this speculation that is causing oil prices to collapse every day.

[Question] Do you have specific recommendations bearing on new ways and means for cooperation with oil-producing countries inside or outside OPEC to discuss at this conference?

The Minister: I believe that specific points will be raised for discussion depending on the extent of the current OPEC conference's success or failure in arriving at a new policy for cooperating to restore stability to the world oil market. Egypt will listen to these points, and we will study and discuss them if they express positive OPEC recommendations on cooperation with the producing countries outside it. This is connected to the degree to which these recommendations are related to our oil policy.

[Question] Will discussions or consultations be held with a number of oil ministers in the countries participating in this conference?

The Oil Minister: I already met Arturo Hernandez Grisanti, the oil minister of Venezuela and chairman of the OPEC organization, and Francisco Labesteda, the oil minister of Mexico, in their visit to Cairo last month. We discussed coordinating efforts to preserve market stability and agreed that consultations and contacts between us to find a way out of the crisis should continue. I also met 2 weeks ago with an Algerian oil delegation, and we discussed some particular views, but these did not address themselves to the problem as a whole. During the conference meetings I will meet with Mr Ahmad al-Shanfari, the oil minister of Oman, and the majority of ministers of OPEC countries, especially the ministers of the Gulf countries, with whom I am linked by friendship and good friendly relations.

AL-AHRAM: Some people say that the current poor conditions the world oil market is going through are a result of the wrongful system some OPEC countries have followed, especially after the resolutions of the latest OPEC meeting last December, which had the goal of entering into a test of strength with oil-producing countries outside OPEC, especially Britain and Norway, to compel them to reduce oil production. However, Britain and Norway have declared their refusal to cooperate with OPEC and attend the enlarged meetings which will begin tomorrow. What are the real reasons for Britain and Norway's refusal?

The Oil Minister: Attendance at this conference is optional in the case of every country. It is related to the current circumstances the oil market is going through. Britain and Norway each has a point of view regarding cooperation with OPEC and I believe that Britain and Norway refuse to cooperate just for the sake of refusing. Indeed, both countries leave the oil companies operating in the North Sea free to determine their production levels, and for reasons related to the political system do not want to "join" an oil price-fixing "cartel."

I believe that the approach some OPEC countries use is a vindictive one and shows extreme nervousness over personal positions. None of this can support the violent attack which has caused control to slip out of hand. I do not know what the wisdom in this is. Is it just to flex muscles, or boast of strength, or is the intention to destroy the economies of the oil-producing countries, with the exception of one or two that have money? Is the goal to make Egypt and other oil-producing countries yield, or make them fall to their knees? Over a period of thousands of years, all the countries of the world have failed to make Egypt fall to its knees, no matter what ordeals it was subjected to. Much greater countries have tried and failed, because the Egyptian people are forbearing and internally strong. Let us not forget that the civilization of thousands of years behind Egypt inspires it to take positions that are much firmer than what some careless people imagine. It is not by money that nations are built but by men, who build their countries, while other countries know that it is wholly the Egyptians who are building it.

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CSO: 4504/240

EGYPT

EDITORIALIST CALLS FOR SERIOUS REFORM PROGRAM

Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 19 Mar 86 p 7

[Article by Yahya al-Jamal: "The President's Speech and Some Media Issues"]

[Text] I am one of the many Egyptians who believe that Husni Mubarak is an honest man, that when he talks about democracy he means what he says, and that when he considered that "true democracy" is the prime foundation which makes it possible for every citizen to participate in the responsibilities of government and the issuance of decisions, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, he put his hand on an essential, basic fact, which is that he wants to get Egypt to safe, secure ground and that before and after all that he is not a person who is attracted by the pomp of rule and the glory of power.

I am one of the many Egyptians who believe that honesty alone and sincere desire alone, in spite of their extreme importance, must occur in conjunction with many things so that the goals the president seeks, which everyone seeks along with him who is sincere about this country and wants to spare it the catastrophes and manifestations of poverty that occurred at the end of last months (the likes of which, and more, could happen if we do not pull out the roots and causes of the problems) may be realized. Many things are necessary.

A political "compass," by which we can learn where to set out from and where to head, is necessary. The lack of a "compass" leads the vessel to founder among the courses of the waves; it advances one step, takes a step back, and time and again vacillates in its own place.

After the "compass," what are needed are "seamen" who are up to the problems. I do not imagine that Egypt has been denied to such a frightful extent.

A political party is necessary which will bear power, will not be borne by power and will clearly and truthfully know where it stands, whom to defend and in confrontation with whom this defense will be.

Opposition parties which will know how to offer solutions as much as they offer criticisms are necessary.

It will be necessary to review the law on parties so that the status of the parties will conform to the status of the political forces in the society in actual conditions.

It will be necessary to review the election laws so that some of our assemblies will not be monopolized, and so that these assemblies will be truly expressive of the will of the people.

This will all be necessary. However, none of this is my point in the discussion today. What I am aiming at in the discussion today is much less modest than all of this.

President Husni Mubarak, in the speech he gave before the People's and Consultative Assemblies in the wake of the events, of the rebellion among some central security personnel, raised what by all standards we can consider a program of national salvation which some people might see fit to add to, but over whose importance and necessity no one disagrees. The president raised many issues and problems in this speech and told the government that it was necessary to face up to them.

My belief is that the media have a major mission and a massive role in this regard. My evaluation is that the nationwide press on the one hand and the party press on the other should play their part in this context in a manner which might not require new recommendations.

What I am actually talking about are the radio and television media owned by all the people, as represented by the government. During the recent crisis, these media acted in a manner which inspires confidence and hope, and therefore I can now direct some ideas on the pages of AL-AHRAM to our brother Safwat al-Sharif, my friend Husayn 'Inan, and everyone working with them in these serious, sensitive and effective media concerning the manner in which the media in a democratic society, or one which is striving toward democracy, should participate in carrying out the specific assignments the president has presented.

While these tasks are directed to the government, I do not imagine that the government alone, or any government in the whole world, can carry such tasks out unless the hands of all the people are joined with it.

How can the media truly participate in this regard?

My recommendation is specific and simple and it is easy to carry it out, if a real desire exists to help the government, learn the people's views and move things from the context of words and "talk" to the context of action and execution.

Let us start first of all by defining the basic matters the speech raised. As is clear, the basic matters the speech raised revolve about four points of concentration or political axes and seven specific assignments for confronting the problems themselves.

The four points of concentration or political axes are:

- A. Real democracy.
- B. Being frank with the people about the facts.

- C. Integrity of government and the fight against corruption.
- D. Scientific confrontation of the economic problem.

The specific problems which he requested the prime minister to address without delay are:

- A. Strengthening the public sector and liberating it from its restrictions.
- B. Eliminating the obstacles that stand in the way of the private sector so that it set off toward development.
- C. Guiding spending.
- D. Administrative reform.
- E. Self-sufficiency in food.
- F. Being frank with the people about the facts.
- G. Stimulating tourist activity.

My recommendation, specifically, is the following: to hold two or three symposia on each of these subjects, after preparing a small working paper which will be presented to the people taking part. For this recommendation to be valuable and for these symposia to produce results from which benefit can be drawn, it will be necessary to observe the following points:

- A. Treatment and discussion must begin in freedom from all restrictions.
- B. We must totally avoid "propaganda notions," the resonant words, encomia and drumming and trumpeting which they dictate, which ail people, even those who take part in it, criticize as jesting and hypocrisy.
- C. We must adopt a notion which proceeds from the premise that no one has control over the truth, that the truth comes from dialogue and the concurrence and proliferation of views, and that what the president has presented are outlines for subjects which must be discussed from all angles and are open to agreement and dispute.
- D. Representatives of all political orientations and parties must take part in each symposium, in order that everyone can present the conception of the problem as he sees it and the solutions to it. This is the essence of the recommendation and its most important point. Unless all orientations take part, their views are presented with full objectivity, and an opportunity is provided for them to offer the specific solutions as they see them, and not just talk or hopes -- without such participation, the recommendation will lose its effect and importance.

If these preliminary points are realized and conversation takes place in an objective, calm, manner, with proper guidance and within the hearing and sight of the people, I consider that two basic positive results will result from it:

First, we will present all views, recommendations, solutions and alternatives to the people on the one hand and to those who will make the decisions on the other.

Second, we will not be leaving scope for auctioneering, trafficking and manipulation of the masses' emotions, and we will give everyone who has an opinion his right to present his opinion, defend it and discuss the views of others.

Above and beyond this is the affirmation of the democratic option, the uplifting of the value of dialogue and the training of public opinion to hear different viewpoints and make a choice among them which this entails.

There is no doubt that the agencies of the government and the agencies that gauge public opinion will closely observe these symposia and will be able to learn their effect on public opinion, its orientations, what it accepts and rejects, and what requires further study and explanation. We are all in the same boat and we must all contribute what we consider right and what we are able to contribute.

Our problems are great and numerous, but there is a solution to every problem if we can face it scientifically. The goal of the approach depends on God.

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WESTERN SAHARA

REPORT ON DETERMINED POLISARIO RESISTANCE AGAINST MOROCCAN TROOPS

Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 31 Mar 86 pp 154-167

[Article by Peter Schille: "The Entire Fatherland or Death"]

[Text] "The war ? Which war ?" The officers of the general staff are making fun of the war. "The war in the desert ? Passé!" one colonel with a gleaming glass eye sneers. The commanders, eager to go into action, spend their time recalling triumphs and forgetting.

Outside, under the plane trees of the headquarters compound at Agadir, a squad of conscripts is going through the motions of standing at attention. The general looks down at them from his window.

"Ever since we finished construction of the wall, we have been safe," General Abd-el-Aziz says gently. "The war has dozed off." There is a peal of laughter. The recruits shuffle off through the shadows.

No one can deny, the merry men of the general staff maintain "that the West Sahara is in our hands."

And what about the Polisario ?

"We have locked them out!" The headquarters of Morocco's southern army fairly throbs with the certainty of victory. "C'est la paix totale au Sahara," Lt Col Ben Achir Janah, Tan-Tan's commanding officer, says in a voice hard as steel. There is total peace.

Fearlessly, King Hassan II has ordered his soldiers to observe a cease-fire. His domain, enlarged by 266,000 square kilometers of desert, is quiet.

"Up there: the wall!" Abdullah Nagam has hit the ground on the edge of a greyish-brown hill and is looking north into the dreary distance. It is a rocky landscape; rocks all around and dismal hills, strung out like gravesites. Down in the valley, there are two Polisario Land Rovers, covered with camouflage netting.

The wall itself is no more than a glimmer atop a chain of black mesas, a mirage in the shimmering air. It is unreal and yet mortally dangerous in its reality. There is a radar antenna mounted on a steel mast staring directly at us.

Mindful of the Moroccan radar, Abdullah crawls up the hill like an insect. Keeping his head down, he peers over the edge. The wall is just two kilometers away; the enemy strongpoint. He points to a brown hill next to it where he says there is a "heavy machine gun emplacement." In front of the dugout whose windows reflect the sunlight there is "a 155-mm gun emplacement," Abdullah tells me in a respectful whisper.

Abdullah and his men cling to the rocks as though they wanted to turn to stone themselves. Fearfully, they hold their breath; a flight of pigeons goes by, their wings flapping. Sometimes it takes only one bird to alert "the radar."

At 10.55 am, Abdullah attacks the 48th battalion of the Moroccan army with three mortars. Seven times the Polisario fire at the strongpoint of Ben Amyara. Soon enough the wall can be made out more distinctly in the smoke of the exploded grenades. It is a wall made of sand and stone.

"Look at them run," Abdullah says. He is not whispering any more but he is still hugging the rocks. Behind the wall there are flames and clouds of smoke. Soldiers in olive-green uniforms dash into the dugout. The radar tower just keeps on staring as though it had gone blind.

11.05 am: it is time to leave; the war is over for today. Abdullah Nagam's men deposit their 81-mm mortars ("captured equipment," says Umar) onto their Land Rovers and disappear into the desert.

It is not until one hour later that the royal gunners respond to the attack. Their projectiles go roaring through the flickering air; the desert screams and smokes. "They are always firing into the blue," Abdullah comments disdainfully.

While the barrage continues, the Polisario squad prepares a meal among the acacias and bramble bushes of a dry river bed, no more than 400 kilometers south of Agadir--equidistant from the Algerian and the Mauritanian border "on the liberated soil of our state." For that state the Polisario have now been fighting for 10 years.

Their state? At present, it is just the dream of a Democratic Arab Republic Sahara (DARS) which has captured their imagination and which exists only in their minds. Every inch of it corresponds to the "Sahara Colony" left behind by Spain in 1976. This imaginary state has been incorporated in the domain of Morocco's king. Illegally, say his majesty's enemies. But the 10-year war has kept them away from their utopia--one wall at a time.

Four-fifths of the West Sahara has been walled in since the fall of 1985 and that area is being guarded by 80,000 Moroccan troops--or is it 100,000 or even 150,000--and being defended against the claims and attacks of the Saharan liberation army. Their forces number 20,000 or at most 25,000 men.

"The entire fatherland--or death"--all or nothing. That is the kamikaze slogan which inspires the Saharan dream of becoming an independent state. It was proclaimed as such on 27 February 1976 at Bir Lahlu in an act of heroic self-inflation. It has since been recognized by 63 nations, including India and Yugoslavia. Nonetheless, the DARS has remained a myth. In reality, Hassan II rules over his two walled-in southern provinces of Sakijat-el-Hamra and Dha-hab.

"The war may still go on for many years," says Ahmed Tali Mbarak. Through the night and the dawn hours, he made his way in his Land Rover from the Polisario camps near Tinduf in Algeria all the way to the wall in the rock-strewn desert--without a map, without the aid of a compass, even without looking at the stars; unerringly, as though he were headed home. "Maybe we will all be dead by then," he says, "but one day the Moroccans will have to give up and withdraw.

The men are crouching around the fire. They are eating rice and sardines left over from breakfast. And of course they are drinking tea; three glasses each. The first glass is as bitter as life; the second is as sweet as love and the third glass is as gentle as death. The mujaheddin--which is what they call themselves--are discussing their plans for an attack. They are satisfied with themselves and their appearance.

Abdullah Nagam, their commander, is in charge of the desert area of Bir Lahlu; a territory devoid of people, alive only because of the war. He is describing a Moroccan guard's futile attempt to escape the falling shells. His death is the trophy of the brief battle.

"After the first shell came down, the guard was in shock," Abdullah says. "he ran to the left, right into the second shell and the third shell set the dugout afire." He saw it all, Abdullah says, through his binoculars; every hit.

His men are lean and dark-skinned and they wear olive-green uniforms with no rank insignia. Around their head, they wear lithams, the thick Saharan veil which keeps the wind, the cold and the sun out and leaves only a slit free for the eyes.

They are in this war heart and soul; it has turned them into nomads once more. With their mirrorless, roofless and windshieldless Land Rovers they race across the desert "which belongs to us." Long ago--whenever that was--their fathers followed the scant traces of rain across the desert with their camels, sheep and goats. Now it is rage which drives them across the sand and rock flats and through the black and rocky valleys: hatred, vengeance and an unquenchable passion for the future. The war alone lends meaning and dignity to their lives.

The equipment of their liberation army consists of Soviet T-55 tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery and SAM 6's and 7's. In the wilds of Bir Lahlu, all it really takes is some mortars, machine guns and Kalashnikovs "as well as the courage of the mujaheddin."

Every morning, they rise out of the desert and attack the wall, more deadly than a sandstorm. Day after day, they mount their assaults on the Moroccan army--because this war is their reason for being.

Viewed from the air--from a Moroccan AB-212 helicopter (made in U.S.A.) for instance--the wall looks like a fairly ramshackle construction. The wind which blows from the north day in and day out eats its way into its flanks as it does into any sand dune--and gently the desert reclaims its own terrain.

Morocco's walled-in desert kingdom consists of a multifaceted system of walls and bulwarks which surround the towns and oases and, at the point where barrenness and silence meet, they also surround the gleaming white phosphate mine of Bu Kraa. One wall after the other is thrown up by Hassan's engineers. Using 40 bulldozers, they erect up to 10 kilometers of wall per day between two and four meters in height. The first such wall was put up in May 1981.

"Whenever we did not need an old wall any more because we had advanced beyond it, we just left it standing and built a new one for protection," says General Bannani in citing the wisdom of his own invention. Gently, he describes his strategy of annihilation to us, conjuring up the end of the "Polisario rebels." In his eyes, they are rebels, despicable mercenaries in the pay of Algeria.

Bannani, the delicate warrior: even when he destroys the enemy with the force of his words, he still looks like a philosopher, say Theodor Adorno. The general prefers not to use the word wall; he is more inclined to call it a defense belt or defense line.

His line can be shifted overnight. It is mobile and can be redrawn at any time wherever there is a gap. It can connect the hinterland with the front-lines. "An offensive installation, voilà," Bannani says. Between old, useless walls and new ones there may "sometimes be 300 kilometers of desert."

It is a mobile philosophy. Nothing makes the general quite as unhappy as to have his wall compared with the Roman limes, the Chinese Wall or the Maginot Line. "Those were all stupid bulwarks, developed from utterly primitive plans," he says. Collect some soil and hide behind it or dig a hole and hide inside it. That is why these defense installations were all overrun. They were military museums from the very start; sacrificial sites; doomsday bunkers.

His system, on the other hand, is "unbeatable but at the same time inexpensive and completely modern," he says. According to a rough estimate by Hassan II, it costs Morocco just \$100 million per year. The general knows better. He mumbles as he corrects the king's figures: "105 million--which comes to 23 percent of the military budget."

"What is of greater importance for the fatherland is the security of its people," Bennani says. Thanks to the wall, military losses have "been reduced by a factor of 100; there are only 0.4 dead per month now as against 40 previously"--which is a statistical and, as it were, abstract way of reckoning. The war is as good as over after all.

The royal army has built "eight walls" criss-cross fashion through the "zone sud." Wall No 8 is 2,400 kilometers long. Anchored in the south of the old kingdom, it diagonally divides the conquered lands from the "liberated territories." It ends between Dachla and Imlili, before reaching the sea.

The final wall will be the one which runs parallel to the borders of Algeria and Mauritania. The 1,062 kilometer-long coastline in the west can do without a wall. The stormy Atlantic offers enough protection there.

And when will Wall No 9 be built ?

"Whenever His Majesty will give the order," say the happy gentlemen of the general staff, turning their thoughts toward Rabat. "That, Inshallah, would be child's play."

"There are still 50,000 to 60,000 square kilometers outside the wall; worthless desert lands in the south. There is nothing to be gained there. Nothing grows there. As far as we are concerned, the rebels may wage war down there as much as they like," Hassan's commanders say.

Bennani, the philosopher in general's clothing, listens to Col Rida, his chief of operations, as he continues his paean to the wall, his glass eye sparkling. "The wall," he says, putting the word in quotes, "has decided the course of the war; it has brought it to a halt. The enemy is suddenly faced with an obstacle. He must stop and dig a way through and use all his strength to force himself through a narrow gap. How nice for us; we have

him in our sights and can take our time about firing at him. 60 kilometers before he even reaches the wall, we have him under surveillance. We patiently wait for him; our radar informs us about his every move. We could even register the movements of a dog 60 kilometers away"--no matter whether he barks or not.

In the area between the command post and the wall, General Bennani has deployed strike forces and one artillery battery per battalion. The "mobile units," using tanks, APC's and jeeps, leave their dugouts to mount an attack whenever the "static forces" are in danger. That is not a bad life, since that danger is long past.

"Not a single rebel can cross the wall unnoticed" and hide like a flea in the people's clothing. "Contacts across the wall are utterly impossible," Rida notes with profound satisfaction. "We have forced them into waging a classic war of position--which is something they are simply not capable of handling."

While the royal army rolls out the heavy artillery, the Polisario must make do with what they have. "They come out of the desert," Rida says, "with their jeeps and fire three or four times at most--with mortars or rocket launchers. Of course they never hit anything; but afterwards they issue their crazy bulletins."

The Polisario battle communiques are written in the camps near Tinduf and made public in Algiers. They are modest activity reports--almost colorless; no heroics. Frequently they are not issued until long after the event as though they were the product of desperate thought. Here are some examples:

"Once more two members of the Moroccan army have left their units and joined the Saharan army."

"The Saharan Popular Liberation Army reports that it carried out 71 small-scale artillery attacks on Moroccan positions along the wall between 2 and 16 November 1985. Moroccan losses are said to have been 20 dead and 30 wounded."

"According to reports of the DARS information ministry, a Moroccan military aircraft was shot down near Dachla on 27 December 1985. The war of attrition continues."

If there were no war, the mujaheddin would be without a job and without food; they would be beggars. These refugees who have been pardoned, as it were, to fight in the desert have nothing but their spirit of resistance to put up against the Bennani principle. "We climb over the wall whenever we choose," says Ahmed Tali Mbarak. "In 1985, we broke through it dozens of times."

Abdullah, who has vaulted the wall, says: "We are smarter than the radar because we know the desert. It is our home."

It is getting dark. Abdullah's shock unit has parked the Land Rover in the sand on the edge of a hollow which the evening light has turned pink and grey just like the bare mountains on the horizon. The mujaheddin feed their campfire with acacia branches. Hussein is cooking some rice; Umar is baking bread while Ahmed prepares the tea. The wind makes the ashes glow like a fiery flower and after the sun goes down, it becomes cold. The night is dark and glittering at the same time.

"Here we are, sitting down and drinking tea," Ahmed says, "and the Moroccans are constantly on alert, 24 hours a day. Often, a mere gust of wind will sound the alarm on their radar screens." Until the evening the rumble of cannonfire had shattered the silence of the desert. "Every round was meant for us," Abdullah says proudly. The Moroccan army attests to his existence by firing at him.

His existence constitutes a threat. "We hit them first because we are the ones on the attack," Abdullah says. "The king ordered the cease-fire because he had to. He felt helpless like a drowning man who cannot swim who asks the ocean to disappear so that he can reach shore on foot."

Don't the Moroccans ever score a hit ?

"Rarely. We have no fixed positions; but at the same time we can pick our target: the wall. Previously, the enemy was as mobile and unpredictable as we are. But now we attack them wherever and whenever we choose. The Moroccans have a tough time of it," Abdullah says. "The wall does not protect them; they must protect the wall."

The new strategy of the liberation army aims at attrition and demoralization, at wearing the enemy down. Since the enemy cannot be finished off, he must be injured until he bleeds from a thousand wounds.

Abdullah gives out the night watch assignments. He claims to have been a workman in El-Ajun and Dachla in former days; but his hands are slender and soft and his mustache is stylishly trimmed. He acts as self-assured as any commander on the royal general staff.

He does not wish to talk about his past life; nor does Ahmed who is just now brewing the last glass of tea--the one gentle as death. He, too, will reveal only bits and pieces of his story. He was born somewhere in the vicinity of Smara, the holy city of the Saharans, in a nomad tent in the desert. Ahmed can only speak Hassaniya, the Arab dialect of the Sahara. He has no knowledge of French or Spanish; he has never attended school.

When we ask him what his pay, he laughs, perplexed about our inane question. He will get his pay after independence, he says, "by the blood of the martyrs."

All of the Polisario families have had to leave some of their relatives behind on the far side of the wall. For their sake they keep mum about their origins. The royal authorities have forcibly relocated Berber families from the north to the desert between El-Ajun and Dachla. Shifting populations around is just one more aspect of the king's policy of conquest.

The closer they get to the wall, the lower the Moroccan helicopters fly and the lower they fly, the more sanguine become the estimates, comments and forecasts. The greater the distance from headquarters, the less care-free the officers tend to get. It is hard to tell whether their expression has darkened because of their rapt attention to the war or their fear of the mujaheddin shells.

A few minutes before we land at the Mahbas command post, 30 kilometers behind the northernmost wall fortress, Col Hammou Arzaz, the regional commander, adjusts his mood to the situation. "By clever and complicated means we may have achieved security against the attacks by the Algerians and their mercenaries," he shouts over the noise of the helicopter engine. "The only thing is that the war is by no means over. First, the Sahara affair must be taken care of."

At one time, Mahbas was an oasis along the caravan trail leading from Smara to Tinduf. Mahbas meant water, food and trade. It is enclosed by a grey sand plain with black and brown mountains cropping out of its dreariness, polished clean by the north wind. A few withered acacias provide the illusion of a semblance of life.

Mahbas lies in the center of long sand walls which were once thrown up and subsequently forgotten: obsolete bulwarks, deserted forts. The oasis has been turned into a fortress, a battlesite and a gravesite. The old inhabitants--peasants, animal breeders and traders--were moved from Mahbas "for their own safety," says Col Arzaz, to Sag, one hour north of here, in 1979. Their adobe huts now serve as quarters for soldiers from the High Atlas. They are professional soldiers who have a difficult time coping with life in the desert. They have signed up for 10 years at double pay.

From Strongpoint No 1 it is only six kilometers to the Algerian frontier--the "provisional frontier" which has not been entered on any official map, according to Col Arzaz. Along this doubtful frontier General Bennani's "eighth" wall runs southward at a respectful distance. Tinduf is only 60 kilometers away--and somewhere in between are Abdullah's Polisario units.

Strongpoint No 1: a model of military strength and a symbol of Moroccan superiority, guarded by a radar installation. Atop the 12-meter high tower the antenna faces east, like a stop sign--but the mujaheddin tend to obey different traffic regulations.

On 19 August 1985, they pushed toward the wall between Rouss Sabti and Chyma. Ahmed and Abdullah were among the 500 men who fought a battle with Col Arzaz' battalions. It started like a surprise attack at dawn and dragged on for an entire day.

The frontline was spread out over a distance of 15 kilometers. The Polisario took some prisoners; the Moroccans captured some tanks and APC's. The dead were not counted. "It was a brilliant victory," Arzaz says; but what is so brilliant about a victory ?

Proudly laughing, Arzaz displays the captured equipment: a T-55 tank, with the ID number 583, has a multi-colored Polisario emblem on the back; but a Moroccan rocket (made in U.S.A.) has smashed its turret and a BMP-1 armored personnel carrier (made in the USSR) with just 293 kilometers on its odometer has been split open by an artillery shell.

"The crew died on the spot of course," Arzaz tells us, "and the others will not dare come back. They know that they cannot gain an inch of ground. They are happy that they themselves do not lose a meter."

Nonetheless, soldiers spend days and nights sitting in front of the tiny grey screen (made in U.S.A.) on which man and beast are shown. Thanks to its system of sensors, the installation is capable of detecting seismic and acoustic signals as far away as Algerian soil. There is no picture on the screen.

The crew awaits the enemy in foxholes and dugouts right next to their operational site. In no time the crew of a fat 120-mm mortar fires a round at a grey shrub this side of the frontier as proof of their tireless efficiency.

The tanks and cannon and the howitzers and twin machine guns, supplied by comrades-in-arms of the Western world, sparkle in their Sunday finery. The fire is on in the brick oven, the smell of bread is in the air and the commander's TV set is filled with the happy sound of the Algerian children's program.

In the center of the strongpoint they have built a model of a strongpoint. There are barbed wire coils in front of the sand wall and further out, there are minefields and the entire model is surrounded by a double wall. Each firing range is hidden behind a set of walls. A sandbox to use for war games--hasn't the king ordered a cease-fire ?

There are almost 500 forts along the entire length of the wall, spaced three, five or eight kilometers apart. Each has a complement of 50 to 200 men which serve there for 6 months at a time. Punitive companies, consisting for the most part of student rebels whose heads have been shaven must serve for years in the forward frontlines.

Near Mahbas, Arzaz tells us, "the wall flirts with the frontier"--but a close encounter is out. The Moroccan units are under orders not to come in contact with Algeria, but not for reasons of propriety. The fact is that the Algerian army is superior to Hassan's forces. Thus, the wall also appears to be something of a symbolic threshold.

30 kilometers east of the holy city of Smara, enclosed by the rock-strewn desert and the black mesas, lies Lafrayrina, Strong Point No 13 of the central sector--a site cut off from all human life like a Martian outpost.

All the decisions are made by the fat lieutenant colonel operating out of the barracks at Smara. Three times each week a tanker truck brings in water from Smara and other trucks bring in the supplies: flour, rice, salt, sugar and tea that have come in by sea through the port of Agadir.

Lafrayrina is a fortress at the end of the world. What are the soldiers in their olive-green uniforms afraid of here? In fear of what enemy have they camouflaged themselves as rocks and dug deep into the barren hills? The wall blends with the desert until it resembles the rocks which dot the landscape.

Since February 1984, 100 men have been stationed here in the deadly silence and never--"unfortunately," the young company commander says--have the mujaheddin taken note of their watchfulness and combat effectiveness.

Strongpoint No 13 boasts a real mosque, a sauna, a brick oven, a cistern and--a soccer field in front of its gates which are guarded by two camels made of loam. The entranceway is decorated with the Moroccan motto "God, Fatherland, King" in small stone letters.

In March 1985, when Hassan II inspected his desert conquests on the occasion of the jubilee of his accession to the throne, General Bannani also took him to Lafrayrina. Wearing yellow ski goggles which he rarely took off, the king admired the wall and Strongpoint No 13.

It seemed as though both had been created solely for this royal moment and for the purpose of preserving in a pretty picture the monarch's affection for this forgotten desert outpost.

Whether it is actually taking place or not, "all 23 million Moroccans are enthusiastically participating in the war," says Chalil Dchil, the man Hassan has appointed to the governorship of Smara Departement. The small capital of the region is being equipped with housing projects and schools as well as hospitals and a sports stadium--all for the greater glory of Morocco. The sacred blue mosque is being restored; water mains and sewers are being built as well as roads and a power plant. In the heart of the desert an average Moroccan small town is being created.

If a visitor displays excess curiosity, the officials and military men will temper his zeal by putting on a banquet for him--complete with pigeon paté, mutton and couscous and torrents of sweet, syrupy tea. It is difficult to ask questions when your mouth is full.

The adobe huts at the foot of the small mountain village of Galtat-Zemmour may look as though shells had shattered their roofs and walls--but Col Haddou Kejji swears "it was a sandstorm; the rain and the sun." In October 1981, the enemy did attack the desert village once but things have been quiet ever since. The village's former inhabitants, he says, are much happier in Dachla these days.

The colonel is in charge at Galtat-Zemmour, situated atop a huge rock which looks like a hammer which has smashed the monotony of the white desert sand. Kejji commands his battalions from a house studded with multicolored tiles.

His troops, protected by a wall, guard the frontier to Mauritania and an utterly silent desert road which once led to Tinduf via Bir-Mughrein. Equipped with armor-piercing "Dragon" rockets (made in France), the Moroccan units are supposed to prevent the Polisario from passing through Mauretanian territory in order to reach the "liberated areas" south of the wall.

There is no relying on the "beggar state of Mauritania," as Kejji calls it, and its 8,000-man army. It has good neighborly relations to both Morocco and the Saharans. The colonel is bored. To get the war going again, he would like to have some German "Leopard" tanks "because the enemy has by no means been beaten as yet."

The enemy, we say ? The Polisario on the other side of the wall with their small Land Rovers ?

"Russia," the colonel says, "the tiger's leap of socialism toward Europe which is being prepared by the Polisario. We are guarding the West. We are guarding this country to keep the Russians from gaining a foothold on Gibraltar."

"How fortunate for us," the colonel says, "that we are not entirely defenseless." At the new airbase of El-Ajun, the royal engineers are constructing concrete bunkers to house the royal fighter bombers: French Mirage F-1s and American F-5s. "They would reach me in 10 minutes, in case I needed help."

The battle for the mountain fortress of Galtat-Zemmour lasted a whole month and it was not storm and rain that fought each other but Moroccan soldiers and the mujaheddin.

The Polisario attacked in the early morning hours of 13 October 1981. Their sand-colored Land Rovers were equipped with recoilless cannon and machine guns. They supplied their small army from supply dumps located in the heart of the desert.

The Moroccan army had long been expecting an attack; Galtat-Zemmour had a complement of 2,600 men. 60,000 land mines, according to Abdullah, were waiting for the Saharans who never divulged how many men they lost in the operation. In order to disguise their true strength, they make believe that their forces are a ghost army whose members are immortal. "We have enough men," Abdullah says, "and we have all the means to wage a modern war."

By mid-November, the Saharans had taken Galtat-Zemmour. The mountains were pockmarked with shell holes and in the valleys lay the charred remains of human beings and of burnt-out guns. Only a handful of Moroccan soldiers managed to get out alive. When they fled, they poisoned the wells.

That was not the type of modern war the Saharans had wanted to fight. Would the enemy really repeal the rules of survival in the desert? They drank from the wells and died by the hundreds. They realized, too late, that their enemy was not like them in the least.

Until January 1984, the liberation army managed to hold out in the mountains along the Mauritanian border but then it could no longer withstand the bombardments and had to withdraw from all the frontlines--from Smara, UmmDreiga, Bir Anzaran and Dachla. The Moroccan engineers put up one wall after the other to keep them out and soon the enigmatic war over a strip of desert territory began to deteriorate into a warlike terrain exercise in the eyes of the world.

The Polisario began to recognize its weakness and at the same time to collect evidence of its activity and efficiency so as to raise its own morale and to convince those in doubt.

In Have Buyema, an oasis between Tinduf and the refugee camps, the Saharans built a military museum to commemorate their exploits. Victories have the appearance of defeats here. There are no more battles; only results.

The open-air exhibit has been installed in a white, square-shaped area surrounded by adobe walls. 25 Moroccan officers crouch in the sand in rows of five. They are exhibit items and war booty just like the silent formations of tanks, armored cars, guns, rocket launchers and weapons made in France, Belgium, Spain, England, Italy, Austria, Israel, South Africa and the United States--all of them remnants of the chaos of war; well-tended as though in preparation for a parade before an imaginary nation.

The tanks and armored cars have found their resting place in walled-in spaces, along with the Land Rovers and the Unimogs with their twin cannons. In front of these, there are entire companies of machine guns--minus the gunners. There is enough equipment here to fight a whole battle: radar antennas, radiotelephone systems and cluster bombs; bits and pieces of fighter bombers and helicopters, ejection seats, even lovingly folded parachutes. The sad arsenal has been arranged by equipment categories; the square-shaped exhibit area fairly vibrates with the stories which these war machines can no longer relate.

Sealed in plastic, sown on white cloth the paper war is equally present here: military ID's, official documents, administrative forms. Every scrap is meant to offer proof of victory: rank insignia (the highest being Major), shoulder bars, medals and decorations--fallen battalions at the ready, after the last battle.

The Moroccan prisoners jump up every time their guards approach. One grey-haired captain, who has been held captive for 6 years, is permitted to write to his family in Meknès from time to time. "Life goes on after a fashion," he says anxiously. "Nothing special. The war has saddled us with all the big problems."

A bomber pilot with a large mustache, who has grown morose after a decade in captivity, assures us in a rasping voice that he has "never dropped any napalm."

Mujahid Mohammed, under whose guidance and supervision the captured officers are operating the exhibit, is a survivor of Galtat-Zemmour "and many other battles." His dealings with his gallery of triumph trophies has turned him into a melancholy man as well. He feels guilty about the museum of death and has only one wish: "to die as a martyr."

As a martyr of the Sahara Republic; a republic in exile; a community of refugees subsisting on a budget provided by charity, numbering "about 165,000 people," according to Mohammed--namely women, children and old folk. This society drawn together by war, lives in the heart of the desert in four far-flung tent cities which have been named for "occupied places" on the other side of the border: El-Ajun, Smara, Dachla and

Aoussad. They live on Algerian soil, southwest of the old caravansary of Tinduf which none of them may visit without permission. It is a life under the watchful eyes and the mercy of Algeria.

In the spring of 1976, the Moroccan air force dropped phosphorus and napalm bombs on the tents of the Saharans who had fled the invaders. At Umm Dreiga alone 20,000 refugees were killed in these attacks. In the aftermath, Algeria lent the utopian republic an enclave of several hundred square kilometers under its own administration.

The Saharans transformed their non-existence into a well-run everyday life. While their men were fighting the war, the women--perforce--took over. They work--constantly worrying about the mujaheddin who come home only once every 4 months--for their children's sake "because they should not become fighters."

Hospitals and schools have been built, wells have been dug; gardens have been planted where some vegetables--carrots, onions, beets, tomatoes and potatoes--are grown to feed the children and the sick.

But without charity they would all have starved to death and without aid from all over the world consisting of food, clothing, household goods and medical supplies from rich and poor nations. When the black nomad tents gave out they were replaced with canvas tents from the United States.

There is no money and no business activity inside the camps; nor is there a jail. The Saharan Red Crescent collects, registers and distributes the aid shipments: tins of cheese from Switzerland; butter oil from Belgium; Spanish sardines; cookies from the United States and fruit juice from Algeria; tobacco from Egypt; tea and ashtrays from China; jackets and trousers from the FRG.

The women do their utmost "to build a normal life under abnormal conditions," says Kalthum Mohammed Mbarak as she stands in front of her tent in the Smara camp. An icecold wind is whipping greyish-brown clouds across the sky.

Kalthum is 30 years old and pregnant. At her feet, her three small sons are tumbling in the sand. She is the wife of one of the mujaheddin. "It is war," she says. "We are not living as we used to. That is our fate."

"We did not want the war. It claims too many victims, too much blood; it causes too much suffering. But it is the only way to our independence." Mohammed El-Amin Ahmed, the minister president of the Sahara Republic and co-founder of the Polisario, wears the nondescript olive-green uniform of the mujaheddin. He is a gaunt, 38 year-old man, born somewhere between El-Ajun and Bu-Kraa; a litham, the Saharan veil, is wrapped around his head.

"We have had a great many dead," he says, "but Hassan has not been able to exterminate us yet by any means." He calls Hassan's campaign against his people an "attempt at genocide"--a futile attempt "because we have not even lost one percent of our people."

El-Amin has refuted Bennani's contention that the DARS is nothing but a surrogate state, misled by Algerian legionnaires, so many times that it no longer upsets him. "We are not mercenaries. We fight with no expectation of riches."

"It is true that our friends give us support," he adds. "First of all Algeria. But our weapons and ammunition we go and get from the Moroccan troops."

300 kilometers farther to the west Abdullah, Ahmed and their mujaheddin are planning another attack on the wall. Sometime between dawn and noon they will strike. "No wall will ever protect the Moroccans from us," El Amin says. "One day we will chase out Hassan even if he runs a barbed wire fence through the whole desert."

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CSO: 3620/627

IRAQ

JOURNALIST REMITS REPORT FROM TOUR OF SOUTHERN FRONT

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 22-28 Mar 86 pp 11-13

[Article by Ibrahim al-Burjawi: "The Iraqis' Heroic Acts Have Stymied the Goals of the Iranian Breach"]

[Excerpt] With the Navy Commander

After a short rest in the hotel, the car took us to a naval base where we met with the commander of the Iraqi navy, Staff Rear Adm 'Abduh Muhammad 'Abdallah. He talked to us about the al-Faw battle which for the first time had paved the way for the naval forces to play a prominent, distinctive role in the Gulf war. He declared two military secrets to us which had not previously been published: these were that Iraqi naval artillery and rocket fire had set fire to the Iranian Nowruz oilfield and that Iran had 12 advanced French-made missile boats of the Tombe Tonnere class, the last three of which had been delivered to Iran by France in 1981. He concluded his conversation with us by stressing inevitable victory through firm cooperation among all the forces of the Iraqi military, the land, sea and air forces.

After returning to the hotel, the Arab and foreign journalists met and exchanged information on the Gulf war. Discussions took place among them on the position Iran had occupied in al-Faw Peninsula, which came to about 150 square kilometers in area, resembled a horseshoe in shape and was surrounded in three directions by Iraqi forces. From the east, the Iraqi navy blocked off the sea approaches to the Iranian forces crammed into this horseshoe, whose number was estimated at 200,000, about 70,000 of whom had been killed so far.

From these comments, we can record that the Iranians in the al-Faw Peninsula had carried out a Sharon-type breach which no doubt was by the devising of Israeli officers and experts who, by the Iranians' own admission, are planning their battles for them.

This breach to some extent resembles the one Sharon created at Diversoir during the October 1973 war, on the basis of whose results Henry Kissinger proceeded to run the Kilometer 101 talks which were the beginning of the peace agreement at Camp David. Questions were repeated among the journalists

the gist of which was, "Is this breach in al-Faw a show to regain the Iranians' face on grounds that they realized some victory, and consequently became prepared for peace talks in accordance with the United Nations resolution which has received international consensus -- a breach Washington conspired with Tel Aviv to create with the goal of using it to play a role which will serve its interests by scaring the Gulf countries and imposing solutions which are in keeping with these interests? During this session, a discussion took place concerning a Saudi role in arranging an initiative to find a peaceful solution to the war. This will take more time, so that Iran's aggressive appearance can be sustained through its occupation of Iraqi territory; this will dictate the postponement of the final struggle to liberate al-Faw, so that international condemnation of Iran can be intensified and pressure on it can be increased to accept the peaceful solution and return the world's attention to the events of the Gulf, now that its attention has been drawn by other events such as the disturbances in Egypt, the changes in the Philippines, the severance of coordination talks between King Husayn and the Palestine Liberation Organization and so forth. Moreover, comments were raised concerning the weather, the terrain in al-Faw Peninsula and its shifting, difficult nature, which has obstructed the progress of equipment and armored vehicles, prompting the Iraqis to prefer to postpone a final attack to liberate the territory until the nature of the terrain changes during the anticipated weeks of good weather toward the end of March, so that Iraq will benefit from this time to realize a strategic goal by inflicting the maximum possible losses on the Iranian concentrations confined to al-Faw Peninsula through successive swift land, air and sea raids and strikes.

With the Commander of the Seventh Corps

After a night whose integrity was unsullied by the sound of the artillery or rocket bombardment we had been expecting as we were overlooking the front, asserting total calm in Basrah, we moved over a long tongue extending in the water to the headquarters of the Seventh Corps command. We sat around a long oval table which was surrounded by three massive bookshelves containing about 4,000 books on history, military science, literature, geography and Islamic subjects, indicating the high level of learning the officers of the Iraqi military command staffs enjoy. Then after a while the commander of the corps, Lt Gen Sa'd Tu'mah al-Jabburi, came upon us. He began his conversation by pointing out that the battle to liberate Umm al-Rasas had lasted just 40 hours, then said, "The enemy, in getting to al-Faw, had the aim of realizing an important objective, which was the port of Umm Qasr. He has acknowledged that frankly. To that end, he made large sectors his target, but we managed to divert him from that and are now following the plan to destroy the enemy in full. We are totally in control of the situation and the enemy has lost his control. However, the difficult nature of the area does not allow us to use equipment. Nonetheless, we are advancing slowly and have liberated important sections. The enemy's resistance is diminishing day by day. I will not promise you a great victory for some days, because that is subject to the area and the combat theater. However, the enemy's losses are numerous; you have seen how flagrant they are with your own eyes."

Concerning the magnitude of the Iranian forces, he said, "Our information indicates that we have skirmished with seven Iranian divisions (a division

is no less than 50,000 soldiers) which the Iranian military command managed to put in a pocket to make it easy to eliminate them. Most of them are guards; some are military divisions. Our position is changing daily and even hourly. We are several kilometers away from al-Faw; the enemy is on a coastal strip and cannot be in communication with Iranian territory. Our forces are 10 kilometers from the center of al-Faw and the enemy's situation has now compelled him to seek the aid of new forces which have not been tested, including children. Here we can say that we have exterminated the basic divisions which carried out the attack."

He was asked about al-Sulaymaniyah and the breach in the front there, and said, "We are fighting on a front 1,180 kilometers long, but the basic battle is in the Shatt al-'Arab. It is natural that there should be constant skirmishing, and what happened in al-Sulaymaniyah is something normal. It consists of skirmishes in which there has been interaction. They are going very much to excess in their military communique."

He was asked about the presence of Israeli weapons in the possession of the Iranian army, and said, "The Iranians themselves have said that they have received Israeli weapons, and Israel has supported this statement. The regimes in Libya and Syria have also admitted that they are supplying Iran with weapons; an Israeli official anticipated the Iranian crossing before it occurred, and stated so after the battle, which means coordination between them. In addition, you could not previously have found the current aircraft, such as helicopters and fighters, in the Iranian's possession."

He was asked if there were new Iraqi weapons and answered, "The weapons we are using are basically of high technology and there is no need for new weapons in the sense of the word, and we do not need them. We do not have a problem with weapons."

He was asked about his assessment of Iranian losses and said, "We can see the losses which are in front of us but the heavy artillery, air force and navy are inflicting blatant losses on them as well. What we do know is that they have brought back divisions and replaced them, which means militarily that they have lost at least half of them. In any event, they do not have the bridges and equipment for making the crossing, which increases the losses." He went on, "I would like to be optimistic and say that the battle will be a matter of days, but what I can say is that we are much better off than at the start of the fighting, the enemy's situation is getting worse every day, and we can assert that the enemy will collapse and we are determined and prepared to liberate the territory, and we have all the resources for bringing that about. The issue is a matter of time."

He was asked whether the rain that fell the last 2 days had obstructed the Iraqi advance and replied, "The fact is that rain is one of the factors which affect our advance. The climate of the al-Faw area, in spite of its proximity to Basrah, is different from that of Basrah. There the humidity is intense and rain is an obstructing factor. If the state of the weather had been good, the situation would have been different from the one we are in now. Nonetheless, maintaining the Iranian pocket will not bring Iran any results, and while we did not expect their attack against it, I can only be happy that the enemy is being jammed into this sort of small area."

Lt Gen al-Jabburi said, "The bridges the Iraqi air force destroyed were not on the Shatt al-'Arab but were in the Iranian hinterland. That was to prevent the enemy from using transportation routes and providing his forces' requirements; this requires the construction of a bridgehead on the sea as well. They can only meet their requirements by just using boats, and prisoners who have fallen into our hands have admitted that no bridgehead has been created and will not be created, God willing. Although a portion of the tanks have advanced, I believe that 70 or 80 percent of them have been destroyed."

He said, "We are now close to one position and if we finish liberating it the use of armored equipment will be more feasible."

He concluded his statement by saying, "The size of the sectors we are massing is great and they are enough to liberate al-Faw. How can I use them in such a small area, though?" He went on to say "After the liberation of the salt flat, which is what we are dealing with now, and will be finished with soon, it will be easy for us to move at greater speed."

To the Combat

From the headquarters of the Seventh Corps, we split up into three groups. Each group went to one of the three columns, the northern, southern or central, having pledged to exchange information among ourselves after the visit had ended.

Before we give a discussion, beginning with the southern column, led by the assistant chief of staff Lt Gen Hisham Sabah Fakhri, it is necessary to point out that a column, in Iraqi military usage, is a formation of no less than three brigades and air, artillery, armor, rocket and helicopter forces are under its command. It also coordinates directly with the commander of the naval forces for the sake of its objectives.

The road to the southern column, as to the other two columns, is surrounded by rolling terrain, marshes and sloughs, facing any equipment that has wheels with the threat of becoming mired in the ground and failing to move, if it is diverted from the narrow paved road. Military fortifications have been erected in the midst of these marshes and sloughs. The terrain is clayey and saline and contains chemical materials which when they dry out exude an obnoxious odor that on some occasions could be toxic. From the headquarters of the command to the second front line, which journalists are allowed to go to, the car's tires kept turning for about half an hour.

We sought protection when we arrived behind some tanks and with our own eyes observed the intense fire set off at the same moment by rocket launchers, heavy artillery, combat aircraft and helicopters, pouring their lava upon the other side and inflicting grievous losses on the Iranian concentrations, within whose ranks dead and wounded had fallen. We saw heaps of Iranian dead, most of them adolescents in age, piled up on top of one another, their numbers estimated in the hundreds. We also witnessed the process of the burial of some of them by Iraqi soldiers in accordance with Islamic rituals and rites, with the total respect for the dead the pure religion requires.

The same story repeated itself in the northern sector, where the northern column, under the command of the Seventh Corps commander, Lt Gen Sa'di Tu'mah al-Jabburi, engaged in fierce fighting with the Iranian enemy. There, however, it was not enough for us to observe the Iranian rockets that fell around us. Rather, we observed the wounding of the press photographer in our company, Mahmud 'Ali Hasan by name, who could not avoid being hit as had the professional soldiers, who did not conceal their scorn for the Iranian's lack of proficiency at hitting targets. Here it is worth pointing out that a television cameraman named 'Abbas Khayyun had also met his death in battle a few days before in the central sector commanded by Staff Maj Gen Mahir 'Abd-al-Rashid, commander of the Third Corps. However, our road to that sector did not reach its destination, although we spent 4 hours on the tongue of land comprising the route within the sloughs and marshes, which were massive in area, because the companies and battalions at the front were being replaced with others from the rear lines, leading to an extreme obstruction of traffic, especially, as we stated previously, since the road was narrow. These 4 hours we spent in the company of soldiers and officers gave us a chance to observe that the Iraqi forces coming back from the front were no less joyful and optimistic than the forces going to it. We also were given a chance to talk with some of them and we heard rare heroic stories from them. One of them related to us the story of his mute colleague who took three Iranians prisoner without uttering a single word, and another told us the story of the doctor who left the rear lines with first aid vehicles so that he could proceed ahead of the officers and soldiers who were attacking to fight with them, so that their hearts would be dominated by a confidence that a doctor was in their presence who would treat their wounds rapidly if they were injured. Another also spoke about a soldier who was working in radio intelligence, and how he snatched up the rifle of an Iranian who had been killed and took it with his radio equipment and attacked fighting. A wounded person who had been injured on his left hand which he had slung to his shoulder told us how he and a number of his wounded colleagues refused to complete their treatment and convalescence and joined their units in order to resume fighting. We observed that they all tenaciously clung to their commanders' slogan, which is "We are fighting calmly because there is nothing to scare us about the future. Our goal is to reduce the losses in our ranks as much as possible."

We returned from the central sector to take a rest with the al-Faruq forces, which had sought good luck from the Caliph 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab's name. There we became acquainted with a likeable, heroic soldier named Abu Tha'ir who told us how the Iraqis communicate with the Iranians by means of radio equipment and laugh at them while exposing some of their lies, as happened when Iran made a broadcast about the death of 200 soldiers in the al-Faw fighting though pictures in the Iraqis' possession proved that more than 50,000 deaths had occurred. At that time the Iranians gave them the reply, "We know that but in battles there always are dead, and that is not important." He also related how Abu Tha'ir himself communicated with the Iranians one day by informing them that their 20 rockets which they had fired on him and his comrades in a vehicle they were riding had all fallen at least 200 meters away, and he laughed at them and told them "Don't you know how to hit your targets? Do you want us to teach you?" The surprise was that they answered him, laughing, "Do not criticize us, we have no expertise and we are fighting you in execution of our commanders' orders."

With the Political Guidance Director

In the main hall of the hotel, upon returning from the front, AL-TADAMUN had a meeting with Maj Gen 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin, director of political and morale guidance in the Iraqi Ministry of Defense. We asked him impatiently about the status of the new Iranian assault in the north. He replied by stressing that Iran had not occupied al-Sulaymaniyah, pointing out "The Iranian forces came into a border area called al-Shawariq and occupied some of a string of high positions situated there. The entire situation amounted to no more than limited border skirmishes whose goal was to divert our attention and turn it away from the basic objective in al-Faw." He stressed that this ruse had not deceived Iraq and that it would not move a single detachment from al-Faw to the north to bring about the breakup of their concentration in the south that the Iranians wanted.

Maj Gen 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin stressed that the Iraqis had handled the al-Faw breach with great steadiness of nerves and balance and were certain of inevitable victory, and that there was nothing to call for haste. (The conversation took place last 27 February.)

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CSO: 4404/283

ISRAEL

DECLINE OF GAZA FISHING INDUSTRY UNDER OCCUPATION REVIEWED

Jerusalem AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI in Arabic 18 Jan 86 pp 41-44

[Article by Muhammad al-Mashukhi: "Fishing in Gaza: The Legislation and Bills Now Imposed Have Subjected the Occupation to Continuous Decline!"]

[Text] The Gaza Strip is limited in terms of area, which does not exceed 360,000 donums, and it is inhabited by about 600,000 people. Its shores stretch from the border at Rafah to the south to the village of Bayt Hanun to the north, a distance of 45 kilometers. In spite of that, the portion allocated to fishing is no more than 24 kilometers of coastline and the distance it is permitted to fish is just 8 miles.

Over this narrow area, the fishermen, who in the past were the richest of tradespeople, are now suffering. Fishing in this sector was the second source of national income after citrus, for which the Gaza Strip was famous. Fishermen are now suffering from poverty and individuals now can only find fish in certain seasons, at exorbitant prices.

What are the causes which have brought fishing to this condition we see it in today?

Has the sea gone dry?

Or do other sources of income have attractions that make fishermen turn from pursuing their occupation? If there are other causes, what are they?

In this report, we will try to answer some of these questions.

Fishermen's Freedom in Various Eras and Countries

Fishermen in the past, in the Ottoman era, would travel the sea from its nearest to farthest reaches, without being restricted to any geographic limits, in spite of the primitive nature of fishing methods. This repeated itself in the framework of the British occupation of Palestine; fishermen had absolute movement and freedom to fish in the sea, except for the periods of the two world wars, and found no one making the waves unbearable for them, questioning them or fighting them over their livelihood. Fishermen had

a distinguished status in society and were rich people. Moreover, after 1948, this normal situation among fishermen continued, in the framework of the Egyptian administration in the Gaza Strip. Fishermen were not deprived of the freedom they had become used to. They proceeded to spread to the south, to Lake al-Bardawil in Sinai, and go beyond that to Port Said, Port Fu'ad and even Alexandria, and no restrictions inhibited them. They would stay at sea for days, after which they would bring out an abundant catch of all types of various fish, inundating the markets so they would get to all classes of society at comfortable prices which were as agreeable as the treatment the fishermen would receive. Tax officials would not persecute them and they were not hemmed in military patrols going about on the coasts, towers of soldiers overseeing the coasts, or "military launch" cruisers plying the seaswells, stopping the fishermen from time to time and subjecting them, with their modest vessels, to many dangers such as death, arrest or detention of the fishing vessels used for fishing. That is, fishermen were people with high incomes in the material and psychological sense and even in terms of sacrifice.

The strip's fish production at the end of 1966 came to about 1,700 tons, that is, had a value of 100,000 Egyptian pounds.

Fishing after the June 1967 Setback

Then came 6 June 1967, which is not just to be considered the end of the honeymoon for Gaza fishermen but was also the beginning of the entry of a new era which was imposed by the Israeli occupation to make the occupation of fishing, with the income it brought for fishermen in particular and the Gaza Strip in general, proceed to decline until it reached the zero point. What is meant here by this difficult number is that what fishing yields up now scarcely covers its expenses. This of course is what every occupation force anywhere wants, and what the Israeli occupation force has done in other economic areas is the best evidence.

After 80 days of occupation, the commander of the Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip and northern Sinai area, Mordechai Gur, issued a military order known by the title of "an order concerning instructions on fishing." That contained a stipulation of levies for annual fishing permits and concentrated all the powers granted to the high commissioner or the Egyptian governor general in the hands of the Israeli occupation authorities. Anyone violating the provisions of this order or the statutes would be punished by imprisonment for a period of 2 years or a fine of 5,000 Israeli pounds, or both penalties together.

Therefore we find that the fine is exorbitant. It equals 500 dinars, in addition to arrest for a period of 2 years. The authorities' start in restricting the activities and work methods of the fishermen in the area relied on this order.

Ocean Swimming -- Restrictions and Obstacles

A year after that, another order was issued concerning the regulation of swimming sites in the sea which contained a definition of places for

swimming. The authorities could stipulate the conditions they considered appropriate by themselves, based on various groups of people or groups according to their categoric assessment, and swimming could take place only in areas which had signs in Arabic and Hebrew at the swimming site.

As far as this was concerned, the fishermen believed that it was not a matter of more than a purely organizational process, but the actual situation established the opposite, through the constant deterioration of their conditions.

Another order was then issued, 208 in number, regarding fishing, stipulating that anyone who fished or was on a boat used for fishing had to carry a valid annual fishing permit on his person and that everyone had to register on it, before the boat went out to sea, and on its return to the port, the date and hour of his departure and return and the number of persons in the boat upon its departure and return. No one could take a boat out for fishing from his port for the purpose of fishing or engaging in any activity whatever unless the abovementioned details of the departure were recorded in advance. It was incumbent on everyone who fished that he inform the competent authorities immediately on his return to the coast of the quantity and types of fish he had caught, and no one could anchor a fishing vessel except in harbors which the competent authorities stipulated from time to time. Everyone who fished at night by boat had to illuminate the boat all during his stay at sea, and if anyone present on the fishing boat committed a crime in accordance with any legislation or security legislation, the owner of the boat or whoever received it from him would be considered a partner in this crime and could be accused of committing it. This order went into effect on 28 May 1968.

Sources of Livelihood Become Strained and the Reason Is Security, of Course

From this order, it is clear that the authorities started to tighten the noose around fishermen and even the quantities caught, preparatory to striking out at this source of income in the sector under the pretext of security and the regulation of fishing.

The flow of military orders did not stop. On 21 September 1974, a military order was issued stipulating that no one could go about in a fishing vessel or be present except within the boundaries of just 8 miles out into the sea.

The order pretended to ignore that fishermen here do not have modern fishing machinery and equipment, except for what the occupation authorities themselves allow! That is, access to development had been suspended with the termination of the honeymoon for the strip's fishermen in 1967. The restrictions imposed left no opportunity for renovation in the framework of the bad economic and political circumstances, and the authorities did not take into consideration what the needs of the people present and their love of survival dictated, which made them seek to eke out a daily livelihood since hunger is an infidel and fishermen do not go to sea and embark on an adventure with their lives in the midst of its terrors in order to come back empty-handed. Therefore their lives have been a struggle between themselves and the fish in the midst of the waves which is not measured by depths and distances.

Another Military Order

As part of the series of military orders regarding fishing instructions, another military order was issued at the beginning of April 1974 regarding people present on fishing boats, stipulating that everyone would have to have a document on his person proving that it had been signed by the signature of a defense army officer in the course of performing his duty which would contain data regarding the location where the fishing boat was situated. Preliminary evidence of its content would be drawn from this at any trial held regarding crimes committed in accordance with all security legislation.

What is a fisherman to do here if there is a stormy sea and he loses the necessary papers and what he had gone after? Will what he catches compensate him for the cost of the arrest or the exorbitant fine?

Then a number of orders and instructions restrictive of fishing and fishermen were issued after that. These spelled out the relationship between the departure and return and the fishing site on the coast and stipulated that the period for ocean fishing could not exceed 60 hours between the time of registration of the departure and return by the fish inspector, provided that the fisherman's return to his location on land be before dusk. Here we say, once again, that if something bad happens to a fisherman at sea at night, such as a stormy sea or the outbreak of a storm, what will he do? Shall he stay until he finally drowns, or shall he take a chance and end up with bullets from the army overseeing the coasts?

Here the fisherman Tawfiq Miqdad said, "We are prohibited from going to sea or coming out of it at night, and if any of us approaches the coast during the hours of prohibition, he is pursued and can be imprisoned and brought to military court. This constitutes a great obstacle to us. For example, at night, when a gale blows, the people overseeing the coast at a distance from our vessel contact the authorities and turn on lights on the coast to help the people who are at sea be guided to the place of departure, and this is one of the worst moments for fishermen.

"This assistance is given when the circumstances are propitious for using fishermen's overseers on the coast. In the event they are not present, under any circumstances, what awaits them at sea when the winds rage, or if the overseers have not noticed what the fishermen are suffering from far out at sea, if we consider that we find, among the instructions issued to the fishermen, that fishermen must stay at a distance from the coast, proceeding the distance of a mile out to sea at night, and are prohibited from leaving for the coast? The hours of the prohibition in which fishermen are forbidden to come out to shore have also been defined by military orders. These are that the curfew will start at 1700 hours in the evening and end at 0500 hours in the morning, that is, a period of 12 hours."

A Discussion of Figures and Obvious Proof

In the context of the restrictions that have been imposed on fishermen in the Gaza Strip, we find that there are 1,050 fishermen there holding fishing

permits at the end of 1985 and the beginning of this year, while there were 1,250 fishermen the year before -- that is, a drop of 200 fishermen from the previous year. That shows us the extent of the slaughter as far as people working in the fishing profession in the strip go, which comes to 16 percent of the fishermen alone. The following table [sic] shows the number and types of fishing vessels in the strip:

Launches: The Number of Fishermen and Their Equipment

As regards launches, these are the most important means for fishing used in the sector and their price comes to 12,000 to 30,000 dinars. We do not find fishermen owning launches individually; rather, there is a group of partners along with them. There are three types of launch, and each type has its own function. There are trolling or dragging launches, wide-net launches and launches with fishing poles:

1. Trolling or dragging launches.

These are the least-used and most expensive launches in the strip. Their price comes to 30,000 dinars; they are equipped with a motor and have the ability to go out to sea. They are equipped with a large net weighed down with lead and six to eight fishermen work on them. The fishing process takes place when the net is thrown into the water and its sides weighed down by lead reach the floor of the sea, the sand. The launch drags this net behind itself so that it can haul the different types of fish it finds on its route which are present or live in the depths. In order to carry out its work as thoroughly as possible, this launch requires large areas free of rocks, which obstruct and paralyze the process of dragging the net. Therefore this type of launch, in spite of its high cost, now works only rarely in the strip, for the reasons we mentioned above. Among the types of fish which it is well known for catching are shrimp, red mullet, eels, (marmir), (danis) and some other types which fall into the net.

2. Wide-net launches.

The price of a single launch comes to about 18,000 dinars; aside from a motor, it is equipped with lights and nets. The price of a wide net alone comes to about 1,000 dinars. About 15 fishermen work on the launch and it operates only with the help of four to five boats which are propelled by oar. The fishing process takes place when the lights present on the auxiliary boats are lit in a process where the fish which the launch catches by means of the net are surrounded. It empties them in the auxiliary boats, which ultimately it draws behind itself to the shores. Among the types that this launch is known for catching are such fish that swim close to the surface as sardines, tuna, (tarakhun), (malitah), (ghawbas), ('aryan) and striped mullet.

3. Launches with fishing poles.

The price of a single launch comes to 10,000 to 15,000 dinars. These are the launches that are used most on the strip. Four or five fishermen work on them and they are used to catch large fish by poles. They are well known for catching sea bass, (faridan), sharks, (jarr) and (miskar).

In spite of this, we find that the authorities impound 25 percent of the launches. The trolling (dragging) launches do not work because there is no suitable space and area for the nature of their work. Therefore, we find that the launches that are working come to no more than 50. These launches work during the fishing season, which lasts about 3 months in the summer only.

With respect to other boats, especially those called feluccas, these work as auxiliaries to wide-net launches and spread out nets in the water, and their cost does not exceed 800 dinars, since they do not use motors or any machinery and rely on oars for their propulsion.

The rowboats are small in size; their price comes to about 1,200 dinars and they run on a motor whose power has been specified by the authorities not to exceed 20 horsepower. Two fishermen work on them, and their function is similar to that of the pole launches, though on a smaller scale because of their small size and their minor load capacity. These rowboats are among the most numerous types of fishing vessels in the strip and are subject to impounding by the authorities.

The Rafah Fishermen -- The Ones Who Suffer the Most

The fishermen of the town of Rafah are considered the ones who are most subject to harassment by the authorities, especially with the erection by authorities of border fences which have divided the town into two halves. The Rafah coast has become almost prohibited to fishing, and the fishermen set out to sea off Khanyunus and Dayr al-Balah. In Rafah there are about 15 fishing rowboats impounded on grounds that they either crossed the borders or did not conform to the specifications the authorities consider appropriate.

Two fishermen whose boats the authorities had impounded some months ago on the charge of crossing the borders related to me, as the Israeli military court continued to look into the matter, the statement "The cruiser stopped us while we were in the area north of the town of Khanyunus, near the coast. They impounded our identity cards and the cruiser officer in charge asked us to inform him of the number of the rowboat which had been going south. However, we did not know; we are not coast guards. He said, 'Wait here' and went off to pursue the boat. When he did not find it, he came back to us and ordered a military patrol on the coast to detain us and the rowboat. Each of us is providing for a large family; the case previously was before the Khanyunus military court, then was transferred to Gaza, then returned to Khanyunus." The two men wondered, "The charge directed against us was that of crossing the borders. The cruiser confronted us as we were fishing north of the town of Khanyunus. How would it be if it had stopped us in the waters of the area of the town of Rafah? We are now awaiting the release of our boat and have no work except for fishing."

The Israeli military court in Gaza is also now looking into the case of the fisherman Ibrahim 'Abdallah al-Bardawil, who is charged with having attempted to remove a rowboat impounded by the authorities inside a fence specially set out for impounding vessels, changing its number and color and putting

another rowboat in its place during the day on 17 August 1984, although there is no difference between the two boats except for the numbers, and they are both fit for fishing. This prompted the authorities to impound the two boats together under this charge, and they are still being impounded. Ibrahim al-Bardawil, who is 50, provides for a family consisting of 13 people.

The fisherman Muhammad Matar Bakr, 55, stated, in the society of fishermen in Gaza, "I have been engaged in fishing for 45 years and I have a wide-net launch on which there are 15 workers, in addition to two launches with poles, in partnership, in which there are 10 fishermen. The wide-net launch has operated only a month in the past year, as has the launch with poles. The authorities previously impounded the two launches in 1984. There is no launch at sea which has not been subjected to impounding by the authorities. All fishing vessels have been impounded in the past by the authorities and most of the charges are that they have crossed the borders with Egypt. However, in reality that was not the case, since most of the boats were seized within our borders."

The fisherman 'Abdallah Hamid Miqdad said "A boat has been impounded for 7 months on grounds that the power of the motor is greater than stipulated; the rowboat was impounded for this reason. I look after a family of six people and have no work other than fishing. Now, I go about in the sea with others so that I will be able to look after the family until my boat is released."

The impounding of boats within fences on land has not been a temporary punishment for fishermen; rather, as a result of being exposed for a long time and because of the humidity of the coast, many fishing vessels are deprived of their usefulness and consequently that leads to blatant loss which comes to hundreds of dinars. In addition, there is another method the authorities pursue against fishing vessels, not permitting fishermen to leave them anchored in the water, making them bring them out onto the coast by boat-drawing tractors. This also causes the wood they are made of to decompose as a result of being dragged over the sand and the coral on the shore. In addition, there is the severe effort and the cost which they pay the owner of the tractor operating especially for this purpose. In addition, returning the boat to the water after it has been exposed to the sun causes it to get cracked, which shortens the life of the boat in spite of the exorbitant cost. All the fishermen, or those who added, "Keeping our boats in the water close to the shore will not drain the sea or disturb security," are unanimous about this.

By Order of the Authorities Each Launch Has Its Own Color and Features

In addition, it is also worth pointing out that the authorities last year required that each area paint its boats with a distinctive color which is different from the other color of the other area. In addition, the process of buying a new launch or boat is prohibited and the traffic laws that apply to taxis apply to fishing vessels, especially regarding the difficulty of obtaining new numbers. Therefore, fishermen whose boats rot and reach the end of their practical life are restricted to bringing in similar boats

which conform to the specifications of the previous ones, and they transfer the old numbers to the new boats.

Thus the extent of the restrictions imposed on the process of development and the extent to which fishermen are compelled to keep their boats as they were for 20 years becomes apparent to us.

The Fishermen's Society

There is a single society for fishermen in the Gaza Strip whose headquarters are the city of Gaza. It contains 380 fishermen who own fishing boats and tries to offer them services such as fishing equipment and some auxiliary marketing and production techniques. In spite of that, it does not include all fishermen. The chairman of the society, Muhammad Zaqut, said, "The fishermen in the Gaza Strip look after about 50,000 people, not to speak of fish merchants and truckers."

Concerning the fishermen's problems, he said, "The fishing area is restricted and the process of impounding boats prompts the owners of boats that are not impounded to refuse to go out to fish, lest they meet the fate of the boats that are impounded."

Concerning the failure to expand in adding new fishing boats, he said, "We have not solved the existing problems of the boats so that we could think about adding new ones. Boats in violation remain impounded for a period of 6 months, and after that they emerge from the impounding unfit for use. Three years ago soldiers who were on the cruiser fired at a wide-net launch in an area which was not prohibited and not outside the borders, but rather was off the coast of the city of Gaza. In the course of that two fishermen were wounded and the launch was hit also. A committee for investigation appeared; we have not heard that it has done anything."

Concerning the projects the society offers to fishermen, Abu Zaki said, "This year the execution of the project to establish a concentrated market for selling fish on the seacoast of Gaza on an area of a donum will start. In addition, equipment has been purchased to make an ice plant and refrigerator for storing fish."

He ended his conversation: "The fishermen's condition is wretched because there is no fishing and living conditions are difficult. The fishermen have no alternative income and need better attention."

A Meeting with the Elder of the Fishermen

Here it is necessary to refer to the elder among the fishermen in the Gaza Strip, al-Hajj 'Abdallah al-Bardawil, 96, who started fishing when he was 10 -- that is, has been engaged in fishing about 86 years. On the subject of fishing, he said, "I was active in fishing at the time of the Ottoman government, up to the present time, the time of the Israeli occupation, during which fishing has reached the worst of conditions. Production has diminished, the area has narrowed and the restrictions have become numerous. I had not all my life expected that fishing would reach this bad state."

He reminisced, "In the past I liked to fish in the sea. It was the best occupation at that time in spite of the primitive means we used, since fishing was done by oars and hand, as there were no launches. When I turned 20, we would stretch from Jaffa to the north to the south of Sinai and the area of the south was full of fish. We would spend 2 weeks at sea without finding anyone who asked us about what we were doing. We were free to act, in total freedom. We often received encouragement to fish from officials, from the Turks, English or Egyptians, and would catch all types of fish and market them in al-Majdal, Jaffa, Gaza and Jerusalem. Now, however, the conditions have changed and restrictions have increased to the point where many people have turned away from the occupation of fishing and have gone to work in other fields. Now all the laws are against us, the contrary of what was in the past. We would hunt pigeons and now that has become forbidden. If it were not for the vegetable farming work the fishermen do, the fishermen would not have waited and there would have been no fishing."

He added, "Now I hate the sea and the municipality now rents it out to a merchant, which pays it an annual sum. The problems of fishermen are numerous and there are no breadwinners among them. The area is restricted and if you look out at night in the summer you will observe hundreds of lights of fishing boats assembled on a single spot. This is a curse from God."

The Standard of Living Has Dropped to an Excessive Degree

The fisherman Hasan Abu 'Awdah stated, "The fishermen's standard of living dropped to a great extent after the Israeli occupation in 1982. The permits of any people approaching the borders are withdrawn for a period of 6 months and they are imprisoned and brought to trial and pay exorbitant fines. The vessels are impounded and the fishermen could not earn expenditures for a year, were it not for other aid from people."

Abu 'Awdah works as a "foreman" on a wide-net launch and looks over its equipment shortly before going to sea. He said, "I inspect the launch. It must be supplied with fuel, motor oil, cooling and drinking water, lighting equipment and net spinners, as well as tea and covers. The basic food at sea is fish."

Concerning the manufacture of launches, the fisherman Ibrahim al-Ghamuri said that their cost was exorbitant and there was no one to manufacture them because capital did not exist and there was no entity to help the fishermen.

Here it is necessary to point out that the fishing areas on which the fishermen of the strip relied in the past begin west of the town of Khanyunus and go up to Lake al-Bardawil in south Sinai. The fishermen would stay at sea a number of nights and no entity would oppose them.

This has been a brief glimpse at fishing in the Gaza Strip, which was famous for fishing, and at the conditions of the fishermen who are now suffering from the two things, the nature and terrors of the sea and the restrictions of the authorities with their various laws, which a person lacks even the ability to comprehend. One fisherman told me "It is difficult for fishermen to change the occupation of fishing by moving over to another alternative

occupation from which we can get expenditures for ourselves. I am afraid that these fishermen will face a day in which they find that the sea the authorities have surrounded with a wall of iron is not just keeping fishermen from fishing but also keeping them from seeing the sea which they have loved and adopted as a sole source for obtaining their daily sustenance, or this sea will be turned into military barracks or a settlement, same as they have done on land."

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CSO: 4404/274

28 April 1986

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

PAPER REPORTS ON 'UNDERGROUND WAR OF LIQUIDATION'

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 26 Mar-1 Apr 86 pp 12-15

[Article: "Exclusive Report: Israeli Frogmen Bomb Palestinian Bases in Algerian Port of Annaba and Italian Port of Genoa"]

[Text] AL-MAJALLAH is publishing an exclusive report on the latest and most serious chapter in the underground war of liquidation between the Palestinian resistance and Israeli intelligence agencies in the Mediterranean basin.

About two weeks ago, the Italian city of Genoa awakened to explosions in its port. When security forces rushed to the scene, they found two docked Palestinian ships a total wreck.

A few months ago, a group of Israeli frogmen aboard modern boats slipped into the Algerian port of Annaba where they blew up another two Palestinian ships.

How were these two operations carried out? Why did Israel refrain from announcing them? Why did the Palestinian resistance remain silent? And why did Algeria refrain from broadcasting the news of this aggression?

In this report, AL-MAJALLAH answers all these questions.

In a special session that included a number of Palestinian and Arab officials, it was mentioned that the PLO was seriously thinking about reconsidering the "Cairo Declaration" in which the organization pledged to stop special commando operations outside occupied Palestine after the "other party," Israel, breached an "agreement" certain regional and international sides had included in this regard.

AL-MAJALLAH has obtained a report disclosing the reasons that compelled the PLO to take this step and the nature of Israel's breach of this "agreement."

The aforementioned report is of great importance and sheds light for the first time on the latest chapter in the secret Palestinian-Israeli confrontation which has intensified since the famous "Larnaca operation" last year.

So what does this report contain? And what is the nature of the hitherto unpublished information it contains?

Last month, two ships were docked at the Italian port of Genoa, hoisting the flags of two countries that have nothing to do, directly or indirectly, with the Middle East conflict.

The port authorities thought that these two small ships were ordinary passenger ships used for short small cruises. Suddenly, at daybreak on a March day, loud explosions shook this calm port. Employees and guards scurrying in all directions found these two ships a total wreck, sinking gradually into the sea amid flames and smoke that rose into the air.

Investigations began from the very moment. At first, eyes were focused on the liquidations that were going on in Italy between drug gangs and the Mafia. However, it did not take long before the investigation began to narrow when it became clear that these incidents were but a new episode in the secret war ranging violently between the PLO and Israel and a mere extension of the bloody struggle on the eastern Mediterranean shores between Israeli intelligence and Palestinian agencies.

Although Israel and the PLO have remained silent about this incident--and so have competent Italian security agencies--these events have nonetheless opened the public's eyes to other cases and to more violent, more effective and more dangerous raids against vital Palestinian targets in an Arab country which is distant from the area of conflict in the Middle East. At daybreak on a similar day a few months ago, the Algerian coastal city of Annaba awakened to the noise of explosions that rocked its silence and brought to mind the days of confrontation between the French colonialist forces and the Algerian National Liberation Front commandos.

Annaba is thousands of miles away from occupied Palestine and Algeria is considered to be at the forefront of the militarily-powerful and security-capable countries. Nonetheless, and reminiscent of the surprise Israeli air raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor on the outskirts of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, Israeli "commandos," who were landed by gunboats outside Algeria's territorial waters, slipped into the port of Annaba where they destroyed two Palestinian ships docked there in preparation for an operation in the direction of the occupied territory.

How? And How?

How did these boats get to the boundaries of Algerian territorial waters? What routes did they follow and from what bases did they depart?

Answers to these questions do not go beyond speculation. One theory is that battleships transported these boats these long distances between the shores of occupied Palestine and the Algerian shores. And since Israel does not have strategic battleships able to undertake such an action, the common belief is that Israel obtained some kind of facilities from other sides.

Another view is that these gunboats, which transported the Israeli frogmen to the Algerian military port of Annaba, took off for their targets in stages, stopping at one point at military bases in the Mediterranean.

Whatever the ways and means of transporting the Israeli boats and frogmen to their targets may have been, information included in the aforementioned report noted only material losses. It said nothing about whether the raid resulted in the loss of life or the capture of the attackers, Palestinian commandos or guards that were supposed to have been guarding this port and the ships docked in it.

But what prompted the competent parties and international sides that must have known about this operation to remain silent and not disclose any details surrounding it? This too is subject to viewpoints and interpretations. There are numerous analyses and explanations, none of which can be ascertained. What is definite, however, is that the Algerian government watched this operation with its utmost interest, especially since it is one of the few Arab countries that embraced the Palestinian resistance, even prior to its rise, and opened their military colleges and army camps at an early date to a large number of the most distinguished Palestinian strugglers, including Abu 'Ali Iyad, who was martyred in the Jordan thicket in the summer of 1971, and Abu Sabri, who was martyred at that time as well. This is in addition to another number of first and second-line leaders who now occupy sensitive positions in the Palestinian resistance.

It is well-known that Algeria is one of a very small number of Arab countries that opened its arms to Palestinian commandos following their departure from Beirut in the fall of 1982 and set up high-quality training camps for them, such as the Taybisah rehabilitation camp where they receive training in modern sophisticated weapons. Within this framework, it appears that the Palestinian navy had a share in setting up training bases at some Algerian ports, including the aforesaid Annaba which was the target of the aforementioned Israeli military operation.

Whereas these two aforementioned Israeli operations, the one in the Italian city of Genoa and the other in the Algerian port of Annaba, have been kept under wraps for one reason or another, it is definite that they are neither the beginning nor the end of the affair. Palestinian information provided AL-MAJALLAH indicates that Israel, during the last three years, succeeded in hijacking 12 Palestinian gunboats and ships and undertook scores of attempts to get to Palestinian naval positions in places far from the shores of occupied Palestine, including those located in Democratic Yemen.

Following last year's Palestinian-Israeli naval confrontation which resulted in the death or injury of 18 Palestinian commandos, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres claimed that Israel had captured enough Palestinian naval units to form a complete fleet of new yachts!

In retaliation for the destruction and hijacking of some Palestinian naval units, the resistance in turn has succeeded, during the last two years in particular, in directing painful blows at the Israeli navy, including the destruction of a number of gunboats in confrontations near the shores of occupied Palestine and Lebanon. This is in addition to some special successful operations such as the famous Larnaca operation against three Israeli intelligence officers, including Sylvia Raphael, the woman said to be responsible for

the assassination of martyr Abu Hasan Salamah, a Black September leader and the main founder of Force 17.

A quick look at the list of Palestinian operations reveals that special Israeli operations were once undertaken normally either to preempt a Palestinian operation under preparation, to hit strategic bases before they were built or to pursue a Palestinian group in revenge for a successful operation in order to assassinate the surviving members of the famous "Munich" operation. One of this operation's heroes was found poisoned in a country in the region a few months ago.

Struggle in the Dark

While these mutual operations are usually undertaken by special forces trained in a specific type of combat action, pursuits, chases and targetting are undertaken by security agencies that often struggle in the dark, such as the Israeli "Mosad" and its subordinate agencies, on one side, and Palestinian security agencies and their subordinate agencies, on the other side.

The Israeli intelligence agency structure--which in addition to the Mosad includes the Public Security Administration, "Shin Be"; the Intelligence Corps, Haman; the Military Intelligence Agency, Aman; the Foreign Ministry's Political Research Department; and the World Jewry Administration in the Ministry of Immigration--is based on a theory which says: "A time will come when the first line of defense for small nations will be knowledge. Israel depends more on comprehensive and accurate knowledge of the activities undertaken by its enemies than on its artillery, fighters and naval and air fleets. Moreover, it is impossible to fight hostile actions at home and abroad by military force alone. Thus, there is dire need for a strong and highly efficient intelligence agency that operates in total secrecy and compares to other intelligence agencies throughout the world, because Israel's survival, first and foremost, depends on it."

Ever since the creation of the Zionist entity in occupied Palestine, successive Israeli leaders have made tireless efforts to strengthen the Mosad. This was started under the supervision of Ben Gurion personally who made the term "special tasks" the official motto of this agency, due to the fact that the range of its activity was circumscribed outside the scope of other state agencies, both military and civilian.

To realize just how important various security and intelligence agencies are to Israel, it must be noted that the task of overseeing them is entrusted directly to the prime minister, the ministerial committee for security affairs, the Knesset security and foreign affairs committee and the chairman of the higher committee for security agencies.

To demonstrate the nature of these agencies' work, it must be pointed out that the Mosad is in charge of running espionage networks, planting and recruiting agents and gathering information about desired targets, while the "Shin Be" is in charge of internal security. As for Political Investigations and Military Intelligence, they are in charge of counterterrorism and planning special operations.

In 1972, due to the expansion of Palestinian resistance activities, and in an attempt to curb such activities, then Israeli Prime Minister Gold Me'ir, created a new position of advisor to the prime minister for special operations. Aharon Yariv was the first one to occupy this position. He was vested with absolute powers to make use of various Israeli security agencies and to coordinate among them so as to direct some painful blows to the Palestinian resistance through assassinations and special operations against offices, leaders, headquarters and influential persons. At first, a special team, called the "liquidation team," was formed out of 15 elements which were distributed over 5 groups consisting of 2 or more persons, with each group in charge of a specific task: one for providing cover during pullout, another for surveillance, a third for attack, and a fourth for communication. These groups have been tasked with pursuing PLO cadres and leaders in European countries.

To manage these groups and coordinate their activities with those of other agencies, an operations room was formed under the chairmanship of Golda Me'ir and including Mosad Chief Zvi Zamir, Ari'el Sharon, General Maymuni, and General Avnir. The first mission of this group was to assassinate a number of Palestinian officials in Europe such as Wa'il Zu'aytar, Muhammad Bu Diya, Mahmud al-Hamshari, Basil al-Qubaysi and others. That period witnessed a bloody struggle between Israeli intelligence and Palestinian host agencies, and Palestinian retaliation against every Israeli operation was quick and effective. For example, the Israeli air attache in Washington, Colonel Yusuf Alon, was liquidated only 2 days after the assassination of Bu Diya in Paris at the end of July 1973.

Mosad has not been as successful as Israel tries to portray it, notwithstanding all the information it receives from its counterparts in the West. Israeli director of military intelligences, Yehudah Baraq, in a TV interview with Israeli TV last 16 October, following the EgyptAir hijacking to Malta, admitted the existence of continual cooperation between American and Israeli intelligence.

The most official and salient admission of the failure of Mosad and other Israeli intelligence agencies came when these agencies were held responsible for "dereliction" and confusion during the October 1973 war, when they failed to spot Palestinian and Arab movements in Lebanon despite the well-known situation in Lebanon at the time that would have allowed them to carryout substantial penetrations in the structure of the resistance and the national movement during the 1982 invasion.

The scandal of scandals with regard to Mosad occurred when its officers, in hot pursuit of martyr Abu Hasan Salamah, assassinated a low-level Moroccan employee called Ahmad Bushiki in Oslo, Norway, in 1973, mistaking him for Abu Hasan Salamah. This abortive attempt angered European public opinion and revealed Israeli disdain for international relations, particularly following the arrest of the intelligence officer who carried it out and who admitted to receiving orders from Zvi Zamir, chief of Mosad, who was operating under the direct command of Golda Me'ir and her then minister of defense, Moshe Dayan.

Palestinian Covert Agencies

These agencies are matched on the Palestinian level by three main agencies, each of which has its own special mission and domain, although these missions are intertwined by virtue of the resistance's circumstances and constant moving, whereby the undertakers of special operations are forced to use guns in face-to-face battles and those in the occupied territory are compelled to join special operations in foreign fields.

The first of the aforementioned Palestinian agencies is the Western Sector Agency, which was created during the early days of the resistance, confining its activities to the occupied territory only. This agency has been run and managed by first-line Palestinian officials such as martyr Kamal 'Udwan, who was assassinated in the well-known Verdun operation in Beirut, and Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), deputy commander of Palestinian Revolutionary Forces who still oversees its affairs.

One thing not known to many is that Fatah Central Committee member, martyr Majid Abu Sharar, who was assassinated in Rome 9 October 1981, served as first assistant to Abu Jihad and was charged, besides attending an Arab information conference in the Italian capital at the time, with a mission related to occupied territory affairs.

This agency's work is marked by complete secrecy due to the gravity and delicateness of the missions entrusted to it. Abu Jihad and other officials who assist him will not disclose anything in this regard, refusing to utter a single word about the nature and scope of their work. Quite often, and in order to demonstrate this point, this agency does not issue any statements regarding operations it undertakes, preferring to attribute them to other parties and groups rather than running the risk of any of its elements falling into the hands of Israeli intelligence.

The second agency is the Security Agency, with its many branches and subordinate agencies. It is similar to the Western Sector Agency from the standpoint of secrecy, but is radically different in the nature of its work. While the main bailiwick of the Western Sector Agency is the occupied territory, the territory occupied since 1948, in addition to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the Security Agency's bailiwick is limited to preventive measures, protection of resistance leaders, countering penetrations within revolutionary ranks, and retaliation against Israeli operations in foreign arenas.

Force 17

With regard to Force 17, which was founded by Abu Hasan Salamah, it was created for a specific mission: to provide protection for Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat. However, it soon expanded its activities, in accordance with subsequent developments, to assume several tasks at the same time on the eve of the departure from Beirut. Hence, its work is over in some of its aspects and covert in other aspects.

In addition to providing protection for the PLO leader, this force which, according to what its current commander, Colonel Abu al-Tayyib says, is 4,000 strong, joined the daily battles during the seige of Beirut, turning into motorized and special forces, in addition to the intelligence role it took upon itself, particularly in the early eighties.

In a special interview with AL-MAJALLAH, Abu-al-Tayyib said that the nature and mission of his forces impose on them both overt and covert natures, "for these forces were mostly above ground during their presence in Beirut and represented the iron hand of the Palestinian leadership, be it in curbing internal violations, providing protection, or participating in daily battles."

Abu-al-Tayyib pointed out that, following their departure from Beirut, these forces assigned themselves new tasks, adding to their other duties the task of establishing underground bases in the occupied territory and polarizing scores of Palestinian youth through their incessant operations.

Abu-al-Tayyib said that Force 17, which he described as "nothing more than another arm of the Fatah movement," was forced to enter the door of foreign operations at an early stage. He affirmed that he himself was a target of Israeli intelligence, which trailed him and mailed him letter bombs under the name "Tayyib Bil Kharuf" during the well-known 1974 letter bomb mail campaign which included Bassam Abu Sharif, a PFLP leader, and Anis Sayigh, former director of the Palestinian Research Center.

Abu-al-Tayyib disclosed that Israel succeeded at the last minute in foiling an attempt by Force 17 to destroy the Israeli nuclear reactor right after the delivery of chemical material shipments used in the nuclear field from the "Strobter" plant in West Germany to "Holon" south of Tel-Aviv in occupied Palestine.

The Force 17 leader confirmed that his forces are manufacturing some mines and detonators used to set off bombs and explosions inside the occupied territory and that, in addition to foreign and occupied territory operations, they take part in operations against Israel in southern Lebanon. He mentioned that these forces, in coordination with some Lebanese resistance groups, are responsible for firing missiles at Israeli settlements in occupied Galilee.

At the conclusion of his interview, Abu-al-Tayyib emphasized that the next stage will be the stage of large-scale quality operations and that the modus operandi will exceed the planting of mines and liquidations by silencers, knives and individual weapons, adding: "You will soon hear, God willing, some happy and joyous news."

The Israeli Breach

Returning to the subject of the "agreement" Israel had breached, AL-MAJALLAH information indicates that the "Cairo Declaration," in accordance with which foreign operations were to be halted, was contingent on an Israeli pledge to halt such operations against Palestinian targets. This information points out

that Egypt informed the Palestinians that the Israeli Government, following contacts in this regard, had expressed its readiness to accept this condition.

A few weeks later, however, Israel breached this agreement when it carried out the aforementioned Genoa operation which destroyed two unarmed ships which it seems were on their way to join the Palestinian navy after their purchase from a European country.

Israel had breached a similar agreement reached under Italian auspices following lengthy discussions between Italian officials and a senior Palestinian official to abstain from any operations on Italian soil when its agencies carried out the assassination of Majid Abu Sharar in 1981 and Major Isma'il Darwish last year.

Information provided AL-MAJALLAH by highly-placed Palestinian quarters confirms that the coming days will witness exciting episodes in the underground war between the Palestinian resistance and Israeli intelligence agencies, particularly following the Palestinian decision to tacitly abrogate the "Cairo Declaration" because of Israel's failure to honor its terms.

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CSO: 4404/276

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

ASPECTS OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL FUND DETAILED

Nicosia FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 1 Mar 86 pp 14-16

[Interview with Jawid al-Ghusayn by Yusuf Hasan: "Jawid al-Ghusayn Offers Status Report on Palestinian Treasury"; in Amman, date not specified]

[Text] The Palestinian National Fund [PNF] performs several services in the life of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territory. At the same time, the president of the fund goes to great lengths in his search for new revenues to meet the needs of this financial institution so that it may continue to perform its numerous tasks.

FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH's correspondent in Amman had the following interview with Jawid al-Ghusayn, PLO executive committee member and president of the PNF, which is currently based in Amman, about the problems facing the fund.

[Question] Since you assumed this momentous job, several problems have come to light in the Arab and world press, the most important of which is the budget deficit the PNF is facing. However, there are those who claim the existence of a financial empire led by the PLO. What are the facts of this matter and what can you tell us about official Arab support for the PNF?

[Answer] The support received by the PNF is generated by levies on Palestinian workers, especially in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries, in addition to Arab assistance determined at the Baghdad summit conference.

In recent years, most Arab countries have not honored their commitments for one reason or another, but Saudi Arabia has kept paying its share in full, be it in the form of money for the PNF or assistance to the occupied territory through a joint Palestinian-Jordanian committee in the amount of \$100 million a year. As for the fund, it receives assistance from Saudi Arabia and from levies on Palestinian workers working in Arab countries.

[Question] There have been demands in Kuwait to stop aid to the PNF. What are your comments in this regard?

[Answer] The truth is that during Abu 'Ammar's recent visit to the Gulf, the Gulf countries expressed their readiness to keep up the aid. Brother Abu 'Ammar met with His Highness Shayky Jabir, the amir of Kuwait, to apprise him

of our people's situation inside the occupied territory. The amir expressed readiness to support our people there and we will continue our contacts in order to organize such aid. Brother Abu 'Ammar, accompanied by Abu Iyad, also visited the UAE where he met with His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin Sultan Al Nahayyan, president of the UAE, and His Highness Shaykh Khalifah. I was present at these meetings and Shaykh Zayid and Shaykh Kahalifah pledged to keep up the aid and put all possible capabilities at our disposal.

Fatah Covers Deficit

[Question] Some say that the PNF is the official Palestinian institution responsible for the payroll only. Is this true? If not, what other responsibilities does it have?

[Answer] There are some things about the PNF that ought to be explained. The fund expends \$39 million a year for the families of martyrs. This is a permanent obligation which keeps growing and these amounts are not enough. Fatah covers the deficit especially since the number of martyrs is on the rise. In the Hammam al-Shatt raid in Tunisia, we suffered additional loss of life, thus adding to our obligations. Add to that the victims of Israeli shelling in Lebanon whose families have to be supported. Those martyrs who lose their lives leave behind families who are supported by the PNF.

Red Crescent and Agriculture

[Question] Does the fund cover the medical expenses of the needy and students?

[Answer] The PNF spends \$13 million annually on the Red Crescent. The Red Crescent is found in a large number of countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Algeria, Yemen, Sudan, Tunis, and, of course, the occupied territory. We offer assistance to our people in the occupied territory through various means, including hospitals, universities, and schools, and other forms of aid such as the marketing of citrus fruit and agricultural products. We made great efforts to support other institutions in our occupied territory so that they may continue their philanthropic work. The fund also takes care of cultural affairs and the Palestinian heritage, covering the expenses of numerous endeavors in many fields.

New Pay Scale

[Question] With regard to salaries, what are the chances for a pay raise, taking into account the many large expenses the fund has to meet?

[Answer] A new pay scale has been drawn up. It was considered in a PNF session during the fund's meeting in Amman 6 February 1986. Although the PLO is facing a formidable financial problem, there are human considerations that have to be considered. Ever since I assumed my responsibilities, we have been trying to treat this problem at a time when the fund is facing a drop in revenues. Notwithstanding such a drop and a budget deficit, we must find a solution to the problem facing the PLO workers due to inflation and the high cost of living. We drew up a work plan and a new pay scale which were

submitted to the PNF for approval and they were ratified. We are in the process of adopting the necessary measures for their implementation.

Responsibility Falls on Our Missions

[Question] The PNF is famous for its good management in transferring money for workers all over the world and to PLO offices and other agencies, quarters, and individuals who are paid or assisted by the fund. However, some managers claim that transfers are not received on time. What suggestions do you have to control the fund's revenues and work?

[Answer] There is no fraud in the PNF. There are sometimes excesses in the budget such as telephone bills, guest offices, car repairs, and other such excesses represented in overspending. We are dealing with such practices as they occur, taking into consideration that the 1981 budgets are no longer realistic in view of the 20-30 percent inflation rate in the last 5 years. This rate has not been factored in because we are still applying the 1981 budgets. We are conducting a study now to draw up new precepts for these offices on a monthly or quarterly basis, always making sure that they get a month's expense account in advance to cover any delays. The offices submit their expense accounts on a regular basis and we transfer to them the value shown on their expense accounts. Failure to meet one's obligations, however, forces us to take action against the perpetrators. All expenses must be backed by receipts. As for salaries and running expenses, they are transferred promptly. However, if an office fails to submit receipts and a statement of expenses, there will be a delay. We want all of them all over the world to submit their monthly expense accounts to the fund so that deposits may be made.

Communities...Communities

[Question] Do Palestinian emigrants, in Latin and South America for instance, support the PNF?

[Answer] Contributions by our brothers in America and Europe are almost nil. It is true that some may offer some services to our offices in these countries, but this is not support in the full sense of the word. Efforts are underway to reach these communities whereby many of them have been brought together through social and cultural clubs established in the last 2 years.

We want these communities to get together to organize their efforts in undertaking services, awareness campaigns, medical care, and assistance to needy families. Our success in this field means success in creating a true bond among our people. There are funds in North and South America that have begun bringing the Palestinians together and we in turn do our share in pulling them together to intensify their efforts.

Priority for Camps

[Question] Can you tell us something about the outcome of the fund's meetings on 6 February 1986?

[Answer] As I have already said, the PNF is the financial tool and nerve of the PLO. It is the only side that receives revenues and covers all PLO expenses. We do have many obligations, especially our responsibilities toward our people in the occupied territory in the fields of health, education, etc. Add to that the situation of our people in the camps in Lebanon who are not allowed to leave their camps to go to work. We have to provide them with schools, clinics, food, and home repairs. This is a heavy burden. Losses during the war of the camps in Lebanon last summer have been estimated at \$37 million and the fund is doing its best through UNRWA to assist these brothers and our people in Lebanon. We now hope to be able to organize our efforts in such a way as to get help to the truly needy who are not in a position to support themselves and to take care of the disabled and students everywhere.

The official headquarters of the fund was moved from Damascus to Amman right after the National Council's move.

They Are All Palestinians

[Question] With regard to those organizations that are currently in Damascus, is the fund committed to covering their expenses despite their failure to respond to PLO initiatives on national unity following the recent meetings in Baghdad?

[Answer] First of all, I would like to emphasize that the PNF covers the expenses of all PLO organizations without exception, including the Red Crescent, the families of martyrs, the army, and all offices and departments. We have covered all these expenses without interruption, in addition to the payroll of our employees and retirees. We have not fired any employees and all our workers are receiving their full allowances.

Retirement?

[Question] Does the PNF have a retirement plan?

[Answer] What we have is a provision we follow in making payments to the families of martyrs. This is a human obligation the PLO has toward these martyrs and their families.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

RELIEF AID FOR REFUGEES IN LEBANON DETAILED

Nicosia FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 1 Mar 86 pp 28-29

[Article: "Financial Support for the PLO"]

[Text] As one of the means for developing UNRWA services for our people, brother Abu 'Ammar received in Amman recently UNRWA commissioner general Mr Giacconelli and had a comprehensive discussion regarding our people's situation in Palestinian camps in the host countries, particularly in the occupied territory, in addition to the huge annual deficit in the UNRWA budget and ways to eliminate it.

On the other hand, the Beirut newspaper AL-NAHAR reported that southern sources confirmed that the PLO recently offered 1,034,400 Lebanese pounds as aid to four schools, especially in Tyre, that accommodate a number of Palestinian students from the camps.

This aid was distributed as follows:

- Al-Jihad High School, 550,300 Lebanese pounds.
- Qadmus-Hawar al-Nakhl School, 35,800 Lebanese pounds.
- Al-Najah School, 211,500 Lebanese pounds.
- Al-Ja'fariyah College, 236,800 Lebanese pounds.

It is noteworthy that the number of Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA is 2,107,108, according to October 1985 statistics.

According to a January 1986 UNRWA report, the number of Palestinian children attending UNRWA schools regularly is on the rise, by 4,800 students this year. Since the total number of teachers is not allowed to grow due to an ongoing austerity measure, classes will have to absorb the maximum number of students they can handle, depending on the size of the room, but the number is usually 50 students per class. The report said that the greatest part of UNRWA spending will be on a group of 350,000 children attending the 637 UNRWA schools.

The table below shows the number of UNRWA schools and their enrollment:

	<u>School</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Jordan	195	136,202
West Bank	98	40,344
Gaza Strip	145	86,923
Lebanon	84	35,164
Syria	<u>115</u>	<u>51,914</u>
	637	350,547

Figures from Lebanon do not include two schools that have been shut down and the number of students is approximate.

As for the UNRWA health program, it will continue to focus on basic care and the first task of the aid program will be to take care of 106,000 hardship cases of elderly and widowed individuals who depend on UNRWA for their sustenance.

The table below shows how the health program operates:

Number of UNRWS health centers	98
Number of outpatient visits a year	4.5 million
Number of families financed by UNRWA at refugee hospitals	1,400
Number of food centers	94

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

PNC CHAIRMAN DISCUSSES COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES

Nicosia FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 8 Mar 86 pp 14-16

[Interview with Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih by Yusuf Hasan: "Full-time Work for National Council"; in Amman, date not specified]

[Text] Palestinians are proud of "Palestinian advice and consent" and the people's representatives are proud to have our venerable Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih as the "chief magistrate" of Palestinian democracy.

The Palestine National Council [PNC] has become an institution of perpetual action, particularly following the 17th session which was held in November 1984 in Amman. Our correspondent in Amman interviewed His Eminence Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, chairman of the PNC, about the work of this organization which is the legislative institution of the Palestinian people everywhere.

Perpetually Active Institution

[Question] The PNC is no longer a "seasonal" institution, but has been turned into one that is active all year round, planning, watching, and calling to account and establishing new relations with friendly and Arab parliamentary institutions. What does His Eminence Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, PNC chairman, have to say about this?

[Answer] Ever since I assumed the PNC chairmanship in 1984, I have felt that I have taken upon myself a great responsibility closely related to the fate of the Palestinian national cause, particularly since our central issue is being subjected to numerous annihilation schemes at the hands of the enemies of the Palestinian people by striking at their legitimate institutions, including endeavors to take the cause and the Palestinian homeland away from the safe hands of their rightful owners. The conspirators' objective is to deprive the Palestinian people of all agencies that can bear the burdens of and responsibilities for this cause.

As I have already said, the work of the PNC, the highest Palestinian body, used to be seasonal, prior to and during its sessions. Now, the PNC is a perpetually active institution. It has set up a full-time office in Amman with department chiefs for information and documentation, a standing committee

secretariat, and a public relations department, in addition to a large legal library and other facilities that serve the PNC and the cause.

On the informational level, and at the request of PNC members, the PNC puts out a weekly bulletin, dealing with its work, contacts, and activities, which is distributed to members and PLO offices abroad. The Information Department published two pamphlets on the work of the 17th session which was held in Amman in 1984 and on PNC statutes and resolutions of the aforementioned session.

With regard to the committees that have been formed, they are, as you know, eight committees, including a legal committee, a fact-finding committee, an oversight committee, and a parliamentary affairs committee. A chairman was elected for each committee and each committee was asked to choose its own headquarters and operate in accordance with the powers vested in it by the PNC chairmanship. I would like to tell you that I have followed the activities of all of these committees and have watched them perform their duties and responsibilities, as determined by the PNC chairmanship.

Oversight Committee

[Question] But the important thing, Your Eminence, is that the committees convene regularly to discuss their work.

[Answer] Yes, most certainly. I would like to inform you that during this week (the interview was conducted in early February) the Legal Committee and the Fact-finding Committee held two meetings in Amman during which they adopted important resolutions which we will announce at a later date. The Oversight Committee will hold a meeting in Morocco soon.

[Question] What does this committee oversee?

[Answer] This committee oversees the conduct of some members charged with violations. It is instructed that they should not rely on pure rumors but depend on facts backed by statements and evidence. It maintains direct contacts with the PNC chairmanship in order to remove any obstacle that may impede it.

The PNC, in consultation with the Executive Committee and on the basis of the PNC resolutions adopted at the 17th session, has formed a central council as an intermediary between it and the Executive Committee. This time, however, this council has been vested with broader powers than before. On this basis, the Central Council has convened two sessions: one in Tunis in the aftermath of the threats against our people in the camps in Lebanon, and the other in Baghdad where discussions focused on important aspects of the Palestinian question, including Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the course the Palestinian leadership ought to follow in this regard.

God Forbid!

[Question] On occasion, some newspapers have attributed to Your Eminence the acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338. How true is this?

[Answer] (Taking off his turban and placing it on the table in disapproval, and citing a Koranic verse about hypocrites) It looks like you, I mean FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH, are the people most interested in what the mass media reports. However, I would like to quote this position of mine, an official position, on Resolutions 242 and 338. The fact is that I have not issued any statements regarding my acceptance of these two resolutions. What happened was that some press correspondents came to my office following the leadership meeting in Baghdad to ask me about the two resolutions. I told them that the PNC had decided to accept all UN and Security Council resolutions. I explained to them that in the Central Council meeting, we did not issue any separate decisions accepting 242 and 338 in isolation from other resolutions. This is our position which we will hold so long as the two resolutions do not fulfill the legitimate needs of our people, including the need for a resolution embracing their right to self-determination.

Immunity for Members

[Question] Let us talk about PNC membership, particularly following the 17th session. In the event that the PNC is required to convene another session, how inclined is it, from the legal point of view, to take in representatives who did not attend the previous session for several well-known reasons?

[Answer] At first, I say that PNC members are of two kinds: the affiliate members who represent organizations, federations, and unions, as you know, and the independents.

With regard to organization, federation, and union members, they are selected by their representatives in their organizational and union ranks and, therefore, can replace their representatives in the PNC. As for the independents, we do not have the power to replace or dismiss them. At the same time, we do not have the power to replace representatives of the aforementioned federations and organizations, according to the bylaws. Thus, when a large number of PNC members asked that some members accused of illegal and detrimental conduct be dismissed, we were unable to do so and asked the legal committee to issue a clear opinion because the PNC did not approve their dismissal, choosing instead to freeze their membership in the next council.

Occupied Territory Representatives

[Question] But with regard to council members from the occupied territory (and we do not want to mention names for obvious reasons), what are the specifications for their selection as PNC representatives for the occupied territory?

[Answer] No specific persons from the occupied homeland have been confirmed as PNC members. Some names were selected as members when the obstacle barring their appointment was removed. All PNC members living in our occupied Palestinian land are personalities who are committed to our just national cause. It is a well-known issue.

Parliamentary Relationship

[Question] What kind of relationship does the PNC maintain with Arab and friendly parliamentary federations, and is there coordination with these federations concerning the Palestinian cause?

[Answer] The PNC's relationship with the aforementioned federations has not been interrupted following the 17th session in Amman. For example, the PNC received an official invitation to attend the 15th session of the Arab Parliamentary Federation Council in Aden and I did in fact head the PNC delegation, which included brothers Salim al-Za'nun (deputy chairman of the PNC) and Khalid al-Hasan (chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee), to the federation's meeting at the end of February 1985.

The federation will hold its 16th session in Amman on 10 March 1986, and we have been invited to attend a round of new meetings by the Arab Parliamentary Federation Council.

Concerning friendly parliamentary councils, we are represented in the International Parliamentary Federation, the Arab-European Parliamentary Federation, and the Arab-African Federation. We have sent delegations to these councils, in response to official invitations, to represent the PNC. We have received an invitation from the president of the Romanian Parliament to visit the parliament and we will respond to this invitation because they are friends.

National Interest and Destiny

[Question] Should the need arise, will PNC members living in Amman call for an immediate meeting?

[Answer] Yes. We hold meetings in Amman from time to time, as necessitated by the national interest, to bring members up to date on leadership actions and initiatives related to the destiny of the Palestinian cause. The last meeting was held last January here in Amman in the presence of Abu 'Ammar and other PNC members living in Jordan.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

PLO PROTESTS FRENCH RELEASE OF TERRORISTS

Nicosia FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 8 Mar 86 pp 38-39

[Article by 'Abd-al-Latif Sulayman: "Ibrahim al-Sus Protests Release of al-Qalaq Assassins"

[Text] French authorities have failed to uncover the perpetrators of a series of recent sabotage operations in the French capital, so they have poured a great deal of their anger on foreign communities. These communities, the Arabs particularly, are living in terror and anxiety in France following the indiscriminate arrest campaign the French authorities recently waged against them, arresting 64 persons, 13 of whom have been deported without any evidence against them.

It is common knowledge that these arrests were made in the aftermath of the series of terrorist operations in France against sensitive public places that claimed scores of civilian casualties, both killed and wounded.

Why and Why Now?

What has exacerbated this climate of anxiety and terror is the French authorities' release of criminals belonging to the Abu Nidal clique who were responsible for the assassination of the two Palestinian martyrs, the PLO representative in Paris, 'Izz-al-Din Qalaq, and his assistant, 'Adnan Hammad, in 1978.

The release of these two persons came midway through their 15-year jail term.

This arrest campaign and the release of the criminals have raised a number of questions about France's policy on terrorist activities and the principles on which this policy is based.

The justification offered by the French authorities for taking this course of action, in both cases, adds to the matter's complexity and ambiguity.

Moreover, press and media disclosures are not enough to justify this policy. These media believe that the aim of the arrest campaign was to spread fear and confusion in the ranks of those circles presumed to make up the environment in which terrorists live, specifically the Arab and Islamic communities, which are accused of religious and national fanaticism.

This justification was not convincing, even to the press, especially since investigations failed to prove the existence of any kind of link between the terrorist operations and the arrests. Nonetheless, the French authorities have deported 13 persons (3 Iraqis, 4 Iranians, 3 Lebanese, and 1 Tunisian, 1 Moroccan, and 1 Kenyan).

Security sources said in justification of the deportation process that some of those people were suspect and posed a danger to public security while the others were illegal aliens in France.

Other political and security sources, however, give other justifications for this campaign which seems to be more plausible and convincing.

Electoral Objectives

These sources believe that this arrest campaign was nothing more than an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the French public. The French authorities, finding themselves unable to counteract the terrorists and uncover the thinnest thread about their intentions, believed that they had to do something, anything, to restore respect and prestige to the regime, which is facing an election campaign on the 16th of this month.

Security circles close to the regime do not rule out the possibility that the terrorist bombing operations, which were concentrated on Paris particularly, had electoral objectives and that certain fascist rightist political parties were behind these bombings in an attempt to paralyze the regime in the election campaign and point an accusing finger at Arab immigrants, who are regarded as the "spoilers" in their election campaign. These sources add that these circles have succeeded to a large degree in their terrorist tactics. The regime has failed miserably in its endeavors to uncover the criminals, thus proving its incompetence in the security field, an important and sensitive element of the election campaign. Moreover, it pointed an accusing finger at Arab immigrants even though the arrests were directed at students, from the Middle East in particular, thus indicating the regime's wish to avoid any direct action against Arab-French communities, such as the Moroccans and Algerians which have a significant voice in French elections.

Regarding the other case, that of the assassins of the former PLO representative in Paris, which was supposed to have been kept under wraps, it has brought to light two important issues in France's general anti-terrorist policy, both of which undermine the regime's prestige in the eyes of the French public and its political forces or in the eyes of the terrorist groups at home and abroad.

According to Prior Agreement

French circles have disclosed that France's release of the assassins was undertaken in accordance with a prior 1982 agreement with the operation's mastermind, which was forged on the basis that Abu Nidal would refrain from using France as a stage for his terrorist operations in exchange for the French promise to release his group midway through their jail sentence.

Other sources do not rule out the possibility that this deal included French hostages in Lebanon through Syrian intervention in this regard. Both cases have prompted negative Arab and Islamic reactions against this French policy, about which the least that can be said is that it is unclear and incomprehensible.

The Arab League office in Paris issued a statement in the name of the Arab countries, Islamic sects, and Arab communities warning the French regime that they will not stand idly by in the face of this racist instigation campaign against them which has been mounted in reply to the terrorist bombings which are condemned by Arab League members, a fact that has been totally ignored by the French authorities.

The statement made it clear that confining the alleged charge to Middle Eastern and Arab subjects has rendered all Arab and Muslims in France suspect, thus encouraging the racist campaign against them.

Al-Sus: Palestinian Protest

On the Palestinian level, the PLO office director in Paris, brother Ibrahim al-Sus, right after the release of the al-Qalaq and Hammad assassins, met with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas for an hour to file a protest with the French authorities and discuss French-Palestinian relations, which have cooled off in the last few months, particularly following the communique the French foreign minister issued during his visit to occupied Jerusalem, stating that the PLO was not the sole representative of the Palestinian people. This compelled the PLO to issue a statement at the time criticizing this communique and demanding a French explanation, thus forcing the French minister to retract his statement.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

LAWYER OFFERS ARGUMENT AGAINST GOVERNMENT IN EXILE

Jerusalem AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI in Arabic 18 Jan 86 p 21

[Article by Jurays al-Khuri: "Concerning the Government in Exile"]

[Text] In its 21 December 1985 issue, the Jerusalem magazine AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI presented the notion of establishing a Palestinian government in exile for discussion. The magazine, in the framework of its presentation of this important matter, stated that it considered that the circumstances were propitious for declaring the formation of such a government, because that was in the interest of the cause and could not bring harm on it, now that our people's progress had reached an advanced stage of the journey along a sound road, with reliance on illuminating experiences of peoples who had preceded us, and that the goal in establishing it was to express the continuity of our people's sovereignty over their national soil in spite of the occupation. That is because the government is the constitutional institution which international law considers expressive of the sovereignty latent in the people and its presence affirms this sovereignty and affirms the constant will of the people for liberation, within the notion that the establishment of such a government does not of necessity mean the elimination or removal of the Palestinian achievements and entails compliance with the desires of friendly entities. The magazine went on to say that the tasks of the government in exile are to reach agreements with countries, follow up on the legislation and conduct of adversaries and to work to thwart that. AL-BAYADIR also concluded with the opinion that the establishment of a government in exile was a political decision declared by the historic leadership in the light of Palestinian, Arab and international facts.

I would like at the start of this discussion to put it on record that the notion of establishing a Palestinian government in exile is not a new one on the Palestinian stage. The first presentation of it goes back to 1969 or 1970. After about 2 years of occupation, some writers took up the issue, and then stopped. In addition, after the October 1973 war and the stage of Camp David, Anwar al-Sadat suggested a government in exile, but his appeal did not meet with a response because al-Sadat had been led into the Camp David platform and the Palestinian masses rejected this conspiracy. Then came President Husni Mubarak, who presented it again, especially after the departure from Beirut, when he declared his readiness to host the government in exile

in Cairo. The United States of America and some of its supporters in the region have also repeatedly advocated the notion, without mentioning the Liberation Organization, out of deceit with respect to the legitimate leadership and search for Palestinian symbols among certain American Arabs, in the hopes of pulling the rug out from under the organization and creating an alternative framework which America would be pleased with. One can say that all these attempts were met with mass rejection and rejection by the legitimate leadership, and its fate was failure. However, the most dangerous suggestion in this context was embodied in the issuance of Palestinian statements in the words of some members of the National Council supporting and advocating this proposition. In mid-1983, some newspapers referred to a secret document concerning the plan for a government in exile which a group of Palestinians lecturing in some American universities had prepared, foremost among them the Jerusalem lawyer Henri Kattan. The document contained a paper consisting of the coming Palestinian political action charter and the declaration by the National Council of a Palestinian government in exile whose sole option would be political. Some bodies went so far as to nominate Walid al-Khalidi for the temporary presidency of this government.

After this introduction, let me ask your permission to move over to the heart of the subject, which is in two segments. The first deals with the legal aspect, that is, the conditions which must exist in the light of international law for establishing a government in exile, and the second deals with the objective aspect, that is, whether it is in the interests of the Palestinian revolution to establish such a government, which is what the magazine AL-BAYADIR gave the expression "suitability and timing."

From the legal standpoint, it is perhaps likely that the conditions of international law for establishing a government in exile, three or four which the magazine proceeded to mention, exist.

From the realistic standpoint, I can say that it is certain that the current circumstances are not at all propitious for the establishment of such a government, and consequently the establishment of one is not in the interests of the cause or the people. To the contrary, the declaration of its establishment will inflict real harm on the Palestine cause and the struggle of the organization as an Arab liberation movement fighting to regain its usurped national rights. In the context of expressing this view, I base myself on the following matters:

1. The declaration of a government in exile, or emigre government, will cause the polarization within the ranks of the organization to multiply, sow conflict within its wings and consecrate the split among its forces, which will divert the real struggle from its objective and course, thoroughly convulse the Liberation Organization as an Arab liberation movement and throw it onto the sidelines of history.
2. Bringing the government in exile out into the realm of actuality will transform the Palestine Liberation Organization from a revolutionary body which has the goal of gaining liberation to a political body with a diplomatic character committed to the resolutions of the United Nations and it will transfer its national struggle from the occupied regions to the podiums of conferences and symposia.

3. The government in exile will impose the political option on the Liberation Organization in place of the military one and will deprive it of its most important attributes as a revolution and as a liberation movement, make light of its national charter, reduce its magnitude and awe on the international stage, deprive it of its independence and make it subject to revolving in the orbit of the reactionary Arab countries.

4. Imitating the experiences of some peoples who established governments in exile during World War Two is a risk whose consequences are not praiseworthy. Every people has its own circumstances and characteristics and every revolution has its own facts. The Palestinian force is unique of its kind, its nature, its circumstances and its facts.

5. I do not accept on faith the fatal view that such a government is the only constitutional institution which international law views as expressive of the sovereignty latent in the people and of the continuity of the sovereignty of the people on their national soil under occupation, since, if that is true, every revolution would have declared the formation of a government in exile as soon as it was unleashed. In addition, if this view applies to governments, it does not of necessity apply to revolutions. In our own case, our people have expressed their firm and constant will to regain their nation and exercise their right to self-determination. For that reason, the sovereignty of our Palestinian people on their territory exists and is sublime, no matter how long it may take, even if it is restricted and damaged because of the occupation.

6. As to the tasks of a government in exile in terms of concluding treaties and agreements, observing adversaries' conduct and legislation, and so forth, these are tasks which our triumphant Palestinian revolution, represented by the Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of our Palestinian people everywhere they exist, carries out and engages in properly, and this is something which does not call for the establishment of a government in exile.

In summary, contrary to the conclusion the magazine AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI has reached, I do not see anything that calls for the declaration of a Palestinian government in exile at present. God is behind people's intentions.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

DEVELOPMENTS IN PALESTINIAN STUDENT UNION MOVEMENT

Al-Najah University Student Elections

Nicosia FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 1 Feb 86 pp 16-17

[Excerpt: "Report on Outcome of University Elections. Portrait of Palestinian Democracy"]

[Text] Palestinians have the right to boast to others about democracy in all their institutions, from national councils to popular federations to youth movements in their universities, all the way to elections in their charitable organizations. The Palestinians are the most democratic of peoples. As for us, we know full well that Yasir 'Arafat faces difficult questions from Palestinian fighters and brave youth and from strugglers in revolutionary bases. He is always expected to answer such questions and he does. In the occupied territory, notwithstanding the various manifestations of Israeli occupation, Palestinians hold their elections inside their institutions and celebrate their successes. Their consuming desire is to realize national unity first.

Nablus and Bir Zayt University Elections

The student council of the National al-Najah University began the new year, 1986, by holding student council elections in a "calm and democratic atmosphere," as described by dean of student affairs, Dr 'Abd-al-Razzaq Rashid.

On 7 January 1986, thousands of al-Najah University students set out to elect representatives to 11 student council seats. The number of students eligible to vote was 3,200 and the turnout was 89 percent, the highest rate in the university's history.

Four student blocs competed in these elections:

- The Martyr Sa'd Sayil Bloc - Student Youth Movement.
- The Progressive Student Front.
- The National Unity Front.
- The Islamic Bloc.

For the first time the Student Youth Movement scored a sweeping victory, winning all 11 council seats with 52 percent of the vote, or 1,511 votes. Its winning candidates were as follows:

- Khalil 'Ashr, chairman.
- Hamdan Su'ayfan, vice-chairman.
- Zuhayr Khattab, secretary.
- Musaddaq al-Masri, public relations coordinator.
- 'Abd-al-Hadi 'Uways, fiscal committee coordinator.
- Faraj Ibrahim Faraj, social committee coordinator.
- Rafiq Yunis 'Abd-al-Hamid, activities coordinator.
- Nidah Khalid Asad, university cafeteria committee coordinator.
- Mustafa Salim 'Abd-al-Fattah, public security committee coordinator.
- Ghassan Majid Daraghimah, cultural committee coordinator.
- 'Adnan Mahmud Hamdan, cultural committee coordinator.

The rest of the tickets won the following votes:

The Islamic Bloc, 1,154 votes.
 The Progressive Student Front, 300 votes.
 The National Unity Bloc, 218 votes.

It is noteworthy that the election watchdog committee was comprised of the following academic members:

Dr 'Abd-al-Razzaq Rashid, dean of students and committee chairman.
 Dr 'Abd-al-Latif 'Aql.
 Dr D. 'Awni Badr
 Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im Abu Fahuq

Right after the Youth Bloc won all student council seats, celebrations were held. The bloc viewed its victory as a triumph for Palestinian legitimacy represented by Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]. The organization and its chairman were cheered and applauded amid folklore dancing and speeches were delivered during the oratorical festivities following the elections.

In his assessment of the elections, Dr Sa'ib 'Urayqat, director of the university public relations department, said: "The elections were held in a truly democratic atmosphere where law and order prevailed. They were a triumph for Palestinian democracy prevailing among the Palestinian people who have truly earned the right to self-determination and management of their aspired-to state institution."

In Bir Zayt and Hebron

The al-Najah University elections were preceded two weeks earlier by elections at Bir Zayt and Hebron Universities where the Youth Bloc ticket won. The Youth Bloc (Tunis Martyrs Bloc) ticket at Bir Zayt University received 750 out of 2,050 votes, thus winning all student council seats, while the Democratic-Popular-Communist alliance received 700 votes and the Islamic ticket 600 votes. To mark its victory, the Youth Movement in Bir Zayt on 6 January 1985 held festivities by scout troops and torch bearers who marched around the campus amid folk dancing, patriotic songs and speeches endorsing the PLO. In this enthusiastic national climate, and intent on creating a model national student unity, the Student Youth Movement announced its readiness to give up four student council seats in favor of the other national student blocs at the university.

Islamic Bloc at al-Najah University

Kuwait AL-MUJTAMA' in Arabic 25 Feb 86 pp 24-25

[Article by Jamal al-Rashid: "Islamic Movement Inside Palestine Growing Despite all Obstacles"]

[Text] The Islamic youth in our occupied territory are moving with considerable vigor, imposing themselves on the general political and student scene despite the difficult circumstances they are facing, not only at the hands of the occupying enemy, but also at the hands of those who are supposed to be their brothers and backers. In this report, we will shed some light on the activities of the Islamic Bloc at al-Najah University in Nablus.

The Islamic Bloc was formed on 14 January 1978 as an Islamic group at al-Najah University. It included at the outset no more than several dozen young men, but God Almighty blessed it with loyal members who worked diligently to consolidate it. This attracted large numbers of students who joined the Islamic Bloc to uphold its principles, which stem from the Koran and the Sunna in word and deed. The number of sisters wearing the Islamic dress and upholding Islamic principles grew until the number of elite male and female students in the Islamic Bloc topped a thousand.

The Islamic Bloc has been subjected to many crises and tremendous pressures at the hands of the university's administration and faculty as well as other student tendencies, but it always emerges from such crises stronger and more powerful, thanks to God and the awareness of its young people.

The Islamic Bloc ran for the Student Union Council elections for several consecutive years, realizing a sweeping victory in 1980-81 when four student blocs ran for elections. In 1982-83, two blocs ran for elections: the Islamic Bloc and the National Unity Bloc that included the Youth-Student Action Front-Student Unity Bloc-Communist Party alliance which joined forces against the Islamic Bloc. The Islamic Bloc lost those elections. In 1983-84, the Islamic Bloc refused to run for the elections because the Student Union Council constitution was sectarian and biased in favor of the other tendencies. The Islamic Bloc entered into a fierce union battle with the university's administration until it was able to amend the constitution, rendering it more compatible with the interests of the students and the university.

This year's elections, 1986, were held on 7 January. The following four student blocs took part in them:

The Islamic Bloc, under the name of Martyr Shaykh 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Bloc.
The Youth Bloc, representing Fatah.

The Progressive Student Front which included the Communist Party-Popular Front-Abu Musa Uprising Alliance.

The National Unity Front representing the PFLP.

Massive efforts were made by the university administration and faculty and many other sides, within and without the university, to form a so-called national unity among tendencies opposing the Islamic Bloc, but these efforts failed due to significant political differences among these various groups.

Two days (the 5th and 6th of January) were set aside for campaigning and each bloc met with its members to explain various political and union issues presented in the arena.

The Islamic Bloc meeting was organized and well-attended. A number of brothers delivered speeches, then the bloc went out in a huge and well-organized march, displaying a photo of martyr 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam while circling the university grounds and chanting:

"We are your men, O Qassam
We do not let up nor acquiesce
He who bargains away our wounds
Is disloyal and a traitor."

The outcome of the 6 January elections was as follows:

- 1,500 votes for the Youth Bloc.
- 1,150 votes for the Martyr 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Bloc.
- 300 votes for the Progressive Student Front.
- 90 votes for the National Unity Bloc.

While it is understandable that the Marxists and Communists should direct their campaign against the Islamic Bloc, we are surprised to hear that the Youth Bloc waged a ruthless campaign against the Islamic Bloc, spreading rumors that the bloc would force female students to wear the Islamic dress and that material support from the outside would stop if the bloc won and, therefore, the elected council would not be able to help needy students. Moreover, the Youth Bloc promised to exempt students from university fees if elected, noting that such fees amount to \$200 per semester, and distributed a communique reviling an Islamic Bloc member.

All this was happening while a Youth Bloc candidate for the student council chairmanship got up on the podium and started kissing the Koran before a crowd of students. How can this spectacle be reconciled with such conduct? And how can a person consider himself Muslim while showing such enmity toward Muslims? Why did Fatah followers in 1983 ally themselves with the Communists and Marxists against the Islamic Youth? And why are they waging a ruthless campaign this year to exclude them from the student council instead of cooperating with them? And is there a group more loyal and sincere about the liberation of Palestine than the Islamists, O Palestinian liberation movement?

Taking al-Najah University students as a sample representing the nature of the population in occupied Palestine and the outcome of the Student Union Council elections as an indicator, we can say that the Islamic current is making great headway in our occupied territory. Therefore, one need not worry about Palestine so long as youth of this caliber are found on its soil. Indeed, no need to worry about the Palestinian cause in the long run so long as

this good land keeps producing such young men. It is not important that they win the student union council today. What is important is to have deep faith and to nurture their course tirelessly and without despair. With 1,150 students committed to Islam out of a total of 3,000 voters, or 38.5 percent of the votes cast, it is not a bad percentage given the young age of the Islamic Bloc at a Palestinian university under Jewish occupation and facing all kinds of frustrations and pressures. We do not discount the Youth Bloc, for although a large number of these young men have been subject to financial and material pressures, many of them have Islamic and national sentiments. As for those Marxists, they do not carry any weight worth mentioning in the student arena. Furthermore, the hope that many of them will revert to their natural disposition which God has bestowed upon them is not lost, especially if the truth about the international conspiracy against the Palestinian cause is revealed. These Islamic young men in our occupied territory are the inexhaustible strategic stock and future treasure. These peaceful solutions being put forth in the Palestinian arena are nothing but test balloons, taming endeavors and troops to hunt down the Palestinian people and annihilate them politically, organically, geographically and historically. So all those who are concerned about the welfare of the Palestinian people must unite and not lose their foothold while walking in the labyrinths of manipulations.

The message of the Islamists at al-Najah University said: "Although we lost the elections, we, brothers and sisters in the Islamic Bloc, remain committed to Islam as a Shari'ah and the right path. We will always maintain our unshakable faith in this religion, adhering to the Islamic nature of our country and our cause, no matter what difficulties or challenges we may encounter."

Following its election victory, and at this time in particular, the Youth Bloc, "under the motto that it represents the student council," is trying to prevent the Islamic Bloc from exercising its customary activities such as lectures, seminars, exhibits and the like. The Islamic Bloc, however, rejects all these endeavors and will resist them with force and determination. We shall continue our activities with God's help.

Regarding their political vision, we have selected the following excerpt:

We, as Palestinians, are the legitimate owners of the cause and the right to self-determination emanates from the will of the Palestinian people.

Our right is indivisible and no part of it may be waived. We stand behind all those who will not let up or give up. We extend our hand to all honorable persons who share our beliefs, but not at the expense of our ideology and our heritage. This is our understanding of unity.

The Zionist viewpoint is the Jewish viewpoint that does not settle for anything less than total usurpation of our rights. In addition to being an occupier and a usurper, it is also an economic and intellectual colonizer working for the establishment of destructive beliefs.

About their stand on current political events, we selected this paragraph from one of their pamphlets:

Both supporters and rejectors of peaceful solutions agree on the acceptance of an international conference to include American, Russian and the various parties to the conflict. Whereas we deem such a conference unlikely, we believe that if it does convene it will not be different from any other UN and other conferences from the standpoint of its being nothing but speeches and oneupsmanship that hold nothing new save for a clear recognition of Israel. Therefore, we doubt the usefulness of holding such a conference. We draw the attention of those who are panting after it to the danger of wasting time to no avail and adding to the internal disputes and bitter conflicts among the brothers between those who support and those who reject such a course, leaving the Arabs preoccupied with one plan after another and one option after another, suffering under internal struggles that lead to other struggles while Israel is safely carrying out all its hostile expansionist designs.

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CSO: 4404/252

AFGHANISTAN

POLITBURO APPROVES 1986-87 DRAFT STATE BUDGET

LD221518 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1530 GMT 21 Mar 86

[Text] A meeting of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo, chaired by Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, was held 20 March 1986. The Politburo comprehensively assessed the implementation of the socioeconomic growth plan and the DRA state budget for 1985-86. The DRA Council of Ministers draft socioeconomic growth plan and state budget for 1986-87 was approved after deep analysis.

In connection with the implementation of the plan and state budget of the current year, the Politburo recalled that despite the undeclared war by reaction and imperialism, and the antirevolution economic sabotage, the country's economy enjoyed relative stability last year and most sections of the national economy had constant growth compared with the year before. Development expenditures based on domestic and foreign sources fully used last year.

The friendly USSR's aid for projects totaled \$110 million, that is, 5 percent more than planned, and constitutes 73.03 percent of the total foreign aid for the year's projects.

As a result of this investment, 30 important economy projects were partially or fully completed.

In connection with the draft socioeconomic plan and state budget for 1986-87, the Politburo recalled that the draft was prepared on the bases of the 16th PDPA Central Committee Plenum; the 10 theses of Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council; and the statement by the Revolutionary Council on the national and democratic nature of the April Revolution and its urgent duties. It was prepared with consideration of the basic guidelines for socioeconomic growth for the 5-year period and is in the interest of the life of the people of Afghanistan.

The socioeconomic plan and state budget for the new year has the following important objectives:

Taking steps to consolidate the results of the April Revolution, expand and maintain its positive results in developing the country's social and economic growth, and speed up the growth of the mixed state sector and cooperative of the national economy together with the expansion and strength of the private sectors;

Concentrating efforts on rebuilding and (?technically equipping) the important production and service enterprises and projects of the national economy;

Using existing reserves, enhancing the quality of work, and reducing the recommended price of production output;

Continuing the democratic land and water reform with the active participation of the peasants, strengthening the cooperative movement by providing financial, material, and technical aid;

Increasing agricultural and livestock output, particularly raw cotton and sugarbeet, to meet the demands for raw material and textile industry and foodstuff, and the possibility of expanding the country's exports;

Promoting growth of the retail trade and foreign trade, and consolidation of country's defense might [as heard];

Intensifying and speeding up the literacy program, consolidation of the financial basis of the development training and education, increasing cultural and health services, and expanding the network of professional training, enhancing the skill of the workers, providing for a 5.4 percent increase in gross output production, and 5.9 percent in the national income production;

Increasing the gross output of agriculture, livestock, and forests by 4 percent compared with last year's assessment.

In order to realize the aims of the agricultural plan, next year a total 145,000 tons of chemical fertilizer, 16,000 tons of wheat seed, 5.9 thousand tons of cotton seed, 60 tons of sugarbeet seed, at a value of 100 million afghanis, and pesticides will be made available for the peasants, state farms, and agricultural cooperatives.

A growth of 4.9 percent has been anticipated in the value of gross output of industry, mines, and energy next year compared with last year.

In the transportation sector, it has been planned that the state and private sectors will carry 6.5 million tons of goods over a total of 1060.02 million km. Retail and private commerce, mixed or cooperative, will reach 23 billion afghanis next year.

The network of state-owned shops and retail trade cooperatives will expand further all over the country, especially in the provinces.

There will be an increase of 61.05 percent in the number of children attending schools next year.

In [the] country's literacy program, it is planned to set up 3,865 new literacy courses and to accept more than 128,000 students.

The capacity of the country's universities will expand next year. The number of graduates will increase by 5.6 percent and the number of the enrollments will increase by 6.0 percent.

The number of main health centers will increase to 121 and the number of secondary health centers to 19 centers.

There will be an increase of 8.7 percent in the total number of beds in hospitals and 25 percent in the number of doctors.

The friendly Soviet Union will provide 80 percent of the anticipated foreign aid for next year.

Special attention will be paid to the border provinces to improve the living conditions of the people of those provinces.

It has been anticipated that 50 projects will be built or commissioned next year.

The PDPA Central Committee Politburo calls on all party, state, and economic bodies and social organizations to carry out all round and broad work in the production collectives among the people to implement the plans and commitments of 1365, this first year of the First 5-Year Plan after the revolution.

In order to raise living standards and to provide facilities for the peasants, the PDPA Central Committee Politburo has considered a proposal to cancel the back taxes for the period March 1981 to March 1986 owed by the peasants and landowners, and decided that the back taxes--totalling more than 2.5 million afghanis--should be reduced in proportion to the payment by installments of the principle arrears over the next 2 years; and in this respect a specific proposal should be presented to the DRA Revolutionary Council.

The activities of the Central Bank of Afghanistan were assessed for enhancing the effectiveness of the national economy in light of the resolutions of 16th PDPA Central Committee Plenum.

Regarding the improvement in the country's banking system and in order to increase its role in the national economy, Babrak Karmal said:

Completion of the banking system, as well as the completion of the tax and prices system, together with laws and work regulations, are extraordinarily important for the execution of duties embodied in the fundamental phases of the DRA socioeconomic development plan for the 5-year period, for even further rapid development of the national economy and a solution to social problems in the coming years.

The Politburo issued instructions to the relevant officials about providing short and long term loans for the expansion and completion of the fundamental

(?phases) of utilizing modern techniques and to mechanize production, extending the authorities and raising the level of responsibility in the banking system, [word indistinct] and self-sufficiency of all enterprises and government institutions, expanding non-cash transactions through the Afghan banking system for all government, mixed, and private enterprise in the course of reciprocal payments as well as in import and export transactions, the creation and generalization of the government system [as heard], stability of prices in domestic trade--especially foodstuffs and basic commodities--and other important cases.

The Politburo also took the necessary decisions on a number of other issues about domestic and foreign policy.

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CSO: 4665/33

AFGHANISTAN

UK REPORTEDLY PROMISES ASSISTANCE TO COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES

LD051835 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 5 Apr 86

[BAKHTAR commentary]

[Text] During his visit to Pakistan, Sir Geoffrey Howe, the British secretary of state for foreign and commonwealth affairs, visited an Afghan counterrevolutionaries camp in Peshawar. During a meeting with their chiefs he promised them further assistance.

The British foreign secretary, with hostile language against the DRA [passage indistinct] praised the Afghan rebels and expressed delight at the uniformity of the British and Pakistani stand vis-a-vis the DRA. [passage indistinct]

M. Thatcher, under pressure from the Washington administration--like the FRG and its other allies--follows in the footsteps of the Reagan administration in the undeclared imperialist war against the DRA. The Reagan administration, with its deceptive statements, expresses support for a political solution to events concerning Afghanistan, while at the same time it puts modern weapons at the disposal of the Afghan counterrevolutionaries and impudently and shamefully interferes in the international affairs of an independent, sovereign and nonaligned country.

Announcing further assistance of his government to the Afghanistan counterrevolutionaries is not new. Some time ago M. Thatcher, following R. Reagan, the U.S. President--who received a number of Afghan counterrevolutionaries and promised them further assistance--received in England as an official guest, Abdol Haq, a professional criminal who, by his own admission, is the man behind the murder of tens of innocent compatriots.

The British leaders, who are equal to any action against the DRA by the Washington administration, are also following specific and dangerous objectives in this motivated mission. Facts show that whenever opportunities become available for the reduction of tension in the Afghanistan situation as a result of the DRA's good will, the imperialist circles, by various means, come out for their destruction.

The dispatch of U.S. Stinger missiles and the promise of further assistance to the counterrevolutionaries by the British foreign secretary, a wave of

propaganda and unfounded fabrications regarding human rights in the DRA is beint intensified on the eve of talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan which are due to be resumed in Geneva in the future. [sentence as heard] They follow destructive objectives, continue the war against the DRA, and create barriers to a solution of the Afghanistan situation.

Imperialists, including the government of M. Thatcher, do not want to assist a political solution of events around Afghanistan: instead they endeavor to give a broader dimension to the undeclared anti-Afghan war. The United States, Britain and their other allies are responsible for all bloodshed in our country.

The enemies of the people of Afghanistan should know that they cannot, by any force, alter the determination of the people of Afghanistan to construct a new society; as before they face decisive defeat.

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CSO: 5665/33

IRAN

EFFECTS OF GULF WAR, DEVASTATION PORTRAYED

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 13 Mar 86 p 9

[Text]

THIS compendious study of the impacts of the Iraqi imposed war aim at delineating the crimes perpetrated by Saddam of Iraq backed by world big powers who have indeed dwarfed Hitler's acts. When the war was extended to W. Azarbaijan and Kurdistan Provinces it left considerable effects on the Kurd-populated areas both in Iran and Iraq.

In the light of the presence of the Islamic Forces in some parts of the Iraqi Kurd-populated regions the dissident Iraqi Kurds increased their military activities against the Ba'athist regime of Iraq so much so that the Iraqi regime, in an attempt to suppress the growing opposition, was forced to hire military manpower from some neighboring countries. But despite all these efforts and by even ruthless daily massacre of Moslem Iraqi Kurds, military operations against the regime ruling Iraq is inexorably escalating and expanding.

With the presence of the Islamic Forces including army volunteer forces and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps in Kurdistan and W. Azarbaijan anti-revolutionary activities were restricted. In this way, Kurdistan which from the first days of the Islamic Revolution was about to be separated from the rest of the country through the plots hatched by counter-revolutionaries—a matter which has preoccupied the Islamic Republic military and civil authorities — was rescued and turned into a stable and secure region like other central provinces in the country.

Those groups of Kurdish people who under nationalistic and pagan propaganda launched by counterrevolutionaries and separatists tended to cooperate with the anti-revolutionaries came to the realization that these splinter groups through deception were exploiting them to achieve their own demonic desires. The people of these regions,

Kurdestan and W. Azarbaijan, lost their faith in these grouplets when it was revealed that they received all-out support from the Ba'athist Iraqi regime which embroiled the region by bombarding residential areas.

The presence of the workers of Reconstruction Jihad in the Kurd-populated areas and the developmental operations and projects this revolutionary organ accomplished in the region played a crucial role in awakening the Kurds to the effect that anti-revolutionary elements were not genuine in their claims aimed at deceiving the illiterate and deprived people of Kurdestan.

It can be claimed that today Reconstruction Jihad workers have provided at least electricity, asphalt road, bathrooms, hygienic water to those Kurd-populated areas security of which have not been endangered by anti-revolutionaries. Actually the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran concentrated its developmental activities mainly on these areas.

Another positive effect of the Iraqi imposed war is that it led many of the members of outlawed groups to show repentance for their sabotage and were disabused of the myth their leaders had fabricated that they were the only force able to tackle the crux of problems facing the country after the triumph of the great Islamic Revolution. The overall seminar held in W. Azarbaijan and participated by 2,000 of the repentants is indicative of this fact.

One of the penitents who was among the organizational cadres of disbanded Democratic Party and a representative of the Party's sixth congress expressed his opinions in an interview about the seventh congress held in Iraq: "Holding of this congress outside the boundaries of Islamic Iran is a token of the complete defeat of the mercenaries of the world imperialism in Kurdestan. This conference further indicates the obvious acknowledgment of the fact that the enemies of the Kurdish people have no room in this region to linger on."

As for Bakhtaran Province with 740 kms of common border with Iraq it is regarded as one of the main connective centers between Iran and Iraq. Most journeys to Iraq and Syria is made through this border. Most parts of this province are within the gunreach of missile, aerial and artillery attacks of the enemy. So far 17 ground-to-ground missiles have been lobbed on the Bakhtaran cities.

The city of Qasr-e-Shirin has been levelled with the ground and is empty of residents. The only things that testify to its once being a city are the beams twisted as a result of the Iraqi bombardments. After the lapse of seven months since the termination of the war of cities, most of the war-torn districts of this province have been reconstructed and renovated.

One of the shopkeepers in the city of Bakhtaran whose shop had been demolished as a result of Iraqi long-range missile attacks said: "The first thing that came to my mind after observing this scene (destruction of his shop) was that it was impossible to reconstruct it but officials of the province paid the full expenses for reconstructing the shop."

Bakhtaran Province was the first province in which the question of constructing shelters found expression. In this province a big missile-proof shelter was constructed.

This reinforced shelter is equipped with all hospital facilities including an operation room, surgery instruments etc. Also, in offices and outskirts of the city of Bakhtaran underground reinforcements have been constructed, which can withstand Iraqi missile attacks. Big camps have also been pitched around the city and are equipped with food warehouses, clinics and other public facilities.

During the heaviest aerial attacks on residential quarters all the staff of banks, offices, hospitals and military centers were permanently present in the city. Friday prayers were held in the city participated by large number of people wearing shroud as a sign of readiness for martyrdom.

Paveh a district of the Bakhtaran Province is predominantly Sunni-populated. The people of Paveh during daily aerial and artillery attacks of the enemy displayed such a strong morale that almost no one left the city for fear of death.

Gilan Gharb is another city of this province subject to Iraqi long-range missiles which has levelled many residential areas with the ground. The enemies scorched tanks which are observed around the connective route of Gilan Gharb, indicate the heroic resistance of the people of this city in the first days of the attacks. The brave people of this city firmly stood up against the enemy aggression and did not allow the Ba'athist Iraqi troops occupy the city.

Ilam Province, majority of whose districts have been the target of Iraqi ruthless attacks has sustained big damages and casualties. The city of Mehran has been completely destroyed and is now

non-residential.

Almost 50% of the city of Dehloran has been devastated. Ilam and Dehloran were under strict control of the Iraqi troops but were liberated through four operations code-named Ramadhan, Fath-al-Mobin, Beit-al-Moqadas and Val Fajr. The city of Ilam, the center of the Ilam Province has sustained big casualties under aerial and missile attacks of the Ba'athist regime of Iraq during the war of the cities.

The majority of the forces stationed in border fronts of Ilam are composed of the native forces. In several occasions during the operations the common people set out to liquidate the aggressive enemies and repulse their attacks.

Forty percent of the reconstruction work in Ilam has been completed and the rest of the operations for renovating this war-torn city is still in progress.

Khuzestan Province, one of the wealthiest provinces in the country was occupied by the aggressive Iraqi troops. This province has sustained the biggest damages. Because Khuzestan, an oil rich province with a capacity of 4.2 billion barrels of oil lodging the world's biggest oil refinery (Abadan Refinery) with an annual capacity of 23 billion ton, and also enjoying the most fertile soil for cultivation of any sort totalling 1.5 million hectare and 30 billion cubic meters of water, was the best target for the Iraqi regime to get a foothold in.

The Iraqi regime, under the pretext of liberating the Arabs of Khuzestan who have lived peacefully alongside their Persian compatriots for nearly 1,000 years from the clutches of the Persians as they put it embarked on its all out attack. The first groups of the people of Khuzestan who fell victim to the Iraqi aggression were the very same Arabs residing in border areas of Khuzestan Province for whom the Iraqi regime shed crocodile tears.

Despite 35 days of brave resistance of the people of Khorramshahr who were armed with only light weapons vis-a-vis the convoys of Iraqi tanks, created an epic in the history of this port city and perhaps in the history of resisting wars. Finally, Khorramshahr, the most important port city of the country fell in the hands of the Ba'athist Ira-

qi troops on October 25, 1980. Nine tenth of the city of Khorramshahr was occupied by the aggressive Iraqi forces who kept this port city under their occupation for 575 days.

Following the occupation of this port city, the army officers and troops looted the houses, banks, etc. They bulldozed the city and raped the women. Thereafter, the Iraqi regime appointed a mayor, police commander, and minister of education in the occupied Khorramshahr. Foreign press lauded the construction of a new school and a Ba'ath Cooperative by Saddam in the occupied area. However, after the occupied city was retrieved in May 1982 no trace of such school and cooperative was found. It was nothing but a propaganda ruse. During the operations launched by the Islamic Forces to take back the port city of Khorramshahr 14,000 Iraqi troops and officers were taken captive.

The cities of Khuzestan Province have been zeroed in on by 187 Iraqi long-range missiles, of which 83 were lobbed over Dezful, irrespective of extensive bombardment of residential quarters, thus devastating many cities and villages and massacring innocent people. As a result of such ignominious crimes perpetrated by the Ba'athist Iraqi regime, 1,253,786 people from the single Khuzestan Province have been made homeless, reported the Foundation of War Refugees. They have been resettled in camps and house complexes constructed for them. Despite the fact that the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are doing their best to provide the essential facilities for the victims of the undeclared war staged by Saddam and sponsored by exploitative powers, still a number of them are living in poor conditions.

Simultaneous with the eruption of the war, Prime Minister Mir Hussein Musavi urged the government officials to commence developmental operations and reconstruct the war-torn regions. For this purpose a headquarter comprised of 16 departments was set up to follow up the implementation of the strike program brought up by the prime minister. The following is the statistics provided by the headquarter designed to reconstruct and renovate war-torn regions, indicating the various departments activities in the first half of 1364:

Land-levelling	400,000 hectares
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Cultivation and harvesting of produce	200,000 hectares	Establishment of poultry farms and compensation of losses	96 units
Reclaiming of pasture lands	50,000 hectares	Supply of hygienic water for villages	346 villages
Stabilizing shifting sands and gravels	6,400 hectares	Supply of electricity for villages	241 villages
Agricultural services	90,000 hectares	Repair of irrigation networks	36 cities
Revival of palm plantations	2,000,000 trees	Preparing crash programs for city construction	28 cities
Dredging irrigational canals	100,000 kilometers	Reconstruction of military centers	37 projects
Construction of rural roads	1,530 kilometers	Reconstruction of communication centers	12 centers
Repair of Connective routes	2,852 kilometers	Reconstruction of radio-television transmitters	8 centers
Reconstruction of Ahvaz-Khorramshahr rail-roads	193 kilometers	Veterinary services	5,000,000 cattles and fowls
Reconstruction of power transmission lines	2,000 kilometers	Replacement of irrigational instruments and agricultural machineries	5,100 sets
Reconstruction of holy shrines	440 units	Repair of irrigational tools and agricultural machineries	1,400 sets
Construction of clinics in villages	158 units	Providing the farmers with pumps	820 sets
Reconstruction of schools in villages	360 units	Replacement of destroyed vehicles and machineries	1,200 sets
Reconstruction of rural services buildings	300 units	Digging wells and dredging qanals (canals)	165 rings
Reconstruction and rennovation of residential quarters in villages	9,500 units	Construction of bridges in rural roads	186 mouths
Reconstruction and rennovation of places for keeping cattles	1,500 units	Reconstruction and renovation of small and big bridges	360 mouths
Reconstruction and renovation of residential-commercial quarters	13,000 units	Reconstruction of installations for producing and distributing of oil for domestic consumption and export.	
Reconstruction of state buildings	1,430 units		
Slight repairs and installing window panes	120,000 units		
Reconstruction of big industrial units	10 units		
Reconstruction of industrial workshops	10 units		

Despite all the hardships and problems the people of war-stricken regions faced during the almost six year old Iraqi imposed war, yet the degree of their love and affection for the Islamic Revolution has not diminished. These deprived and oppressed people, on the contrary, proved in prac-

... tice that they are firm in their support of the revolution and its leaders when they responded to the call of Hojjatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, to depart for the fronts against the aggressive enemy. It was after this call that convoys of volunteer forces set out for the battle fronts. The convoys known as 'Karbala Convoys' was the biggest popular mobilization since the breakout of the war.

On the top of the government agenda is the plan for aids to the people to promote both agricultural produce and industrial investments. The following statistics provided by the Public Relations of Agriculture Ministry indicates the volume of the sale of wheat by farmers in some provinces:

Provinces	63	64
.....
W. Azarbaijan	56,780 tons	45,698 tons
Kurdestan	150,980 tons	179,782 tons
Bakhtaran	108,336 tons	159,116 tons
Ilam	6,024 tons	21,611 tons
Khuzestan	37 866 tons	115,206 tons

Unrelenting efforts of the government and the people in other industrial and educational areas will bring in its wake a happy, prosperous future for the country under the umbrella of Islam.

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