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28 May 1982

NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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CONTENTS

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

- 'AL-MAJALLAH' Interviews Palestinian Military Aide
(Sa'd Sayil Interview; AL-MAJALLAH, 15-21 May 82) 1
- 'PLO Diplomat' Interviewed in Vienna
(Abdallah al-Franji Interview; ARBEITER-ZEITUNG, 18 May 82) ... 4

PERSIAN GULF AFFAIRS

- Unified Gulf Currency Proposal Facing Difficulties
(Kazim al-Muhaydi Interview; 'UKAZ, 31 Mar 82) 6
- Negative Effects of Asian Labor Discussed
(Muhammad al-Ramihi; AL-ARABI, Mar 82) 10
- GCC Secretary General Criticized for TV Remarks
(Editorial; AL-TALI'AH, 24 Mar 82) 16

AFGHANISTAN

- Former Diplomat Helping to Form Government-In-Exile
(Abdul Rahman Pajwak Interview; FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE,
5 May 82) 19
- Agricultural Delegation Received by SED in Schwerin
(S. T. Peykargar Interview; SCHWERINER VOLKSZEITUNG,
3-4 Apr 82) 21

BAHRAIN

- Interview with Prime Minister
(Shaykh Khalifah ibn Sulman al Khalifah Interview; GULF DAILY
NEWS, 15 May 82) 24
- Briefs
Iranian Helicopter Landing 28

IRAN

Khomeyni Seen Tightening Noose on Shari'atmadari (Wolfgang Guenter Lerch; FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE, 28 Apr 82)	29
Plans Discussed for an Islamic Common Market (Ahmad Tavakkoli; KEYHAN, 1 May 82)	32
Aims, Advantages of Islamic Common Market Expounded (Dr Namazi; KEYHAN, 2 May 82)	38
Former Charge Reveals Functions at Rome Embassy (Mohammad Hoseyn Naqdi Interview; AVANTI, 27 Apr 82).....	43

JORDAN

Islamic Group Condemns Involvement in Gulf War (AL-HURRIYAH, 29 Mar 82)	47
Teachers Union Elections 'Manipulated' By State Intelligence (AL-HURRIYAH, 29 Mar 82)	49

KUWAIT

Briefs Ties with Bahrain	52
-----------------------------	----

MOROCCO

Domestic Politics Discussed (al-Sarraj Muhammad Munir; AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI, 22-28 Mar 82)	53
---	----

SUDAN

Sudanese Cotton Attracts International Buyers (AL-AYYAM, 5 May 82)	56
---	----

TUNISIA

Tunisian Foreign Policy Examined (Rashid Khashanah; AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI, 22-28 Mar 82)	57
--	----

QATAR

Briefs Steel Production	59
----------------------------	----

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Budget Deficit Not To Affect Development
(Yusuf Urdon; KHALEEJ TIMES, 18 May 82) 60

Briefs
Drip Irrigation Project 63
Funds For New Projects 63

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

Briefs
Second Five-Year Plan 64

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

'AL-MAJALLAH' INTERVIEWS PALESTINIAN MILITARY AIDE

PM170823 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 15-21 May 82 pp 31 [as printed]

[Interview with Brig Gen Sa'd Sayil, Fatah Central Committee member, in Beirut: "Secret Message to Palestinian Resistance From Britain on Falklands Crisis"--date not given]

[Text] Brigadier General Sa'd Sayil, (Abu al-Walid), Fatah Movement Central Committee member, has revealed to AL-MAJALLAH that Britain has sent a message to the Palestinian resistance command urging it to show "self-restraint" and not reply to the Israeli air raid on Lebanon last month. He denied that the United States did something similar in this regard, as was rumored.

Abu al-Walid, who spoke to AL-MAJALLAH following the Israeli air raid that resulted in the martyrdom of 17 Palestinians and Lebanese and the injury of about 60, said that the Israeli enemy is still continuing to concentrate his forces in northern occupied Palestine and that daily sightings confirm that the enemy is determined to launch a large-scale attack which might reach as far as al-Damur, south of Beirut, "although the main effort will be toward al-Zahrani in the south."

Asked whether it was true that the Palestinian resistance had received a U.S. message after the Israeli raid calling on it to show restraint and not to reply to the raid, he said: "This is not true. We did not receive any message from the United States in this regard, either directly or indirectly. The only message we received was from Britain. It called on us to show self-restraint and not to reply. Also some foreign ambassadors in Beirut asked us the same."

Abu al-Walid said: "I believe that Britain's request to us to show self-restraint is due to developments in its dispute with Argentina over the Falkland Islands. It wants to keep its case alive and not to be overwhelmed by another case."

Abu al-Walid, who acts as chief of staff of the Palestinian forces, said that the excuses which Israel gave for launching its recent raid are not the real motive for the aggression for which it has been and is still

preparing. Israel considered any Fedayeen operation, whether inside the occupied territories or across the Arab borders, as a violation of the cease-fire agreed last July after violent Palestinian-Israeli battles in southern Lebanon. Abu al-Walid asserted that the agreement that was reached with the help of the United States "applies only to southern Lebanon." Abu al-Walid believes that what dictated the recent Israeli attack and what dictates the other anticipated attacks is Israel's plans to strike at the PLO "in its capacity as the political and military means of the Palestinian people and the leader of its struggle."

Abu al-Walid adds: "It appears that the Zionist command has become even more rancorous and is speeding up its steps toward aggression. It is accumulating justifications and flimsy excuses for such aggression following our people's uprising in the occupied territories, which has done away with the Israeli civil administration plan and buried the autonomy plan as specified in Camp David."

Continuing, he said: "Our people's uprising in the occupied territories has confirmed the impossibility of implementing the Palestinian part of Camp David. So when Israel began carrying out its plans to liquidate the PLO inside the occupied territories it began to prepare for a campaign [to] liquidate the PLO outside Palestine with the aim of facing the world with a new fait accompli and to impose the Camp David agreement on the Palestinian front." Abu al-Walid affirms that "17 years of the Palestinian revolutionary struggle and its conflict with Israel are enough to convince anybody of the impossibility of crushing this revolution with military force. But it appears that the ruling Israeli mentality does not learn from the lessons and experiments of history."

The Fatah Central Committee member explains that the Palestinian resistance "does not consist of regular forces which can easily be dealt a lightning military blow and smashed. Although these forces are organized in units as with any other army, they follow a special method of fighting that is different from the well-known conventional methods. So whatever the adversary's strength may be, it is very difficult to deal a fatal blow to these forces."

Speaking about what he calls the political and regional gains that Israel wants to achieve by liquidating the Palestinian resistance, he says that, in addition to coveting Lebanon's waters, Israel is also seeking to become a basic and major factor in the process of political decisionmaking in Lebanon, especially in view of the fact that Lebanon will be holding presidential elections in a few months' time. Abu al-Walid says: "In the light of Israel's insistence on disregarding world opinion, which is demanding a just solution for the Palestine problem, and of what I have just said regarding the goals of aggression, we consider the recent Israeli raid merely a prelude to a large-scale aggression for which Israel is continuing its military preparations and accumulating justifications. Confrontation between us and Israel is not merely one raid and an answer to it, it is a continuing conflict

which will continue until we achieve our objectives of liberating our homeland and establishing our independent state." He adds: "The Palestinian revolution has the capacity to reply to Israeli attacks but it reserves itself the right to reply at a suitable time and place so that the reply produces political returns and takes into consideration all the factors, foremost among which is not burdening the Lebanese masses with more than they can take."

Abu al-Walid denies that there are "red lines" drawn by the Israeli enemy. "Our red line," he says, "is our red blood. Israel is trampling on all customs with the continuing great support of the United States." He points out that the recent raid came 12 days after the United States used its veto to prevent Israel being condemned at the Security Council for organizing the bloody attack on al-Aqsa mosque and desecrating the holy shrine.

Speaking about the reasons why the Palestinian resistance does not possess powerful and sophisticated air defenses to protect the Palestinian camps and the Lebanese villages, Abu al-Walid explains: "On our part we try to obtain modern weapons in order to face the modern warfare the Israeli enemy is imposing upon us, but there are many difficulties. Most important of these is that the Palestinian resistance does not have the financial resources to enable it [to] obtain modern weapons, particularly in view of world inflation, which means our material resources cannot enable us to obtain modern and effective air defense systems, despite the fact that such weapons are available in the world market. This is despite the fact that we have no problems with regard to the ability to handle such weapons since we have the cadres and the expertise to enable us to handle any type of weapons, however complex and sophisticated they may be."

Abu al-Walid went on to say: "The Israeli aggression is continuing and clear. It is evident in the occupied territories, where it aims at seizing the land and expelling the inhabitants. The situation has escalated into attacks on all the Muslim holy places, with total disregard and indifference to everything. It has been established that the attack on the al-Aqsa mosque was planned and coordinated and carried out directly under the supervision of the Israeli government. It is necessary to step up aid for the Palestinian revolution. I must point out here that the Saudi Government has launched a donation campaign for the Palestinian resistance following the Israeli attack on the al-Aqsa mosque. It must be pointed out here that the burdens of the Palestinian revolution inside and outside the occupied territories have increased, which necessitates increased aid to the Palestinian resistance."

Concluding, Abu al-Walid said: "The first prerequisite for confronting the present and future Israeli attacks is to stop the Iraq-Iran war, which is exhausting the strength of Iraq and Iran, strength that should have been devoted to confronting aggression. There are reports about the possibility of reaching an acceptable solution and stopping this war. We hope that the war will end quickly so that all the capabilities and the guns are directed against the real enemy and the real danger."

'PLO DIPLOMAT' INTERVIEWED IN VIENNA

AU181330 Vienna ARBEITER-ZEITUNG in German 18 May 82 p 5

[Report on interview with Abdallah al-Franji, "PLO representative in Bonn" who has come to Vienna to give a lecture, by Peter Pelinka--date of interview not specified]

[Summary] Al-Franji is one of the most experienced PLO diplomats in Europe. His name became known a few months ago in Austria, too, when a Palestinian who was being questioned following attempts on the lives of PLO representatives in Brussels, London and Paris admitted that he had also planned an attack on the Bonn PLO representative. "In Vienna there has been some speculation that al-Franji might become the new PLO representative in Vienna. This delicate question is not decided yet, however." It is assumed, though, that this will be clarified on the part of the PLO by June, when the representatives abroad for the coming year will be appointed. As far as the Austrian Government is concerned, al-Franji should be acceptable as PLO representative in Austria, as he comes from the ranks of Yasir 'Arafat's own organization, the al-Fatah. At present, however al-Franji has other problems on his mind than the possibility of a transfer to Vienna:

"We are convinced that the Begin government is seeking a full confrontation with us in Lebanon as early as in the next few weeks," he says. "The confrontation will cost us a lot, but we are strong enough to hurt the Israeli Army." "In the occupied territories--West Bank and Gaza Strip--the Israelis have set up 17 new prisons in 15 years, the schools are striking 4 months a year on average against the occupiers, children are wearing badges with the Palestine flag despite high fines imposed on their parents, and the hatred is growing every day."

Al-Franji believes that the two recent bombing raids against Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon were already an attempt by the Begin government to provoke an open armed conflict--a conflict which the PLO does not want at present because the Arab countries which support it are at present more disunited than ever. "And by ourselves we are no match for the highly armed Israeli Army--but it will no longer be possible to eliminate the PLO factor."

"According to al-Franji, the PLO hopes that the Lebanese Falangists will no longer let themselves be used as allies of the Israelis--talks about this are underway--and it hopes above all that the antiwar movement in Israel itself will grow stronger: 'after all, 20,000 Israelis have just demonstrated for our right.'" Al-Franji is moderately optimistic regarding Egypt, asserting that President Mubarak is cautiously deviating from the Camp David policy of his predecessor al-Sadat. "A one-sided peace without a solution for us Palestinians cannot function, we have always said that." He also considers as a positive factor the fact that the PLO is being de facto accepted in Europe as a partner for political talks--"and that is more important than the diplomatic recognition, which we continue to hope for."

"The PLO sees the main difficulty to a Middle East peace in the fact that Begin is supported by the United States 'as otherwise only by Latin American dictators and by South Africa.' And that will hardly change under Reagan, even if PLO "Foreign Minister" Faruq Qaddumi will hold talks in Washington in June: 'I am very sceptical in that respect.'"

In conclusion, al-Franji says: "We really do not want a bloody confrontation, let alone in Europe. But Begin is misusing the historical persecution of the Jews to justify his current policy." And he quotes what he calls "the courageous statement by your chancellor" that "this kind of thinking will lead to a biblical end."

CSO: 4400/273

UNIFIED GULF CURRENCY PROPOSAL FACING DIFFICULTIES

Jiddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 31 Mar 82 p 8

[Interview with Kazim al-Muhaydi, secretary general of Union of Gulf of Chambers of Commerce, by Muhammad Mahjub and Ahmad al-Zahrani in Ta'if: "Recommendations to Develop Gulf Cooperation; Difficulties Facing Unification of Gulf Currency; date not specified]

[Text] Al-Ta'if--Kazim al-Muhaydi, the secretary general of the Union of the Gulf Chambers of Commerce, has given this interview to 'UKAZ in the wake of the sixth session of the Executive Council of the Union of the Gulf Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture which was held in al-Ta'if two evenings ago.

Discussion on Participation in Investors Conference

[Question] Can you give us an idea about the agenda discussed during the meeting?

[Answer] The agenda discussed at this meeting included a report by the General Secretariat, participation in the Arab investors conference, reduction of the fees collected for certificates of origin and trade lists, insurance of goods imported to the Gulf states with foreign insurance firms or with firms which have branch offices in the Gulf states, as well as participation in the fiber glass project. It has also been decided to issue the Gulf Economic Cooperation Guide. The [Union's] final accounts have also been approved. Other issues on the agenda were studied and the necessary recommendations were adopted.

Next Meeting in Oman

[Question] When and where will the next meeting of the executive council of the Union of the Gulf Chambers of Commerce be held?

[Answer] It will be held in Oman in the second half of October 1982.

Session of Harmony and Understanding

[Question] The session lasted nearly 4 hours. Can we know what sort of climate prevailed in the session?

[Answer] The session was a session of harmony and understanding, and of opposition of opinion at times. This opposition has not been expressed just for the sake of opposition but has been based on sound opinion. Ultimately, the sound viewpoint is adopted and agreement is reached in the light of true fraternity.

Importance of Cooperation Council's Steps

Regarding the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] and the steps it has taken, al-Muhaydi said:

"The foundation of the GCC and the quick steps that this council has taken, especially the unified economic agreement, are an important accomplishment. The agreement is considered a very important step to speed up the realization of economic integration and to give even the private sector momentum so that it may move quickly and keep abreast of the rapid development realized by the Gulf states. The truth is that steps are being taken to establish joint projects between the Gulf states. There is a plan to set up a fiber glass project. The economic feasibility study on this project has been presented to the Gulf Legal and Industrial Investments Organization. A meeting will be held for the company's constituent assembly on the 6th of next month."

Our Role Is Still Modest

[Question] Are you satisfied with the services being rendered by the Chambers of Commerce Union?

[Answer] The truth is that our role is still modest because the union is still young, having been founded only a little over 2 years ago. The technical staff is also small. We are exerting efforts to develop the technical cadres so that we may be able to carry out the great tasks entrusted to this union.

[Question] How satisfied are you with the outcome of this session?

[Answer] This is just a meeting of the Executive Council in which the agenda was studied well by the participants and in which beneficial recommendations were adopted to develop the Gulf cooperation.

We Seek to Unify Currency

[Question] What is your comment regarding unification of the Gulf currency?

[Answer] This is a major goal which we all aspire to achieve. So far, the economists and the technicians have faced technical difficulties. We hope that the technicians will be able to overcome these difficulties to bring the unified currency into existence.

[Question] What is your view of OPEC's reduced oil production?

[Answer] The fact is that the longer the reduced production continues, the bigger the asset left for future generations will be. Increased production does not serve the interests of the producing countries but rather their wish to meet the needs of the consuming countries and to safeguard the international economy. This is what made the producing countries produce more than they needed in the past. This is why the consuming countries have created this fabricated and premeditated recession [presumably meaning oil glut] in order to pressure the producing countries to lower their prices. But the OPEC has been aware of this, has foiled the consuming countries' scheme, has maintained its oil prices and has preserved its oil by reducing its production.

Cooperation Council Is Noble Goal

[Question] What is your comment on the establishment of the GCC?

[Answer] In fact, the foundation of the GCC is for a noble goal. We hope with all our hearts that the council will realize the goals for which it has been founded because the Gulf states feel that without cooperation they cannot survive in a world in which small entities do not survive. In this short period, the officials have felt the importance of their cooperation. This council has been established and has made long strides despite its young life.

Gulf Working Paper for Investors

[Question] How did you discuss in your meeting the Arab investors conference which will be held in al-Ta'if?

[Answer] In fact, we have prepared a working paper which has been distributed to the members of this conference to be studied with the other working papers presented by other circles.

Unification of Jurisdiction

[Question] Is there a working plan to unify the jurisdiction of the Gulf chambers [of commerce]?

[Answer] In fact, a symposium will be held in Kuwait on the 24th of next March to coordinate the economic legislation applied by the Gulf states. The General Secretariat is exerting efforts to conduct a study on the regulations of the chambers of commerce in an endeavor to coordinate these regulations. As for the goals, the jurisdiction of the chambers of commerce is greatly similar, even though there is a little difference in nomenclature. As for duties, they are the same. The chambers of commerce carry out duties in the spheres of industry, agriculture and services.

Two Ways to Realize Goals

[Question] What, in your view, are the results which will be realized by such meetings and what is the extent of their economic benefit to the Gulf states?

[Answer] The union's goals are realized in two ways: By way of the technical efforts exerted by the general secretariat and by way of the studies and proposals presented to the executive council for approval. These studies and proposals act as a guide for the general secretariat in its daily work. Some of the studies are presented to the governments and the economic organizations as part of the efforts to support these organizations and future projects.

Two Ordinary Meetings Annually

[Question] Is there a plan to increase the number of such meetings?

[Answer] According to the union's constitution, these meetings are held twice annually. I believe that this number is adequate. Should anything requiring the convocation of a meeting develop, then a special meeting will be held.

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NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF ASIAN LABOR DISCUSSED

Kuwait AL-ARABI in Arabic Mar 82 pp 14-19

[Article by Dr Muhammad al-Ramihi: "Negative Effects of Asian Labor's Invasion of the Gulf and the Arab World"]

[Text] We are facing a unique phenomenon that affects not only the Gulf but the entire world. This phenomenon is a situation in which immigrants become the numerical majority in a country. In most Gulf countries today, the size of the immigrant population has become a critical problem, first in the political sphere and then in the social, cultural, and economic spheres. Despite the fact that this phenomenon began with the influx of oil revenues, it assumed a serious pattern in the 1970's when the majority of the immigrants to these countries began to be individuals from cultures completely alien to the culture of the Gulf area. This phenomenon is still on the rise.

Preliminary published general figures indicate that there are around 5 million foreign workers in the Gulf oil countries (the GCC countries). Of these, at least 3.5 million are non-Arab immigrants, primarily from Asian countries.

The phenomenon of Asian immigration into the Gulf countries is now (in the early 1980's) at an unprecedented level and intensity. Despite the many articles in specialized journals and periodicals, the scientific conferences convened to study the phenomenon both inside and outside the area, and the recommendations that have come out of official meetings of the responsible organizations, the phenomenon continues to worsen.

The immigrants, whether Arabs or non-Arabs, also have problems which deserve to be studied and solved. In this article, however, we intend to discuss the pros and cons of the peaceful Asian invasion of the Gulf countries.

Factors That Attract and Repel

The Persian Gulf societies are societies that have recently experienced rapid growth and many psychological and social changes. In less than 30 years, they have been transformed from a simple social structure based on grazing, agriculture, and pearl fishing into a social structure based on a modern and growing economy while oil has led to the development of complex social relationships. This transformation has been and continues to be accompanied by a series of structural changes that have strongly shaken the social

structure. We are still observing the effects of this transformation, but we are far from having completed a final assessment of its results to date. One element of this transformation is the change in the composition of the population. The relative smallness of the population in these countries coupled with the tremendous scale of the projects undertaken by these societies to develop their infrastructure have made the influx of foreign labor a natural phenomenon. In the beginning, these societies attempted to content themselves with employing trained or untrained Arab labor or settling the Bedouin people. This took place in the 1960's. However, the rapid pace of development, especially at the beginning of the second half of the 1970's, imposed a different trend, the importation of Asian labor.

A number of factors contributed to this trend. The most important factor was the relatively small size of the local population (despite the growing migration from the desert to the cities for permanent residence) as well as the lack of trained manpower and the weakness of theoretical and practical training for this manpower. Moreover, the increased hiring that accompanied the formation of new government organizations led to a high level of veiled unemployment in the government and mixed sectors. This also led to a lack of optimum utilization of local manpower. Even partially trained workers (literate and semi-literate) found their way into easy government employment, leading to what is known today as "veiled unemployment," which is the accumulation of employees in the ministries and official agencies over and above capacity and need. A number of these factors made the demand for Asian labor appear natural.

On the other hand, there are other factors in the countries of origin that made the movement of this manpower into the Gulf area part of an integrated strategy.

The increased demand for Asian labor in the Gulf coincided with the growth of unemployment in many of the Asian states due to economic reasons--including the international economic situation--as well as political reasons, specifically the elimination of American military bases in certain of the Southeast Asian countries following the end of the Vietnam war in 1975. For example, unemployment increased in Thailand after the close of the Vietnam war when thousands of skilled and semiskilled workers lost their jobs after the closing of American air bases in northeast Thailand. These repelling factors made job opportunities for these workers in the Gulf appear to be golden opportunities. They were also golden opportunities for the governments of the workers' native countries. On the one hand, this situation enabled these governments to eliminate the worsening unemployment along with all the attendant social and economic evils in their countries. Secondly, it enabled them to obtain a foreign source of hard currency as a result of the remittances of money by these workers back to their native countries.

Internationalization of the Gulf Population

The phenomenon we are studying is not just an economic or political phenomenon. It is first and foremost a human phenomenon. This is what makes the subject so difficult to deal with. The perils are many, particularly the political perils, for the foreign workers now in the Gulf outnumber the entire native

population of the area. In addition, the social and cultural dangers are evident. Therefore, the voices calling for regulation of the hiring of Asian labor do so with the intention of fending off imminent harm and preventing injuries to the natives of the area and to the area's Arab character, not on the basis of a narrow regional position or a definite economic position. But what are these perils and how are they manifested?

These are many issues that can be cited in this context, including the following:

1. The political issue: There are increasing references to the political dangers posed by the growing Asian labor force in the Gulf area. Asian immigrant colonies in some Gulf countries outnumber the local population and some of these colonies exist as quasi-military work camps. Aside from this fear, the interests that are created as a result of the tremendous financial transfers from immigrants to their countries, on the one hand, and the existence of a situation that enables those countries to rid themselves of widespread unemployment, on the other, could lead over time to the development of certain rights for these large colonies which the countries of origin could be compelled to defend in the future as existing, continuing, and permanent rights. Some voices have begun to be heard on this matter in the parliaments and governments of the native countries. These voices oppose any decrease in the size of the labor force immigrating to the Gulf countries from their countries or, more seriously, call for other rights not rejected in the practical situation by world public opinion. We have seen the growth of this kind of rights over the course of time with regard to the immigrant colonies in some European countries despite the fact that these colonies account for only a tiny fraction of the total populations.

In the case of the Gulf countries, those general rights obtained by the immigrant colonies entail a complete inversion of the makeup of the population and the obliteration of the Arab character and the culture of the area, possibly forever. We have some indications today concerning such a future development.

Commenting on the situation of Thai labor in the Gulf, an official report in Thailand said: "The goose that lays the golden egg should be placed under proper care." From time to time, the Indian parliament criticizes the situation of Indian labor in the Gulf. Moreover, reports have begun to be published--some by international organizations--dealing with the situation of Asian labor in the Gulf. For example, the Organization for the Combatting of Slavery and the Protection of the Rights of Man, a nongovernment organization headquartered in London, has issued such a report. All these reports point to the political hiring that could continue if the chaotic hiring of Asian labor continues without any control until matters reach the point that any decision taken on this sensitive subject with the aim of regulating labor could be impossible to implement.

2. The economic issue: A large percentage of the Asian labor force in the Gulf is actually a civilized luxury. Some studies estimate that a third of the Asian workers consist of domestic servants, nursemaids, chauffeurs, restaurant and hotel workers, and cleanup workers. All of these are non-technical workers and policies could be drawn up to eliminate them or at least

limit their numbers. This could be done either by regulating their employment or by automating some of these jobs. There are other groups of Asian workers, particularly in the building and construction field, from whom the local economy derives no benefit at all. They live in their own work compounds and all their consumption needs are brought to them from their native countries, so that the local market realizes only marginal benefit from them. On the other hand, the "state" in the Gulf bears enormous costs due to the presence of these workers because of the added pressure on services offered to members of this sector, who use public installations, roads, transportation, health services, and places of recreation. Most of these services have been designed to accommodate a limited number of people and when Asian workers use these services--and certainly it is impossible to prohibit them from using these services on humanitarian grounds--the result is that the standard of public services declines due to the heavy use. At the same time, the citizen is prohibited from developing such services as treatment facilities, ample hospital beds, and the like without putting additional strain on services such as water, which is relatively scarce, and electricity which is enormously expensive, although some do not see these tremendous unforeseen expenses caused by the inflated rate of importation of Asian labor.

3. The health, social, and cultural issue: New diseases have begun invading the area and some diseases have returned to the area after having been declared eliminated. Among the new diseases is leprosy (AL-ITTIHAD, 20 September 1981) and among the returning diseases is pulmonary tuberculosis. When we recall that many Asian workers are employed in houses or in places that offer food such as restaurants and hotels, the seriousness of the health situation becomes evident. This seriousness is increased by the fact that these workers live in houses which--for the most part--are unhealthy and they generally get by on small portions of un nourishing food in order to increase their savings. In addition to all this, large segments of these workers have poor health consciousness because in their native environments and as a result of ignorance and lack of resources they have acquired unhealthy hygienic and social habits. Moreover, the social customs of these workers have a great effect on important segments of Arab society in the Gulf--particularly children and young people through nurses, servants, and drivers, not to mention the other psychological and social effects resulting from the presence in the society of large numbers of unmarried young men. Certain types of crimes flourish in the communities restricted to immigrants. These crimes include drug and alcohol abuse as well as the spread of offenses against public morals and stealing which require much attention by the security authorities. There is even organized crime for which the incentive is personal ambition. Asian immigrants are even compelled to kill in some cases to obtain money.

The ads published in the daily newspapers in the Gulf reveal the crisis proportions of the search for greater gain when the Asian worker leaves the workplace where he was hired in order to search for a job with better income. The Asian workers bring their customs, values, and culture in the general sense with them to the modern and developing Gulf societies. Because of this, a strange cultural mixture of languages, dialects, customs, and traditions is created, causing some cultural phenomena to assume a strangely distorted form, being neither Arab nor Asian but rather a mixture of the two.

Arab or Non-Arab

One of the important phenomena associated with Asian labor in the Gulf is the fact that some citizens defend its presence based on their own private interests. In many investigative reports in the local press, we find that some contractors in the private sector and other citizens defend the presence of Asian workers--even those who are untrained and those who constitute a burden on the national economy and on development in general. The basis for their defense of the presence of awesome numbers of foreign workers is private welfare. One example of this is an article published in the 2 July 1981 edition of AL-ITTIHAD, a newspaper published in the UAE. In this interview, a number of local contractors gave their reasons for preferring Asian labor. One of the reasons was that these workers accept lower pay and do not make any comments about working conditions, the food service, or the quality of the food unlike the Arab worker who carefully examines everything and will not keep quiet about any unsuitable situation!

This is the way that some individuals who prefer Asian labor view the factors that justify the continued use and growth of the Asian labor force. At the head of the list of reasons for preferring Asian workers is the cheap cost of this manpower. However, this view is still based on personal interest because it does not allow for the enormous social and economic cost paid by society as a whole as a result of the savings in personal costs enjoyed by a few members of the society. This is in addition to the loss borne by the Arab homeland as a result of the loss of the income that would be realized by employing Arab workers who need that income. Still another loss is that borne by the Gulf countries through the transfer of technology purchased from the West at enormous cost to Asian workers without any benefit to the Arab or local worker. This is a tremendous loss despite the fact that it is intangible.

It is evident that support for Asian labor is not limited to individuals or small and medium size domestic companies operating in the building and construction sector. It also extends to Western companies that obtain huge job contracts from the Gulf countries. In order to enlarge their returns, these companies turn to the Asian countries to obtain labor which is both skilled and cheap so that they will not be bound by labor laws or medium-term rights for this type of labor. Naturally, this is aided by not having to be concerned with local or Arab labor. In addition, some official organizations in the Gulf turn to this cheap market to meet their needs in certain technical sectors. Therefore, the Gulf is flooded with diverse foreign labor and financial resources are transmitted to non-Arab labor exporting countries.

The amount transferred from the Gulf to one Asian country, Thailand, totaled \$500 million per year for the last 3 years of the 1970's. These remittances rank sixth among sources of Thailand's national income. When we realize that Thai workers do not constitute the largest Asian colony in the Gulf, the great reliance that the Asian countries place on foreign remittances by labor exporting states, there are those who complain that the immigrant workers return to their native countries with greater financial means and new customs that differ from those familiar to the ordinary Asian citizen in his country. This explains the fact that some workers who finish their jobs seek to escape returning to their native countries, moving from one place to another in the Gulf if

need be to escape residency and labor laws. This situation increases social tension.

"Sponsorship" jobs, through which citizens bring in Asian labor, are flourishing. It is not necessary for the citizens to employ the workers in their own installations or in private jobs. Rather, they are hired from within or released on the local market on the condition that they pay part of their income to this contractor. The demand for Asian labor is growing in all the Gulf countries to the extent that even in the area countries that are relatively rich in domestic labor, statistical indicators have begun to indicate that Asian workers will surpass the local population by the 1990's (1980 census in Bahrain). Other statistical indicators show the same trend in the remaining countries of the area.

There is a chronic lack of domestic manpower and steady growth in the immigrant labor force, prompting us to ask a big question: What will this growing foreign labor force ultimately lead to? It will certainly lead to an increase in social tension and severe cultural instability as well as affecting the development plans.

Some have begun to wonder what the development goals in the Gulf area are and who will actually benefit from them after foreign workers enter new fields such as the establishment of services agencies, internal contracting, and the opening of commercial shops--or in other words, after they attain semipermanent stability. Moreover, how can the society continue to depend on immigrant workers who are vastly out of touch with its culture and civilization for the provision of basic services?

The continuation of the "foreign complex" and contempt for manual labor on the part of widespread domestic groups will never allow domestic manpower to take over the jobs now done by immigrant labor. The luxurious reliance on this manpower will continue for a long time until a critical point is reached.

There are now in the Gulf around 10 Asian nationalities different in language, culture and religion. Among them there are numerous dialects, languages, and religions. Some nationalities specialize in certain jobs (domestic service). Thus, the Indians, Ceylonese, and Filipinos specialize in hotel employment and the Korean specialize in construction. This phenomenon has been studied at all political and academic levels to the extent that some legislative assemblies have held special sessions to discuss the issue (AL-ITTIHAD, 24 March 1981). However, no unified and affirmative policy has yet been arrived at. Basically, the problem requires a political and planning decision of the highest order. If a decision is made to regulate this labor and employ it more properly in coordination with Arab and domestic labor resources, we will have put our hands on the key to a sound means of preventing a cultural disaster that could begin with a friendly invasion.

8591

CSO: 4404/347

GCC SECRETARY GENERAL CRITICIZED FOR TV REMARKS

Kuwait AL-TALI'AH in Arabic No 736, 24 Mar 82 pp 4-5, 14

[Editorial: "The Theses of Mr Bisharah: Turn Back the Gulf, Change it into a Lake of Facilities"]

[Text] Since the inception of concept of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], its implementation and its embodiment in security and economic agreements among the six Gulf nations, there has been one ever-present and constant question: What will this coopeartion be, which is aimed at achieving unity, and what will be the extent of its influence on each of the Gulf nations individually?

This question truly was justified, in view of the real disparities between nations that have begun to pursue democratic systems and nations that still exist under Middle Ages systems, and in view of the actual disparities between nations that are independent in their foreign policies and nations that in word and fact lie prostrate in the arms of the United States and its strategic plots.

It is apparent that this question, which is based on practises that cannot be denied, has begun to receive some response from the GCC secretary general, 'Abdullah Bisharah. It is as if he had taken upon himself the task of crystallizing the GCC's philosophy, at times personally and at other times in his official capacity. Despite the fact that sometimes he doesn't clearly distinguish between his personal opinion and that of the council's, those who follow the statements, lectures and interviews of Mr Bisharah will find a similarity in what is stated by the spokesman of the GCC's general philosophy.

In a recent talk that was televised in the program "The Gulf Today," on the evening of 20 March 1982, Mr Bisharah stated what we have been afraid of, that is, that Gulf cooperation would equalize these disparities to the advantage of the more backward quarters and those who are more insistent on reversing the political, economic and military development in the Gulf and freezing them within the limits of the program of certain GCC states, and not within more advanced limits.

In this talk, four theses form, in our view, this reversal and turning back. They are:

1. The issue of American military bases in Oman:

Despite the declaration by the GCC summit conferences that it would adhere to a policy of non-alignment, that it would not accept foreign bases and that it would not accept any foreign military presence, Mr Bisharah feels that the GCC "must be tolerant and appreciative of Oman's circumstances," ignoring the fact that the issue is relative to the circumstances of United States plotting, which has spread a policy of bases and facilities, and has created a rapid intervention force from Tangiers to Oman, clearly aimed at protecting its so-called interests and the interests of the West and Israel, as a spearhead of the entire Arab region against an imaginary danger which it calls the Soviet danger. This would occur after achieving the capitulation of the rest of the Arab nations and their submission to the treaties of capitulation, and the agreements of normalization and facilities, which have surfaced as their fruits in Egypt. Does this thesis prove that the GCC has bought this delusion and has begun to pursue it? How does its policies and tolerance accord with the interests of its creators and those who are promoting it? What has become of the principle of non-alignment and non-acceptance of foreign bases and their justifications?

2. The issue of the experiment of political participation in Kuwait:

Clearly, Mr Bisharah described this democratic experience in Kuwait as being "a kind of luxury," conveying a strange levity. However, even stranger than that was Mr Bisharah's claim that the democratic system was developed for "secretariats" and the "dialogue between citizen and official," and that it was urgent that "secretariats" and "dialogue" continue. As for a parliament, that is not urgent and is "a kind of extravagance and luxury." No matter how exaggerated this view is of the democratic system as developing modern secretariats, rather than as a constitutional system that guarantees popular participation in political, economic and social decisions, the call for a return to "secretariats" means a call for return to the extinct tribal society and a denial of any modern development that has led to the formation of modern states, and not to the formation of modern tribes. With this point, we find ourselves in Kuwait as if we were being driven by the logic of certain Gulf parties to go back in time, in the name of cooperation.

3. The issue of GCC justifications and the relationship between its states:

Mr Bisharah raises a strange point here about the GCC nations, since he considers them to be merely portions or subdivisions of one large tribe. He insists on the blood relationships. "All of them are in fact cousins who have intermarried and have made the family larger." In his view, this forms the basis for the GCC.

Here we also find a strange philosophy aimed at changing the economic, social and political ties to ties of blood and genealogy, a philosophy that backs away not only from the pan-Arab bond, but also from all the other religious and sectarian ties. It degenerates into the most backward of all ties, the family relationship. This is in spite of science and history, and the course of development, which has been evolving this connection for thousands of years. Is there a modern state, or any modern policies, based on the family relationship?

4. The issue of Gulf security being connected to Palestine :

Here, Mr Bisharah refers to the shifting of the Gulf's role from one of assistance and support to a role of participation in the political decision. He emphasizes that there can be no stability in the Gulf so long as the Palestinian problem is not resolved.

Therefore, the Gulf states should participate in fashioning the political decision regarding the Palestinian issue. But how? According to him, they should speak out for certain other Arab nations on behalf of the Palestinian issue, and report the views of certain Arab states to the Western nations or to the United States. Finally, he sees in the Saudi initiative, a Saudi-Gulf initiative.

This is the concept and limits of Gulf participation in solving the Palestinian question, in Mr Bisharah's view. If we recall a previous statement of his, in which he stressed that the interests of the West, and especially the interests of the United States, coincided with the interests of the Gulf states, we can deduce what kind of participation Mr Bisharah had in mind.

As for our being able to see any mutual interests between our people and the West, the Americans and "Israel," we believe that the Gulf's role in this conflict is a different one. It is to take part in the conflict against the enemy who threatens to swallow up the entire Arab area, not just Palestine, in the interests of his economic, military and social security. Therefore, participation must be based on the premise of safeguarding Arab interests and not Western, American and Israeli interests. There is a definite distinction between what is truly in our interests and what is in the interests of the Israeli-American enemy. Our Gulf people know that when the Americans come, the Israeli-American are right behind them, because of the dramatic decision between the two allies that brought them together into a comprehensive strategic alliance, which serves them directly, that diverts our people's attention away from the real direction that the occupation will come from, and screens their view of the facts of the situation, whether on the local, Arab or international level.

Again we raise the question, is this the GCC's philosophy? Is this the course that it is taking?

Mr Bisharah's statements are dangerous, and their danger stems from the fact that they come from the GCC's secretary general. To be silent about them would mean tacit agreement. If cooperation and coordination, or rather, unity among the Gulf peoples is desired by all national forces, then these policies and trends should be rejected, even though they come under these lustrous titles.

7005

CSO: 4404/404

FORMER DIPLOMAT HELPING TO FORM GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE

Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German No 112 15 May 82 p 6

[Interview of Abdul Rahman Pajwak by Klaus Natorp]

[Text] In the next few days, an important personage will impact on the Afghan resistance groups from his Pakistan exile in Peshawar, that is, Abdul Rahman Pajwak, who for many years was Afghanistan's head delegate to the United Nations and president of the U.N. General Assembly in the session year of 1966-67. The 63-year-old diplomat Pajwak, who just a short while ago was in Kabul, either under house arrest or constant watch by the police, enjoys high prestige in the camp of the nonaligned movement as well as in western countries.

In late March, the Kabul regime permitted Pajwak to go to India where he wanted to get medical treatment since he has had a stomach ailment for years and has been almost constantly bedridden lately. The treatment in New Delhi must have been good since he improved in a short time, and he decided to offer his services to the Afghan resistance and resettle in Pakistan. He used the time before Pakistan gave him a visa to visit old friends in West Germany where he had been Afghan ambassador for several months in 1973.

In Peshawar, Pajwak will try to unite the various rival political organizations of the Afghan resistance into an alliance so the Mujahedin freedom fighters will at least get political representation that speaks with one voice. So far, all such moves have failed.

Pajwak also deems it necessary that an Afghan government in exile be formed as soon as possible. He denies, however, that he wants to form and lead a government, as many have said. In an interview with this newspaper in Bonn, he said he feels too old and sick to do so. He is, however, willing to cooperate in forming a government in exile if it is so desired.

Evidently Pajwak has already had contact with the resistance movement before his departure from Afghanistan because he is counting on being received in a friendly manner there. Since he reached the high point of his career during the era of the monarchy and the era of President Dawud, he is one of the present leaders in the Afghan resistance from the rulers of that time who

have been persecuted--and it could have been otherwise. The dismissal of Pajwak after the April Revolution in 1978, and his persecution by and resistance to the communist regime in Kabul have obviously contributed to the fact that no more rancor exists between the political leaders of the resistance and the most experienced and respected diplomats that Afghanistan has had up until 4 years ago.

The Afghan exile groups in Pakistan must be blind if they do not use the prestige connected with the name of Pajwak for their cause. The flight of Pajwak is in any case another serious blow to the communist regime in Kabul. Members of his family who have remained in Afghanistan are already feeling the wrath of the rulers. Pajwak has undertaken wherever he goes to publicize the horrors the Soviet occupation troops have committed in his country.

In an interview with this newspaper, he deplored the fact that people in the western countries have not been sufficiently informed about conditions in Afghanistan and has demanded that "the media" produce more "direct reports" than so far, that is, send their own correspondents to Afghanistan. Primarily from Germany, so far too few reporters have been in the combat areas. Indeed, interest in the West about the ongoing Soviet aggression in Afghanistan has been shamefully slight.

The worst part is the destruction of Afghan culture, the old way of life, the social structure, and the educational system. Destroyed villages can be rebuilt and the burned fields restored, Pajwak said, but Afghan culture is probably unretrievably lost if the Russians succeed in vigorously pushing the sovietization of Afghanistan in all areas. Almost all the books in the schools have already been replaced.

Pajwak will also try to operate on the diplomatic level again. He is considering calling an international conference on Afghanistan under the auspices of the United Nations in which the permanent members of the Security Council and representatives of all continents should take part because Afghanistan has, meanwhile, become a global problem. According to Pajwak's conception, Soviet security interests can be satisfied by an agreement in the Security Council. However, Pajwak rejects the "Finlandization" of Afghanistan. According to his experience, the Afghan people will not permit anyone to make rules for their politics--"even if the struggle lasts 50 years."

CSO: 4620/45

AGRICULTURAL DELEGATION RECEIVED BY SED IN SCHWERIN

Schwerin SCHWERINER VOLKSZEITUNG in German 3-4 Apr 82 p 6

[Interview with S. T. Peykargar by Dietmar Altenkirch date and place not given]

[Text] A few days ago a delegation of Afghanistan's Democratic Peoples Party visited our bezirk. It became familiar with the work of the National Front, with agriculture and with private and communal operations. At the end of their stay, the Schwerin newspaper spoke with Sayed Taher Shah Peykargar, leader of the delegation and candidate of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Good Experiences for Development Back Home

SVZ: For 3 days you and your delegation were guests of our bezirk. What was the purpose of this trip?

Peykargar: We are very happy that, by invitation of the SED Central Committee, we were also able to visit the Schwerin bezirk. The 3 days we spent here were filled with impressions. We informed ourselves thoroughly about the work of the SED's bezirk organization and of the National Front, as well as agriculture.

You must know, our revolution is still very young. It began on 27 April 1978 with the fall of the reactionary Daud regime and the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Since then we have experienced fundamental changes. The rule of the big feudal lords came to an end, land and water distribution reforms were introduced, and measures were taken to solve economic and social problems in the interest of the people. We want to continue this process. We are now in the second phase of the National Democratic Revolution. Its tasks have been summarized by the first national conference in an action program. The experiences of our friends are an important help when solving these tasks. Here, in the Schwerin bizirk, we became convinced that very good experiences were gathered during the development of socialism.

Interesting Meetings in the Bezirk

SVZ: What all did you look at and what was especially noteworthy for you?

Peykargar: We visited Gorlosen, a community in the Ludwigslust kreis, we looked at communal installations and visited a communal farmer in his home. We were convinced that the people live in happiness and peace, but that they are also working for that. We gained similar impressions during a visit in a private bakery in Schwerin and in the PGH "Three Shields." It was important for us to see how the simple man works, how he lives, what he thinks and feels.

We saw concretely how under SED leadership all people, members of the most varied strata of society, of different parties and also those who do not belong to any party are mobilized into active cooperation in the development of socialism. There is a saying in classical Marxism: The theory turns into a material force, once it grips the masses. Here, the theory has become practice; here, the entire nation attains great achievements in the strengthening of socialism. For that reason, we have very thoroughly studied the modus operandi of the National Front, which includes various parties and mass organizations. As I have said before, we are in a new phase of the revolution. We must mobilize all forces for the new tasks, especially the strengthening of the people's power and of the confidence in it as well as for the protection of our revolutionary achievements. We have restructured our party, the Democratic People's Party, and we have formed social organizations which encompass many layers of society. They belong to the National Patriotic Front which held its first national congress in June of last year. A national committee was formed, also corresponding bezirk organizations. This is an ongoing process, it is fully underway. So what we are saying here is of very practical importance, especially for even closer ties between our party and the people.

April Revolution Decisively Defended

SVZ: You spoke of the defense of the revolution, which is a thorn in the side of the reaction.

Peykargar: Improvements in the social and political life do not come easily because our work is hindered time and again by attacks by the domestic and foreign counterrevolution. In that, imperialism plays an infamous role. It is training counterrevolutionaries in Pakistan, supplies them with arms and infiltrates them into our country. They burn down schools, burn the harvest, destroy bridges, murder children, women and the aged. Our people hate these bandits, their imperialist helpers, and make great sacrifices in their fight against them. In this struggle, the solidarity of all socialist nations, especially the friendship and cooperation of the Soviet Union is of great significance.

SVZ: There were also plans by the United States to have an Afghanistan Day on 21 March. In Washington, they mobilized 600 people for that purpose....

Peykargar: ...while in our capital Kabul 250,000 citizens demonstrated against United States interference in the internal affairs of our country. It is nothing new that the United States feels "solidarity" ties to the Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

Babrak Karmal said about this latest attempt at interference: wherever imperialism had to suffer defeat, whether in Vietnam or in Czechoslovakia, it held "days of solidarity," solidarity with the counterrevolution. History has since forgotten these days, and it will be the same for the Afghanistan Day. We will decisively defend the ideas of the April Revolution.

SVZ: As a final question, would you characterize the role of youth in this just war?

Peykargar: It receives all our attention. In our youth we see the backbone of our party. The Democratic Youth Organization was founded in 1978. Its members, organized in large groups, actively participated in the building up of our society--e.g., mining areas--and also in national defense. One hundred thousand youths have recently welcomed the resolutions of the national conference in a big demonstration. They are prepared to solve all tasks put to them. The many pioneering groups belonging to our youth organization, who were given the names of fallen heroes, preserve their memory.

Finally, I would like to send cordial greetings to all readers of the Schweriner Volkszeitung, and wish them success in their daily work.

9328

CSO: 4620/39

BAHRAIN

INTERVIEW WITH PRIME MINISTER

GF160450 Manama GULF DAILY NEWS in English 15 May 82 pp 6, 7

['Text' of interview with Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah ibn Sulman al Khalifah by Johathan Wallace, chief executive of Middle East Economic Digest, RECENTLY, presumably in Manama]

[Text] [Question] International business confidence in the Gulf has been shaken by a number of recent events--notably the war between Iran and Iraq and the attempted insurrection here in Bahrain last December. Do you think this warning of confidence for the future security of the region is justified?

[Answer] No, it is not justified as such. I think there is a lot of exaggeration on this.

Of course, what happens in this area concerns everybody, because security is a very important matter for development, investment and for business generally. So, when war broke out everyone here was very concerned about it--but not to the extent that it frightened people into stopping business or questioning future plans for the area.

I think the most important factor is the creation of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC). This should give both East and West more confidence in the continuation of stable business in the area.

[Question] Could you give a brief account of the events in Bahrain last December?

[Answer] We discovered these plots. They were supported by a foreign power and organised by other countries. We are very glad that we stamped on the plotters in time. They didn't represent anything very dangerous to us but we are not used to this sort of thing so we had to take strong action.

But this is not to say that this affair was not a serious matter for Bahrain, so we could not allow it to continue or to erupt again.

We feel that with the co-operation of other countries in the area we will have a broader knowledge of what is happening in the region and who it is that is trying to create unrest in our countries.

[Question] Who do you assume is behind this unrest?

[Answer] We have said enough about the country behind these people because we knew at the beginning that there were some training camps in this neighbouring country. They were designed to create unrest in the countries of the Gulf and this has been realised--not only in Bahrain--but all over the Gulf states.

[Question] The trial of the 72 plotters has been concluded. When will judgment and sentencing be given?

[Answer] Judgment will be given on May 20. Sentences may be handed out after this. In this context I must say that there has been a lot of exaggeration, elaboration and propaganda about how many people have been arrested. The Western press is especially at fault by speaking to irresponsible people and reporting that thousands have been arrested.

We assure everybody that the whole prison population of Bahrain (including those arrested for driving offences, theft and so on) is less than 500. This is a very, very low percentage of population for any country--even in the Gulf now.

These 72 people who were arrested are the only people arrested in this connection. Of course, there are those who escaped: we have their names and we know where they are.

[Question] What have been the consequences of this event? Is there increased security now? What lessons has the government learned?

[Answer] Yes, we have increased our security. But if you look around, Bahrain has the least security of anywhere in the Gulf area. Of course, what happened in December shocked everybody--nobody expected it. The people still do not realise how near to disaster the island was. So security has been increased and we will continue to strengthen it because we work from the minimum.

[Question] The causeway project has security implications. How is it progressing?

[Answer] It is moving ahead very well and we do not see it as a security risk at all. We look at it as strengthening our security. We are developing; we are not standing still. This is part of our development.

When Bahrain is joined to the mainland so cars can travel from here to Saudi Arabia and Europe--this is progress. Then it depends on how you use that progress. We are just as human as Western people. Nobody's perfect, but at least we are moving forward and we try to learn from the experience of other countries. We have ample time to prepare for the impact of the causeway on Bahrain.

[Question] Do you see the causeway as making the security pact signed with Saudi Arabia in December much more viable?

[Answer] I see the security pact as a frame on a nice picture. We must protect this nice picture and put security around it to protect our development. Before, as we developed ourselves from nothing, security was in the hearts of the people. Now we feel that we must protect ourselves from the outside, so we must put a frame around--a strong frame--to allow us to continue what we have been working on for many years.

[Question] Do you have any indication as to the progress of the Iran-Iraq war and when we might expect an end to the fighting?

[Answer] War is a disaster. Any country going to war--whether for short or long time--comes out a loser. We see this war as destroying two neighbouring countries. It is not to the benefit of these two countries or of any country in the Gulf to have this war continue.

As you know, the Iraqis offered peace terms at least a year ago. Unfortunately, the other side was not co-operative and would not listen to reason.

[Question] So you feel the war will drag on?

[Answer] There are some efforts being made to stop the war. I know very well that the Iraqis are prepared to co-operate in the present mediation attempts but, unfortunately, the other side has shown no willingness to stop this war. This is very sad, but we will continue our efforts to end the fighting.

[Question] Do you think it is necessary for Bahrain to increase its defences? You recently ordered aircraft and missiles from the U.S.--will there be more weapons purchases?

[Answer] It is necessary for Bahrain to increase its defences and we will work to strengthen them.

[Question] Saudi Arabia sees the role of the U.S. as crucial to the area's stability. Others feel that the U.S. is a generator of instability in the area. What are your views of American foreign policy in this part of the world?

[Answer] American foreign policy is not new to us. We have good relations with the U.S., as Bahrain, and so we know U.S. foreign policy. We cannot be the one, out of so many countries, to say that the U.S. is the reason for this or for that.

[Question] What, exactly, has the GCC achieved so far and what might be accomplished in the future?

[Answer] It has taken a long time to form this council and has been in our minds for many, many years. The creation of the GCC alone is an achievement because, when you look at the regimes in the council, they are all alike; all that is now needed is co-operation within the existing law and legislation which we have.

We have good relations with each other but we want a single voice, we want unified legislation, we want free movement of our people between member states. Our people moved freely among the Gulf states before the council was formed but now it is time to put everything in writing and to see how we can improve our cooperation.

[Question] The other factor for instability is seen by some to be the Soviet threat (from Afghanistan and South Yemen). Do you see this as a real threat to the Gulf?

[Answer] No. I would like to say that we are continually told that there is a threat from the Russians. We are the judges of that. I think that we should have relations with all the nations of the world. It depends whether we have diplomatic relations or not. But we should not say that this country or that country is a threat or not. I cannot agree that the Russians are a threat to the area.

CSO: 4400/275

BAHRAIN

BRIEFS

IRANIAN HELICOPTER LANDING--Bahrain--An Iranian National Oil Company helicopter with two people on board made an emergency landing on Wednesday night at Bahrain airport, government officials said yesterday. Bahrain had contacted the Iranian Government and the Bell Helicopter and its crew were free to return to Iran, they said. They said the crew was questioned by security authorities but the landing was being treated as an emergency and not as a defection attempt by the two, they said. [Text] [GF150846
Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 14 May 82 p 4]

CSO: 4400/275

KHOMEYNI SEEN TIGHTENING NOOSE ON SHARI'ATMADARI

Frankfurt FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German 28 Apr 82 p 12

[Article by Wolfgang Guenter Lerch: "Power Struggle in Iran--By Stripping Shari'atmadari of Power, Khomeyni Triumphs Once More"]

[Text] In Qom, the "holy city" of the Iranian Shiites, the respected Islamic scholar Ayatollah Shari'atmadari has been placed under house arrest. The government accuses him of having been implicated in a coup attempt instigated by former Foreign Minister Qotbzadeh. A body composed of high-ranking Islamic scholars has stripped Shari'atmadari of all religious dignities. The government in Tehran does not even rule out the possibility of a trial being instituted against him, it being claimed that data are available documenting his participation in the coup attempt.

Tehran has long since been anxious to rid itself of the "liberal" ayatollah. In the first phase of the Iranian revolution, when it was still permissible for newspapers not fully supporting the "line of the imam" to appear, Shari'atmadari had protested the increasing totalitarian trends, particularly in the treatment of the Iranian minorities--Kurds, Turkmen, Baluchis, Arabs and Azerbaijanis.

Shari'atmadari represents the last named, a Turkish-speaking people of about 10 million which played an important role in the struggle against Iranian rulers--first the last of the Qajar, and then the two emperors of the Pahlavi dynasty. Already during the "mashrutiyyeh," the 1905-1911 "constitution revolution," the capital of Iranian Azerbaijan, Tabriz, had been one of the centers of the struggle against the Iranian monarchy. In 1979 thousands of supporters of Shari'atmadari took to the street in behalf of "their" ayatollah to back his moderate views about Islamization and the treatment of minorities.

These days, however, there are no protests in Tabriz. Today Azerbaijan--unlike Kurdistan--no longer is a province of unrest as far as the central government is concerned. The Tehran propagandists have discredited Ayatollah Shari'atmadari so thoroughly in his homeland that now but few Azerbaijani dare take his side. As long as 2 years ago, word went out from Tehran that Shari'atmadari was a "tool of the counterrevolution" and that his moderate attitude was serving the interests of the enemies of the Islamic revolution. These slanders are having their effect to this day, it having been reported

that in the past few days demonstrators in Tabriz even demanded the "execution" of Shari'atmadari.

The action against the 82-year-old Islamic scholar is, however, also connected with the power struggle being waged at present in the country's religious and political centers for the succession to the leader of the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeyni. Shari'atmadari is among the 6 "ayatollah al'ozma," the top "leaders" standing out among the about 1,000 or 2,000 Islamic scholars who have attained the rank of "ordinary" ayatollah. Only these six are serious contenders to succeed Khomeyni.

It is no secret that, apart from Shari'atmadari, Ayatollahs Golpayegani, Najafi-Mar'ashi and Qomi have not always been in agreement with Khomeyni's "line." Unlike Shari'atmadari, however, they apparently have now switched to Khomeyni's ideas and put aside their dissident views on various questions. In accordance with the constitution, after Khomeyni's death a body of experts has to be elected which will decide who is to succeed the leader of the revolution. The ayatollah who advocates without restrictions the radical-religious ideology of the Islamic Republic Party (IRP), which interprets Islam in totalitarian fashion, will have the best chance.

This party's dominance in Iranian domestic policy is complete, and as a result an early collapse of the present regime is out of the question--not even after the death of the leader of the revolution. The government in Tehran has managed to get the bazaar merchants on its side again--not to speak of the masses of the mostaz'efin, the "disinherited and disfranchised." the millions of poor in Iran are the backbone of the radical-religious regime.

From among its ranks come the young volunteers who are seeking a "martyr's death" at the front in the war with Iraq. And the mostaz'efin also provide the bulk of the "Pasdaran" or Revolutionary Guards, whose squads the government can employ as the most important element of repression. Since the overthrow of the shah, the population of Tehran is said to have increased from about 4.5 million to not quite 7 million. The mostaz'efin who have come from the rural areas constitute an almost inexhaustible reservoir for the troops of the Revolutionary Guards.

In the past few months Tehran has also managed to exploit the victories in the war against neighboring Iraq, now more than 1 and 1/2 years old, for propaganda with a view to stabilizing its regime. Together with its closest ally, Syrian President Assad, Tehran has gone so far as to call for the overthrow of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who in the eyes of the ideologues of the Islamic Republic has become the third "sheytan" (Satan) besides Washington and Moscow. And appeals to the religious feelings and messianic expectations of the Shiite Iranian masses are also helping to put up with the increasing economic difficulties.

Moreover a clever policy of distribution has led to a situation where, in the opinion of European economic experts, the mostaz'efin are only negligibly worse off than they were before the revolution. Apparently Moscow also is helping to plug the biggest economic gaps. Tehran's trade with the Soviet Union has been increasing steadily in the past few months.

It would nevertheless be a mistake to underestimate the resistance of the oppositionist forces. Again and again reports about spectacular actions by the leftist Muslim "people's mujahedin" or other groups are reaching the public--for instance, about the Lavizan Barracks in Tehran having been taken by storm or about a rising in the town of Amol near the Caspian Sea in which more than 60 Revolutionary Guards are said to have been killed. But the echo of such actions in the country appears to be small, particularly since the supporters of the "people's mujahedin" and those of the "National Front" generally come from the sparse middle class, which is no longer rebelling at the repression.

8790

CSO: 4620/43

IRAN

PLANS DISCUSSED FOR AN ISLAMIC COMMON MARKET

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 1 May 82 p 5

[Speech by Minister of Labor Ahmad Tavakkoli]

[Text] The proposal for an Islamic common market among the Muslim countries was raised by the authorities of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially Hojjatoleslam Khamene'i, the president. The establishment of commercial transactions and signing of economic agreements between low-income Islamic countries will form the basis for an Islamic common market. Under the conditions of global oppression and imperialism, headed by the world-devouring United States, which has clamped the shackles of economic dependence on the legs of deprived nations, economic relations among Islamic and non-dependent countries will be a move towards the negation of global capitalist economic domination. By establishing a single united economic line, the anti-imperialist Islamic governments can stand up against the oppressive Satanic powers and by creating a common market, they can provide for their economic and commercial needs as much as possible. According to the political and economic authorities of the country, relative harmony in confronting the economic domination of global oppression and harmony among the members of the market, working towards the rule of Islamic economic guidelines, are among the primary principles in establishing a common market. According to these principles, that group of Islamic governments which do not have a clear policy against the domination of global oppression or are dependent politically, militarily, or economically on global imperialism cannot play an effective role in an Islamic common market.

In the opinion of one of the authorities and experts on Islamic economics, the first principle in establishing a common market is political agreement among the countries which intend to create the common market. Hence, it must be said that without political agreement, overall economic and commercial relations among Islamic countries cannot be established. A look at the history of the formation of economic common markets among countries

shows that these markets have generally been created on the basis of common political goals and mutual economic interests. For instance, the European Common Market has been created on the basis of the common economic and political interests of several capitalist countries. These countries follow a specific goal in carrying out their economic and commercial policies. In the view of the experts, an Islamic common market must be based on Islamic ideology and mutual economic and political interests. Therefore, that group of countries which are superficially Islamic but actually agents of pro-American Islam and conform their economic and military policies to the interests of global imperialism, will not have a place in the Islamic common market. Economics experts say that the establishment of a common market must take place step by step. In order to eliminate the policies of economic imperialism, the Islamic countries must start by trading in limited goods and strengthen the common market by eliminating customs duties and commercial profits. One of the goals in establishing a concentrated, collective power in the buying, selling, and trading of goods is that it can carry an weight in global economy and politics. If an Islamic country enters the world economic and political scene with clear, anti-imperialist policies, it will be only one country against the capitalist oppressive powers; but if this same country enters the world market backed by the support of its allied countries, it will be a powerful force against the imperialist powers. According to the economic authorities of the country, the establishment of an Islamic common market among allied countries requires much study and examination, because this idea has not yet been discussed in its fundamental form and on the basis of the goals and policies of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In connection with the establishment of an Islamic common market, we asked the opinions of several national authorities. The minister of labor and spokesman of the government, the minister of economic and financial affairs, and the deputy minister for foreign affairs answered our questions concerning an Islamic common market in this issue.

Views of Minister of Labor and Government Spokesman

In an interview, Ahmad Tavakkoli, the minister of labor and government spokesman, said to us concerning the characteristics of an Islamic common market: "Certainly, the relations between several Muslim countries must be based on Islamic laws and guidelines. The first basis for the establishment of a common market is this very principle. Another point in establishing a common market is that the members of the market must move towards independence and self-sufficiency by providing for their own needs. These countries must be able to eliminate each other's weaknesses and, after a while, stand on their own feet, independently, as far as possible. Commercial relations between dominator and dominated countries are always unilateral, such that the dominated countries will never be able to independently provide their needs.

However, in establishing a common market, Islamic equality and brotherhood will rule. This important Islamic principle will manifest itself in a common market in terms of economic independence. /Another point in the establishment of an Islamic common market is that relations must be, as far as

possible, such that they will decrease the dependence of the Islamic countries on the superpowers" [in boldface].

One issue that is considered in the establishment of an Islamic common market is that some of Islamic countries are dependent on global oppression and imperialism. In connection with this issue, Ahmad Tavakkoli said: "This dependence exists, to varying degrees, among all the countries alike. Presently, the growth of Islamic nations is increasing day by day. Naturally, this growth influences the directions of the governments. We believe that if an Islamic common market is established, a relatively significant increase in the contact between these nations will ensue and this will raise the level of Islamic culture. We must pay attention to the point that the relative dependence of some of the countries must not be an obstacle in our relations with them. If it should present no problem that as a Muslim country, 86 percent of our foreign trade is with the West, how can it be that when we procure a part of our needs through our neighboring Muslim brothers, this relationship is considered imperfect merely because that country has good relations with the West? How can it be that if we have the immediate need for Western companies, there is no objection, but if we have relations with the commercial companies of Islamic countries whose governments are dependent on the superpowers, this is considered incorrect? We believe that this will result in the countries, even on the level of governments, becoming closer to one another and that many of the governments will feel that relying on the superpowers is unnecessary, that instead of relying on the superpowers, they can rely on their own nations. By changing their policy lines, these countries can be free and independent, like Iran, and can help all the oppressed people of the world."

The government spokesman continued: "When we went to Malaysia, we became familiar with one of the major products of Malaysia, caoutchouc. (This product is very vital to the rubber industry.) /On this trip, we noted that 25 percent of the 50 percent of imported caoutchouc is produced in Malaysia although we buy this caoutchouc from British companies/ [as published; in boldface]. With the establishment of the common market, we will be able to purchase caoutchouc directly from Malaysia without the intermediary British company, which is a plundering imperialist merchant. In this manner, we would eliminate the British middleman. If we do not establish the common market with the participation of Malaysia, which has good relations with the West, we will not be able to cast aside the plundering British middleman and establish a common market which would decrease the influence of the superpowers and the multinational corporations."

The Statements of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ahmad 'Azizi, the deputy minister for foreign affairs, in an interview with us, pointed out the characteristics of an Islamic common market. In this connection, he said:

"The characteristics of an Islamic common market can be summarized in three principles. First, there should be coordination between the voluntary countries, moving towards the rule of Islamic economic guidelines. Secondly,

there must be relative coordination among the members of the common market in confronting the global heathenist system and the economic domination of global oppression. Finally, the third principle is that the legitimacy of the goods and services to be traded must be considered according to the degree of their necessity for the Islamic society. In planning and coordinating between the countries which have been considered for participation in the creation of a common market, I propose that the guidelines and the bases for the establishment of the market be devised by the proposing country and those countries which meet the criteria be invited. The approval of the criteria for cooperation and the start of the implementary stages of planning and coordination among the member countries of the common market are necessary."

The deputy minister for foreign affairs added, concerning the future of an Islamic common market, given the dependence of some of the Islamic governments on global oppression and imperialism: "The essential goal of the Islamic countries must be the annihilation of the global system of heathenism and oppression, providing the grounds for the unity of the Islamic community to enable the total establishment of Islamic government. Naturally, the strategic goal of the Islamic Republic is the same. In carrying out our foreign policy, we always make an effort to determine and analyze the obstacles along the way to achieving this goal and move to eliminate them by means of short-term or long-term tactics. In connection with the establishment of a common market, these obstacles can be the lack of relations and understanding, expansive political and economic ties with the system of global oppression, and, ultimately, the absolute servitude to the superpowers. Through efforts to eliminate these obstacles in an appropriate time period, the essential stated goals can gradually be attained. The establishment of a common market with the preparations and principles that must be considered will provide a favorable opportunity for making this effort and will, God willing, come to fruition."

Definition of a Common Market

In th opinion of the economic experts, to establish a common market, this market must first be defined. One of the economic authorities and experts said in this regard: "When we speak of an Islamic common market, we must first determine a precise definition. From the onset, we must determine for what transactions the market is a place. /In my opinion, an Islamic common market is the place for trade in goods as well as manpower resources and for trade in and movement of capital between the member countries/ [in boldface]. That is, we want the transactions among the Islamic countries to be exactly like transactions within the borders of a country. /The establishment of an Islamic common market must be carried out step by step/ [in bold-face], because the creation of such a market is impossible in a short period of time. We cannot say that, for instance, we will have a common market starting tomorrow. All the common markets which have been created have either failed or been established step by step. This market should first include limited items; that is, it should include that group of items for which a country is known and which are not produced in another country. By exchanging this type of goods, the common market can be established step by step. In my opinion, the Islamic countries must create a division of goods

and division of labor among themselves, so that, for example, when an item which is not produced in Iran or another Islamic country and can be produced in Pakistan, Pakistan can participate in the common market by raising the production of that item. This country can sell us or other countries that item. We can also raise the level of production of our exclusive goods and put them at the disposal of Islamic countries.

Experts say that one of the principles of common markets is the elimination of customs duties and commercial profits. The meaning of this principle is that the goods which are exported from Iran to other countries are subject to customs duties and that the set price of this item in that country consists of the primary price plus customs duties. But the common market eliminates these customs obstacles. An economic expert says, concerning the elimination of customs duties in the common market: "In removing the customs obstacles, an important issue must be considered. That is, the division or the examination of the true potential and practical resources of every country must be taken into consideration in eliminating customs obstacles. If we eliminate the customs obstacles between the member countries of the common market, it would facilitate the entry of goods and bring down their prices. Noting this issue, the resources of every country must be studied as a basis for planning the common market. For instance, if we have the resources to produce an item or one kind of raw material, we consider whether or not it is to our advantage to bring this item into the common market. The products of other countries must also be placed under our scrutiny in the same way. In light of the points mentioned, the common market must have the force or power for agricultural, industrial, and commercial production and its potential and practical resources must be carefully studied."

Standards for Being Islamic

In the opinion of the national authorities, Islamic strategic unity among the member countries of the common market is one of the goals of the Islamic Republic. But, at the same time, the guidelines and standards for being Islamic must be clarified. One of those involved in the foreign policy of the country said: "As a Muslim country, we have in mind that one day, all the Islamic nations must follow the same line and must have strategic unity among themselves. One of the manifestations of the unity of Islamic countries will be that they will slowly trade their products in a way similar to trading within a country. What must be considered in establishing a common market is whether we want to operate regionally or on the basis of the political systems of the countries or on the population of each country. We must determine which countries are Muslim countries and, on the whole, what the standards for membership in the Islamic common market are. In establishing this market, we must take into consideration whether only the Muslim countries in one region should participate or all the Islamic countries throughout the world should be members of this market. We must know, for instance, whether an Islamic country in southwest Africa should be a member of this common market. All these issues which I have mentioned must be clarified for us. If a distant Islamic country is a member of the market, the issue of delays in the delivery of goods will be raised. In any case, in my opinion, without a political agreement, we cannot put our economic

power at the disposal of another country. In any case, the establishment of an Islamic common market has advantages, which I mention here. Presently, many of the Islamic countries are uninformed about the economic resources of one another as a result of the domineering economic policies of global imperialism, especially that of the United States. The more the Islamic countries are able to eliminate each other's needs, even at the lower levels of technological goods and expertise, obviously, not only will they decrease their dependence on global imperialism and oppression, but they will also strike powerful blows against global imperialism. I must give you an example in this regard. When we buy some goods from the United States, another country also buys the same item from the United States and several other countries also buy the same goods from the United States [as published]. If we establish a common market, we will find out which country produces this item and we will purchase directly from that country. For instance, instead of importing rice from the United States, we will purchase it directly from Pakistan and in this way, strike out against the economy of global imperialism and capitalism.

9593

CSO: 4640/293

IRAN

AIMS, ADVANTAGES OF ISLAMIC COMMON MARKET EXPOUNDED

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 2 May 82 p 5

[Speech by Minister of Economic and Financial Affairs Dr Namazi]

[Text] The common goal of the Islamic countries in establishing a common market must be liberation from the economic domination of the neo-colonialists. Millions of oppressed Muslims lack political and economic independence under the oppression of global imperialism in the rich continents of Asia and Africa. Meanwhile, the functionary, dependent governments of some of the African and Asian countries, in the form of dealers in global oppression, keep their nations in absolute poverty. The commercial and economic market of the dominated countries is in the hands of international plunderers. Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic of Iran has raised the issue of creating an Islamic common market among the Muslim nations. According to the economic and political authorities of the country, although the creation of a common market is still in the very preliminary stages, this plan can be the basis for common economic ties between the oppressed Muslim nations. Under these circumstances, models of Islamic governments and the considerations governing their membership in the common market must be devised, and relations with superficially Islamic governments which are mercenaries of imperialism must be prevented.

The most important factors in creating a common market are to have common anti-imperialist and anti-oppression goals and to believe in Islamic ideology. For instance, the Muslim countries of Algeria, Syria, and Libya, which have, for many years, fought colonialists and imperialists on the global scene and have fought against the economic domination of global imperialism in their countries by relying on the force of their Muslim masses, can be friends and allies of the Islamic Republic of Iran in establishing a common market. Those governments which have proven their servitude to global imperialism in all economic, political, and military areas shall not have a place in the Islamic common market. Engineer Musavi, the prime minister, also believes that creating any kind of distance between the oppressive superpowers and Muslim countries and establishing relations

between the Third World countries are in the interests of the oppressed nations, because the countries which have been kept underdeveloped have common economic and political interests. In the opinion of the prime minister, building a common foundation among Third World countries concerning economic and trade issues will enable these countries to play their true role in the global scene in the future. Therefore, in the opinion of the experts, an important aspect of the goal of creating a common market can be to pressure international plunderers. If Muslim and anti-imperialist countries work together in a common market, they will be able to close this market to the goods of plundering imperialist companies and by exerting economic pressures on the bloodthirsty imperialists and bring them to their knees. An awareness of the resources and needs of each country and a common plan will raise the technological capability of the Muslim countries which have been kept underdeveloped. Presently, about 80 percent of the world oil resources are located in the Middle East and a great deal of the natural wealth is to be found in Asia and Africa. Correct utilization of these resources and joint economic plans among the members of the market will provide for the needs of Muslim countries.

The Views of the Minister of Economic Affairs

Dr Namazi, the minister of economic and financial affairs, expressed his views in an interview with us concerning an Islamic common market. First, concerning the characteristics of such a common market, he said: "In regards to a common market, I must say that in our foreign and economic relations, we must either look at the issue from an absolutist or a relativist perspective. In other words, if from an absolutist perspective we say that we should have relations with a country only if it is in total agreement with us from the standpoint of intellectual principles and Islamic ideology, this is impossible, because a large part of the countries in the world are non-Islamic or anti-Islamic, including capitalist or communist countries. There are also Islamic countries that are more or less dependent on the superpowers of the East and West. Therefore, considering the fact that our economic relations with other countries is an inevitability, we have to have relations with other countries. If we want to clarify these relations from a relativist perspective, we must see with which of the countries of the world we can have more relations and, in fact, with which countries it would be more advantageous for us to create economic relations. If we look at foreign relations from an absolutist perspective, there might not be even one country in the world which would approach this issue the same way. Even the European Common Market has members with different political views. In certain cases, these countries have conflicting economic interests. Therefore, we must look at our economic and political relations with other countries from a relativist perspective."

The minister of economic affairs said concerning the manner of economic and political relations with other countries: "The point that must be kept in mind in regards to a common market is the relationship between economic and political issues. Of course, it must be said that political relations and economic relations between countries are always of a particular nature, dependent on the special characteristics of the economic issues. For

instance, suppose that a country has perishable goods and wants to export them while other countries in the world need those items. In this case, the country which has the goods would not even consider whether or not the country that is going to buy is of the same ideological opinion in all areas. This same country might need for its domestic use such goods as raw and secondary materials, the shortage of which would greatly harm the economy of its country. Hence, it will try to import that item from another country. This country as well will not think about the issue of whether or not the country that exports that item is of the same opinion with it in all political aspects."

Mutual Interests in the Common Market

Dr Namazi believes that the principle behind a common market is based on mutual interests of the nations of the region. He explains: "The principle of the consideration of mutual interests is one of the first principles for the establishment of an Islamic common market. We look at the Islamic common market from this perspective, but certainly other considerations must also be taken into account in this market. Perhaps one of the most important fundamental principles of a common market is equitable prices in conjunction with favorable conditions for commercial trade. The end result of the consideration for this principle in the common market is that exploitive and unjust relations between nations, such as those between small countries and oppressive powers, will not exist. In establishing a common market, we are attempting to base our economic and commercial relations with other countries on justice and the elimination of exploitation." He continued: An important point that I must mention about the common market is that the establishment of such a market must be on a long-term basis; and we must plan in order to establish this market.

The question that might be raised by everyone concerning the establishment of an Islamic common market is whether economic relations among all the Islamic countries of the region might ultimately benefit the superpowers since these countries, more or less, have relations with them. But one point that must be mentioned in this regard is that these relations can, at the same time, foster a sense of independence, or at least a decrease of dependence, in the people of Islamic countries, because the existing realities, the resources of the countries, and the spirit and wishes of the people will not be ineffectual in the decisions of the governments. When the Muslim people of the countries of the Middle East realize the possibility for expanding relations among themselves and realize that through the creation of stronger political and economic relations among themselves, they will be able to rely on Islamic forces by establishing a common market, our purpose will have been attained, to a great extent. Also, the governments of the region cannot remain indifferent to the desire of the people of their countries for independence. In other words, if more economic relations are created among the people of the region, this organized economic force can form a strong centralized unit against the oppressive superpowers of the world. This force will carry much weight in the global economic scene.

Elimination of Dependence on Imperialism

In the opinion of the experts, the elimination of economic dependence on imperialist countries must be one of the goals of an Islamic common market. Presently, due to the domineering global capitalist economic policies, the Muslim people of the Asian and African countries are being exploited. The enslaving economic and commercial relations of governments dependent on imperialism have kept the industry and agriculture of the Third World countries backward and many of these countries are markets for the sale of goods imported from capitalist countries. The widespread practice of a single-product economy in the Muslim countries of the Third World and other countries is the result of the economic and commercial policies of imperialist countries, especially the United States. Our country, as well, was, during the domination of the Pahlavi regime, a market for the sale of goods imported from the West and the pulse of the Iranian market was in the hands of plundering multinational companies. Large imperialist cartels and trusts manage the markets of dependent countries any way they see fit. Their Satanic policies were exactly the same during the domination of the hated Pahlavi regime. The consumption of more than 240,000 items of imported goods from capitalist countries provided the grounds for the economic dependence of Iran on U.S. imperialism more than ever before. Presently, the purpose in creating an Islamic common market must be to provide for the needs of the deprived and non-dependent countries by encouraging mutual trade. In the opinion of the experts, by creating an Islamic common market among the anti-imperialist Muslim countries, a large portion of the needs of these countries, such as for clothing, foodstuffs, and many industrial raw materials, can be provided through a barter system. Concerning the elimination of dependence on imperialism through a common market, one expert said: "We know that imperialist governments are based on a capitalist economy. When the Islamic common market is established and commercial trade between the countries starts, even with small items, the expansion of this trade will hurt the global oppressors. We can begin trade relations in the common market with a few items and gradually expand. The establishment of a common market will mean the creation of a centralized and collective power for buying and selling which will carry much weight. With planning, the common market can also determine how to procure its needs in terms of technology and expertise. Therefore, common political and ideological lines are an essential priority in the establishment of the common market. In other words, an Islamic common market must have an ideological base. Economic harmony is inspired by ideological harmony. However, the idea of establishing a common market is still in its infancy and no specific planning has been done. We must see in practice in the future how this plan will be implemented and executed."

Views of Other Authorities on a Common Market

Several national authorities have expressed their views concerning a common market. Engineer Musavi, the prime minister, said concerning the purpose in establishing a common market: "The destiny of the Islamic countries and nations is becoming more closely tied each day. Strong, ideological roots tie the Muslim nations together. In order for relations among the Islamic

nations to expand, we must find a basis for these relations. The economic and commercial relations between Muslim countries must develop together so that these countries will be able to stand united against the superpowers. When one looks into the future, one realizes that building a common basis in economic and commercial issues among Muslim countries will enable them to attain their true role. We need very much to have relations with the nations of the region and to show them our goals. We must expand our economic and cultural exchanges with Muslim countries in order to be able to explain to the Muslims of the world our peaceful intentions."

Dr Velayati, the minister of foreign affairs, also said concerning an Islamic common market: "An Islamic common market is a very good idea, one which would encourage the Islamic countries to provide their needs, to some extent, through cooperation with one another. The goal in establishing a common market among several countries is that those countries will provide facilities and concessions in transactions among themselves. Creating economic relations between ourselves and Syria, Turkey, and countries such as Algeria and Libya and other Islamic countries can, in fact, be a first practical nucleus of a common market. We have spoken to the authorities of these countries, who have also welcomed this plan. Presently, we are making preliminary plans for such a market."

Askar-Owladi, the minister of commerce, also said, concerning a common market: "At the present time, the government has come to believe that in order to be independent of foreigners, both in regards to the country's Islamic revolution and in regards to the Muslim nations of the world, we must move toward the creation of an Islamic common market. Of course, at the present time, we cannot claim to say that the [prospective] members of the common market complement one another 100 percent. But we are taking the first step along this road and I should say that within one year we will be able to trade most of the non-industrial goods in the Islamic common market and, in this way, in regards to foodstuffs, clothing, and many industrial raw materials, complement each other."

In any case, the plan to establish a common market is a new idea which requires more research and study by those involved in the economic affairs and foreign policy of the country. In understanding the problems and difficulties concerning this plan and determining its Islamic guidelines, a new economic front made up of the Muslim countries of the Third World against global imperialism can be created.

9593

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FORMER CHARGE REVEALS FUNCTIONS AT ROME EMBASSY

Rome AVANTI in Italian 27 Apr 82 p 16

[Interview of Mohammad Hoseyn Naqdi by Fawzia Mascheroni: "The Revolution Was Betrayed"]

[Text] The former "number 1" of the Iranian Embassy explains why he resigned.

"Yes, even if I remained in Italy there could be attacks on my life. By Islamic activists, of course. I can say this on the basis of my own 7 months' experience at the Iranian Embassy. But that does not mean that I am afraid." Mohammad Hoseyn Naqdi seems well aware of the risks he is running, so much so that we succeeded in interviewing him only after many difficulties owing to the need for guaranteeing his personal safety. Naqdi, 32 years old, was the charge d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran in our country until last month. He is almost too young, too raw, to be able to carry out such a delicate role with the needed competence (the fundamentalists of Tehran have never had a sufficient number of really fully trained technical and diplomatic personnel available) and he is obviously little accustomed to making refined theoretico-political analyses. However, in the 7 most dramatic months Iran has lived through from 1979 until today he has had very close, first-hand experience with the secrets of the diplomacy of the ayatollahs.

He had barely decided to leave his office and seek political asylum at the UN when there was a response from Tehran: his brother, Ali Asghar, who had remained in the fatherland, was arrested. Naqdi commented, "He is practically a hostage. The regime has much experience in the matter of hostages. But my brother will not be so easily released."

Political prisoners in Iran today amount to tens of thousands, without counting the shootings which take place every day. But Mohammad Naqdi also has something to say about the steps taken by the Islamic Republic vis-a-vis the Iranians who live in Italy. He explained, "In addition to normal consular responsibilities, the Iranian authorities ordered me to carry out another task which I considered I could not accept: make contact with Iranian groups faithful to the regime, give them economic and political support and thus facilitate the repression of other Iranians, dissenters, and democratic opponents.

[Question] Are there written documents, circulars, official instructions about this?

[Answer] "The culture of the mullahs is more oral than written," Naqdi replied, emphasizing the term mullah with a slight sneer. "Very many instructions are transmitted verbally. But a few documents of that kind are in the files of the various Iranian embassies around the world. Another fact complicates an inquiry into who is responsible: the embassies are not only headed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Various bodies, such as Khomeyni's office, and even some Friday imams, have the authority to give instructions to officials abroad."

Some time ago our paper published the text of a circular in which Tehran prompted diplomatic missions to compile lists of followers of the Bahai religion and of "all the counterrevolutionaries, especially the so-called students," residing abroad. Our paper received no denial. "That is natural," Naqdi commented. "It is a fact and it cannot be denied. There were orders not to renew the passports for those categories of suspect persons."

Opposition sources later made public another document in which mention is apparently made of quite large financial compensation to "orthodox" Iranian elements responsible for carrying out espionage activities or provocative actions among opposition elements abroad..." I have not seen that document with my own eyes, but that does not mean there are no such payments. They generally are made by special missions Tehran sends abroad. In fact, one of their tasks does consist of paying so-called Islamic students to carry out terroristic acts, to provoke disorders with the opposition elements, and even violently mistreat them, seeking to find out their names...

A certain number of orthodox Iranian element are circulating in Italy today, bearing service passports, and are still little noted by the opposition or by the police headquarters. They are neither real students nor real officials, but pasdaran, guardians of the revolution, who came from Iran with the specific task of identifying opposition elements, provoking disorders, and so forth. If they happen to be arrested by the Italian police authorities during these activities, the embassy not only pays for their defense lawyers but even uses all diplomatic means to get them out of prison. The Iranian diplomatic and consular missions have specific orders to support Islamic activists, whatever the price may be."

[Question] You used the term "terrorism." Does it appear to you that these activities have any connection with subversive Italian organizations?

[Answer] "I can repeat to you verbatim one of the assignments they gave us: facilitate contacts by the so-called Islamic students with whatever group that could in any way help their activities. There are documents that confirm the assistance given by Italian far right groups to the so-called Islamic students. Even some officials of the Iranian diplomatic corps in Italy and of the Iranian Embassy to the Holy See have relations with the Italian far right."

[Question] You took over your responsibilities in August of last year, following the removal from office of Bani-Sadr, when the harshest and bloodiest repressive period had already begun. How did you then come to the decision to dissociate yourself from the Tehran policies?

[Answer] "The ideals of the revolutionary movement begun in 1977 were very clear: independence, freedom, a republic. Up until a few months ago I believed that the principal aim of the revolution was independence, and it was necessary to pay a certain price to attain this objective. For a short time, however. Unfortunately, I was wrong. Collaborating with the regime, I gradually saw--rather, I lived through--a process that was evolving toward ever stronger and more systematic repression. It was precisely through this repressive action, which did not relent even for one day, that the regime led the country toward a new form of total dependence on international reactionary forces."

[Question] Concerning foreign policy orientation, can one consider the regime as a monolithic bloc?

[Answer] "Aside from the Islamic Republican Party there are other groups, likewise within the regime, which follow different tendencies, from medieval extremism to fundamentalist radicalism. At the same time, even within the bosom of the IRP there are different lines; the two strongest ones are the pro-U.S. line and the pro-Soviet line."

[Question] The most recent news, for example news about the arrest of Qotbzadeh and the followers of Shariatmadari, give the impression that the current you call "pro-Soviet" is now in a stronger position.

[Answer] "In fact, the influence demonstrated by the pro-Soviets leads Western circles to think that Iran is sliding into the position of being a satellite of Moscow. However I consider that just because the Tudeh party does not enjoy any popular support it constitutes merely a group of spies: its task is to be part of the system's secret service. But history and the experiences of other Middle Eastern countries show that this espionage group will in the end be punished by the same reactionary Khomeyni regime. For the fundamentalists the only remaining possibility of survival (but I am convinced they will soon fall) consists of returning to dependence on the United States, something that has already begun. Those close relations with Pakistan, the Emirates, and with Turkey is sufficient evidence of that, not to mention the rumors that even Israel may be selling arms to Iran."

[Question] However much more numerous and meaningful accords have been concluded with the USSR, Bulgaria, and Libya; even Syria sells arms to the ayatollah.

[Answer] "Certainly, because the struggle for power in Tehran is not over. There are no really independent persons in the regime."

[Question] You have said you now wished to join the National Resistance Council of Bani-Sadr and Rajavi. Why did you select that among all the opposition groups?"

[Answer] "I have no doubt that the Council is the only democratic and progressive alternative in a position to solve my country's problems, the only force that enjoys a widespread popular consensus in Iran. Its political line is clear; its economic program is responsive to the most urgent problems. Iranian society is complex: there are workers, peasants, a national bourgeoisie, the great mass of the bureaucratic service, and various ethnic minorities. A front open to everyone is essential." Naqdi now seems nervous, worried that the press could give too much importance to his little personal story, to the detriment of the political significance of his decision. He presses us to take note of his appeal to political and trade union organizations, and to the Italian people, to support the National Resistance Council. And he hopes that the fate of his brother will not be forgotten: he well understands the extent of "Islamic vengeance."

9772

CSO: 4628/15

ISLAMIC GROUP CONDEMNS INVOLVEMENT IN GULF WAR

Beirut AL-HURRIYAH in Arabic 29 Mar 82 p 29

[Article: "Letter from Amman Column: 'Islamic Group in Jordan Criticizes the War Against Iran'"]

[Text] A statement issued by an Islamic group calling itself "The Sons of the Koran Movement" has been widely distributed in Jordan. The statement carried a strong criticism of the Saddam regime's war against the Iranian revolution. It also strongly criticized the dispatch of Jordanian forces to fight on Saddam's side in the war and it criticized the enmity of the oil kings and emirs against the Islamic revolution in Iran. The statement said:

"To the masses of our great people:

"Now that the Islamic revolution in Iran is moving beyond its third year and is moving towards great horizons of a magnificent tomorrow and a promising future, the tyrannical and despotic enemies of Islam are frightened and are feeling the ground quaking under their feet. In spite of all the conspiracies engineered by the international forces of despotism, under America's leadership, and implemented by a host of hypocrites, the remnants of monarchists from within and the ranks of Arab reactionism and Arab ignorance from without, the revolution nevertheless moves forward resolutely as it strikes deep roots in the ground.

"A great light is shining forth from Tehran illuminating every Islamic nation and filling the hearts of millions with hope. At the same time, those regimes which falsely bear the name of Islam and those rulers and emirs who have plundered the nation's wealth and have squandered it on gambling tables, in purchasing resort centers and hotels on the coasts of America and France, in purchasing striptease establishments in Germany, and in arranging tourist trips to night clubs in Europe are seized with fright. What remains of the billions -- hundreds of billions -- ends up in banks in the West as a luxury for their sons and as poverty, sorrow and suffering for our sons.

"The tyrannical ruler of Iraq has launched a war against Islam in Iran which has been going on for more than a year and a half thinking at the time he started it that one week would be enough to bring down the revolution. That is what the ruler of Iraq did, and as the months passed the curtain was pulled back from "Qadisiyah."

After the statement criticized the reactionary Jordanian regime for joining Saddam's war and criticized the Gulf shaykhs and the Saudi princes "who are trembling with hysteria in an attempt to ward off the spectre of war from their palaces and to prolong their stay there in the service of the hateful American master and who are spending their billions for this."

The statement said that the reactionary ruler in Jordan who sits on the "longest line of confrontation and sends mercenaries in a desperate attempt to block the forces of the Islamic revolution from advancing. This is done under cover of a vicious propaganda campaign. Not the worst of the rumors in this campaign are the rumors which Israel is helping to circulate that Israel is sending weapons to Iran. Do not grieve for Saddam's Qadisiyah to Husayn's Yarmuk, oh Jerusalem."

The Sons of the Koran Movement concluded its statement by calling upon the masses to "shout as loudly as you can to bring down the alliance between Arab ignorance and the international forces of despotism."

6945

CSO: 4404/406

TEACHERS UNION ELECTIONS 'MANIPULATED' BY STATE INTELLIGENCE

Beirut AL-HURRIYAH 29 Mar 82 pp 28-29

[Article: "Letter From Amman Column: 'Despite Election Fraud and the Collusion of Jordanian Intelligence, A Thin Victory for the Alliance Between the Brotherhood and the Right in the Teachers Union Elections'"]

[Text] The slate consisting of an alliance between the Muslim Brotherhood and rightist elements made up of self-proclaimed nationalists succeeded in maintaining its reactionary control over the special education teachers union; however, this success had the taste of failure since no one can envy this slate for its victory, which was based on undisguised support from [Jordanian] intelligence (indeed, it asked for the assistance of intelligence personnel), a blatant falsification of the will of the union rank and file, and a violation of the rights of the rank and file. It was the National Coalition slate which joined battle against the alliance between the Brotherhood and the self-proclaimed nationalists after it had exhausted all available means of drawing others away from the morass of linking up with and relying on the Brotherhood. Although this slate failed to remove the union leadership, it nevertheless won the respect of the nationalist forces not only because it lost to the reactionary-rightist alliance by only 15 votes but also because this National Coalition increased its strength during the period between the two elections and because everyone came to know that it was the election fraud and the blatant support of the intelligence organization which prevented them from winning by adding forged non-existent votes to the reactionary alliance's base of support. This turned the tide.

The following is the story of the special education teachers union elections:

The Atmosphere in the Second Election

On a previous occasion AL-HURRIYAH published the facts concerning this union's first election, which ended in a postponement for a period of two weeks because of an insufficient turnout. AL-HURRIYAH also noted the atmosphere of chaos and blatant falsification of the will of the teachers, the contempt and the insults which were heaped on the teachers who came to exercise their right to vote, and how dozens were deprived of exercising this right.

The atmosphere surrounding the first round of elections stirred up large-scale reactions and protests in this union and among the masses. The Ministry of Labor and the union organizations were deluged with protests and objections,

especially since these violations and the atmosphere of chaos and election fraud took place under the eyes and ears of representatives of the authorities and the security organizations. In fact, they took place in collusion with them.

Therefore, the Minister of Labor, under the pressure of protests and objections which deluged the ministry, had to establish a minimum of peace and order in the second round of elections. However, the ministry did not concur with the request to change the site of the elections (a small hall in the General Federation of Unions building), nor did it agree to audit the union membership lists to ascertain their validity. (a ministry employee appointed to supervise the elections admitted that the membership lists had been turned over to him five minutes before the elections began and naturally he was not able to check their accuracy). This occurred despite the knowledge that these challenges came two weeks before the elections and the ministry had ample time to check the lists.

The elections began at 1100 hours Sunday 14 March and ended at 1800 hours the same day. It should be noted here that the previous leadership of the union deliberately chose Sunday (which is a day off for the Christian schools) in order to lower the turnout of teachers in these schools.

The alliance between the Brotherhood and the Right was deeply concerned over the flood of votes for the National Coalition slate. The committee supervising the elections (made up of Jawdat 'Uthman, head of the food union, al-Shaykh 'Ali Mithqal, of the al-Kartun branch of the printers union, and 'Umar al-'Awdhat, head of the municipal workers union; the latter was suspect because of his contacts with the security and the first two virtually represented the alliance of the Brotherhood and the Right) had instructed the reactionary alliance to bring in additional voters every time the scales tipped in someone else's favor.

However, the outward calm which prevailed over the elections soon turned into sharp tension when numbers of counterfeit voters turned out and the ministry's representative did not permit them to vote unless they brought the proper proof of identity required of all voters. More than 30 persons were furnished with cards from the al-Aqsa schools and the Islamic College in al-Zarqa', both of which are schools which fall under the control of Muslim Brotherhood personnel, but these people did not have the official identification documentation which, by order of the union leadership, they are supposed to carry.

The committee supervising the elections objected to and challenged the aforementioned Labor Ministry employee for carrying out his responsibility with honor and trust. The committee threatened to withdraw, and the ministry employee relented and agreed to let these people cast their votes, but on condition that he keep their cards which were given to them by the aforementioned schools so that they could be verified against the union membership lists. The supervising committee, however, rejected this condition and announced in a huff that it was withdrawing.

The ministry employee was surprised when Jawdat 'Uthman, chairman of the supervising committee, returned shortly with two men from general intelligence. The committee chairman asked them to intervene to allow the counterfeit voters to

vote. The two intelligence personnel called over the Ministry of Labor representative and asked him to ignore those carrying false identity papers, or else be subject to dismissal and arrest. The people did in fact cast their votes amidst the astonishment of various union personnel who came attended the elections at the fact that the head of the food trades union would ask intelligence personnel for help. He was one of the most prominent union personnel affiliated with this "nationalist" force which was aligned with the Brotherhood.

Thus, the Brotherhood-Rightist alliance which controlled the special education teachers union was not content with falsely inflating the size of the union's general assembly and preventing fully paid up enfranchised teachers from exercising their right to vote by deleting their names from the general assembly lists. Indeed, this alliance resorted in the end to asking for blatant support from the intelligence service to let the counterfeit voters pass through so that it could control the union at any price.

It should be mentioned here that the National Coalition slate, which was running against the alliance, limited itself to just five candidates out of a desire on their part to allow the forces affiliated with the "National Ranks" to win the four remaining seats. If the elections had taken place without interference and all forms of disgraceful election fraud, this would have happened and the Brotherhood personnel would have been dismissed from the union leadership. The election results proved this.

Before this, there had been attempts by some on the national slate to attract this nationalist force and remove it from the alliance with the Brotherhood. It granted this force huge concessions; however, it backed away from the agreement which was reached to form a tripartite national coalition by a unilateral decision and an alliance with the Brotherhood. They announced this in the press even before the parties in the coalition were informed of this. Nevertheless, efforts to attract this nationalist force continued until the last moment. When all efforts failed the National Coalition came down with a slate of just five candidates.

6945

CSO: 4404/406

KUWAIT

BRIEFS

TIES WITH BAHRAIN--Frequent visits between leaders in the Gulf area and peninsula can be used to iron out differences. Difficulties are mainly caused by the personal interest of some individuals who think their interests and that of the area coincide, and that their interests must not be affected even if it meant delaying the interests of the nation as a whole. The Bahrain amir is responding to the invitation with a cordial spirit and this visit can consolidate the historical connections between the two countries. The relations between Bahrain and Kuwait have been characterised by a fraternal spirit of love and desire for progress. Bahrain's leadership has overcome many obstacles during the past twenty years. These obstacles were not easy to cross, but the unique leadership, which is characterised with wisdom, could withstand storms and currents. God aided this country and its leaders to create prosperity and stability for the nation which wishes to take its proper position. During the visit to Kuwait we will discover that the Bahrain leadership is held in high regard with true emotions and love. [Text]
[GF111129 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 10 May 82 p 6]

CSO: 4400/273

DOMESTIC POLITICS DISCUSSED

Paris AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic No 255, 22-28 Mar 82 p 25

[Article by al-Sarraaj Muhammad Munir: "Strengthening Opposition Weakens Opposition"]

[Text] Few people doubt King Hassan II's political acumen, or his ability to transform crises into victories for himself. Perhaps the most recent example of that was his decision, on the 3 March anniversary of his ascension to the throne, to release the leaders of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, led by Abdelrahim Bouabid, the party's secretary general, without that appearing to be a serious concession to the French Socialist Party.

It is well known that relations between Morocco and the French government have been cool recently, especially after Rabat sentenced the Socialist leaders to a year in prison, carried out last autumn, because of their criticism of the Moroccan king's acceptance of a plebescite in the Sahara, and whom the French Socialist Party demanded be released. It was said that their jailing was what stopped the visit of President Francois Mitterrand to Morocco.

However, King Hassan II was successful, during his visit to Paris, in stopping the deterioration in relations between the two countries. Whenever he was asked about the possibility of issuing a pardon for Bouabid and his colleagues, he would reply that the less said about this matter the better, alluding to the fact that he did not wish to give the impression of bowing to foreign pressures. Therefore, the decision was no surprise, and now it has become possible for the French president to visit Morocco in the near future.

Up to that time, observers did not think it inconceivable that the trade unionists and the Socialist Union of Popular Forces' members, who were arrested as a result of the Casablanca incidents last June, would be released, since the requests for appeal that they submitted have not yet been decided.

In fact, the reactions of other forces and groups considered to be among the opposition was classic, since it was confined to criticism. This should be considered logical, when we take into consideration the divisions

and competition for leadership on the one hand, and the rapidity with which the authorities gained control over the situation, which spread a feeling of weakness on the other. Since that day, the country has been under notable tension, especially in the universities, where the government has established university guards in the major university cities, to prevent gatherings and demonstrations, and to impose order.

This has given some justification to the name "AWACS", by which they have become known in student circles, in a reference to the early warning aircraft.

The presence of these guards has resulted in several violent demonstrations staged in Moroccan universities, since the government has not rescinded its decision.

Despite this, talk is going around once again, following the release of Boudbid and his comrades, about the revival of democratic life and restoring the domestic front to oppose the Saharan war. Of course, the size of the opposition is one thing and its being silent something else. Because of the judgement against it, this is unlikely these days, but in principle, there is nothing to prevent waters from resuming their course, especially since the possibility of a plebescite regarding the Sahara has now become slight, after the decision of the OAU secretary general to accept the Saharouwi Republic in the recent meeting in Addis Ababa.

The current opposition is not radical, and its presence is necessary. It shares to a large extent in absorbind popular grumbling, especially middle-class grumbling, which is the most dangerous. This has become the largest element of the radical opposition, as a result of unemployment, the drought and the rising prices of foodstuffs and petroleum products. It is a fact that the Islamic movement will be the principal beneficiary in the event of the opposition's absence from the political scene in Morocco.

Recently, this movement's supporters have become active, which has led to violent clashes between them and the security forces in some cities. This is especially true in Casablanca, where the authorities are currently trying to stabilize the security situation, be dividing the city into several independent districts, with greater opportunities for work and better living conditions. This movement has become the object of increasing concern in political circles, who believe that the only way out of the present crisis is by raising phosphate prices and increasing investments in order to revive the Moroccan economy, and consequently, raise the living standards of the middle class, who in the past were attracted by the traditional opposition parties, but who are being attracted today by the Islamic movement.

Therefore, the laic opposition of whatever kind, i.e., the Socialist Union of Popular Forces and other parties, have to be able to fulfill a larger role in organizing the citizens to block what these circles describe as religious extremism. However, matters could go from bad to worse. A sensitive question, such as granting military facilities to the United States in Morocco, could give this movement a means of extending its influence into all popular segments, on the basis that this cooperation is targetted against the Arab and Islamic peoples. The picture of future expectations might be completely contrary to all of this.

7005

CSO: 4504/256

SUDANESE COTTON ATTRACTS INTERNATIONAL BUYERS

Khartoum AL-AYYAM in Arabic 5 May 82 p 1

[Text] Delegations representing important buyers for textile manufacturers and cotton traders from Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Federal Republic of Germany, England, Japan, and France as well as representatives from some journals specializing in cotton will be arriving in Khartoum on 21 May for a working visit that will last one week. During their visit they will meet with the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, the Governor of the Central Region, and the governor of the al-Jazirah Project. They will also make field visits including a visit to the al-Jazirah and Khashm al-Qirbah projects and the al-Jazirah warehouses in Port Sudan.

AL-AYYAM was informed that this visit comes as a result of the restoration of world-wide confidence in the quality of Sudanese cottons, with respect to excellence and preparation, which had been shaken during the previous years.

A responsible source within the General Organization for Cotton said that the visit of these delegations is considered a good opportunity to attract the attention of all those in the cotton business in the world and to place Sudanese cotton in the forefront once more.

On the other hand SUNA mentioned that a Sudanese delegation headed by Mr. 'Abd-al-Wahhab Tamim, under-secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation, Commerce and Supply is currently holding talks in Peking with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Trade in the People's Republic of China with the purpose of defining a trade protocol between the two countries and supplementing parts of the previous protocol.

SUNA added that in accordance with the trade protocol between the two countries it is expected that this year's profits from cotton exports from the Sudan to China will reach more than 29 million dollars as a result of the increase in excellence of Sudanese cottons and the growth in production this season.

CSO: 4504/306

TUNISIAN FOREIGN POLICY EXAMINED

Paris AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic No 255, 22-28 Mar 82 p 24

[Article by Rashid Khashanah: "The Gulf Replaces Europe"]

[Text] Hardly a day after Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi's visit to Tunisia, the Tunisian prime minister, Muhammad Mzali, packed his bags and began an economic tour of the Gulf countries. It was the first of its kind since this government was formed in April 1980. Mzali was accompanied by his minister for finance and planning, Mansour Moalla, and not by his political ministers, since the trip's discussions, beginning in Saudi Arabia and ending in Kuwait, with the Gulf officials were concerned solely with economic matters. It was a very rewarding trip, or rather, more profitable than the Tunisian delegation had expected, as one high-ranking official told AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI. The idea of establishing a Tunisian-UAE bank, for example, was merely a project prior to the trip, but the delegation reached a mutual understanding, and an agreement was signed regarding it with UAE officials. This bank, therefore, is a secondary benefit from the trip, on the banking level, while the primary object was to conclude an agreement with Qatar on participation with it and France in establishing a Tunisian-French-Qatari bank.

The history of this bank goes back to October 1980, when the former French prime minister, Raymond Barre, visited Tunisia and reached an agreement with the government on this project, which since that time has languished on a waiting list, until the Socialists took power in France. The new French prime minister, Pierre Mauroy, visited Tunis last February and was content, there was no final agreement, to bind himself to sending a French official to Qatar during Mzali's trip, to sign the tripartite agreement there.

The French came, but they differed with the two Arab parties, and completion of the project was limited to Tunisia, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

There is no doubt that the abandonment of Tunisia by the European Common Market, and especially France, was a fundamental factor in the Tunisian officials' overtures to the oil Arabs, since these overtures were their sole option.

Pierre Mauroy's visit, about a month ago, ended with dashed hopes, since the French withheld their financial aid to Tunisia and refused even to complete the second television channel project. Therefore, Arab investment has become the primary source that could help implement the sixth development plan and meet the escalating demands of the trade unions. Moreover, achieving a reconciliation with the Jamahiriyah and the signing of several important agreements between the two sides has hastened to close the window of economic crisis, and has reduced the social tension stemming from the matter of increasing salaries. However, the capitals visited by Mzali were not pleased at the improvement of relations with the radical neighbor. Even some of the Gulf leaders questioned the dimensions of the new honeymoon between Tunis and Tripoli, and the coincidence between Mzali's trip and the outbreak of a media attack between Riyadh and Tripoli.

Tunisian officials, in response to these questions, stressed the continuation of Tunisian diplomacy's moderate line, embodied by Mzali's discussions with Saudi and Gulf officials, which dealt with preparing for the next summit conference in Fes. These discussions afforded Tunisian diplomacy a special role in preparing for the next summit, and one that complements the Kuwaiti role as a bridge between moderates and radicals. It should be mentioned here that Col Qadhdhafi announced his intention to attend the next summit in Fes, when he was in Tunisia. Accordingly, Mzali will visit Morocco soon to convey the results of his contacts to officials there.

Government of the Middle

This middle-of-the-road position forces the Mzali government to maintain good relations with moderate and radical Arabs simultaneously, in order to carry out its economic plan and to leave the bridges open in all directions, as befits the government of a country in which the headquarters of the Arab League is located. Even though Arab investments did not enter the Tunisian economy until 1974, today they form more than 22 percent of the loans granted to Tunisia. The Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development has participated in financing 13 projects with a total investment of \$136 million. These are almost the only investments going into infrastructure projects and the industrial production sectors. However, an important part of other Arab investments is going into non-production projects, like tourism. One example is the huge city that Saudi businessmen will build in northern Tunisia, on a tract of 10,000 hectares of fertile land.

This negative direction of some Arab investments has caused the opposition to say: the investment fields were peripheral and soft, since no economic field can be developed unless there is an economic base that can respond to the needs of the industrial and agricultural projects. Whatever the role of Arab investment is, Mzali's trip reinforced the Arab direction and achieved a bigger financial reward than political, because the government at this stage is apparently in need of strengthening its positions at home, in the face of developing social movement.

7005

CSO: 4504/256

QATAR

BRIEFS

STEEL PRODUCTION--Qatar produced 400,000 tons of iron and steel last year, according to Dr 'Abd al-'Aziz Ma'ruf, vice president of the Arab Union for Iron and Steel Industry (AUII). Speaking to ARAB TIMES sister daily AL-SIYASAH, Dr Ma'ruf revealed that only 15 percent of the total produce is consumed locally by Qatar, he said. "The rest is exported to neighboring countries and to foreign nations. Last year, about two million tons of iron and steel were needed by the Gulf states," he added. The industry was established in that country due to the availability of natural gas at a low price. [Excerpt] [GF131141 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 12 May 82 p 7 GF]

CSO: 4400/275

BUDGET DEFICIT NOT TO AFFECT DEVELOPMENT

GF181033 Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 18 May 82 p 1

[Article by Yusuf Urdon]

[Text] Mr Ju'an Salim, undersecretary at the Abu Dhabi Department of Finance, has stated that the estimated budget deficit would have no "material" effect on the country's essential services and development programmes.

In an interview with KHALEEJ TIMES yesterday, he said: "Normally, there is a surplus in the budget at the year end. Experience shows that the actual rate of development expenditure in any given year does not go above 70 per cent of the allocated resources."

He explained that the low disbursement of resources earmarked for development projects was caused by certain constraints which retarded implementation of schemes, specially if they were now. This resulted in big savings in the last few years also. "Add to this the fact that the government does not have to borrow either from the local or the world money market," he further elaborated.

Mr Salim pointed out that another factor that would minimise the impact of the expected deficit on development programmes and essential services was the absence of tax levies in the UAE.

He, however, said it was the first time an expected deficit had been announced and "I think it is high time the federal government reasonably controls its expenditure to match its revenues."

He warned that without a comprehensive plan, the gap between expenditure and income "tends to widen until a day comes when balancing the budget becomes impossible."

He predicted that the 1983-1984 expenditure would grow at a faster rate compared with the previous years. But the revenue would increase at a slower pace because of the shrinking demand for oil and associated products.

"If you look at the budget trends, you will see that expenditure has been continuously going up. On the other hand, growth of revenue has been lagging behind," Mr Salim explained.

He noted that in 1978-1979 budget, expenditure was up by 31 per cent (mainly in the recurrent budget), in 1979-1980 the increase was 104 percent, and in 1980-1981 only four per cent. The overall expenditure rise between 1977 and 1981 stood at 233 per cent.

Mr Salim attributed the expenditure growth to a number of factors such as the transfer of many services, including education, health and information, which were being previously carried out by the individual emirates, to the federal government.

Despite the increasing pressure on the federal government, he went on, the budget performance was in accordance with the government expectations, yielding overall balanced budgets in the previous years.

In explaining the reasons for the smooth budget performance at a time when expenditure was going up very fast, he said there was a corresponding increase in the revenues during period under review.

"In 1979 rising oil revenues generated higher revenue growth rates which absorbed the enormous expansions in the budget. But after 1981 the picture has completely changed due to decline in oil prices and oil production cuts caused by excess supply in the world market," he emphasised.

He said the combined effect of these two factors was felt by all OPEC nations, albeit at different scales. He added that the UAE was one of the least affected OPEC countries thanks to the moderate oil prices maintained throughout the past few years and the high production level which was far in excess of the economic needs of the nation.

He said spot prices were recovering now although they were expected to go down in the summer. Should these expectations come true, the budget deficit might be reviewed again, he pointed out.

Mr Salim said at least three options were open to the country to overcome the current expenditure problems.

He said the first option was reconsidering the list of priorities by giving precedence to development and essential services in the budget.

Secondly, government manpower requirements ought to be streamlined. "The current labour force in the country far exceeds the nation's need. We can reduce the numbers of foreign labour by improving the quality of the people being recruited to help in promoting development and progress," he noted.

Third option, which he said was a remote possibility, was the issuing of treasury bills and bonds by the government in the local market. "This may not be an appropriate step at the moment due to the high interest rates and also because market has to be reorganised to be able to cater for such issues," he observed.

Mr Salim said the dirham market was not large enough to accommodate such instruments and, hence, the consequential huge borrowing could touch off liquidity problems.

"But this does not necessarily mean that this area cannot be tapped if the expected deficits continue for a long time. Most governments in the world borrow from their local markets. The UAE is no exception. But I believe that there will be no need to resort to borrowing as trimming of expenditures could solve the problem," he said.

CSO: 4400/275

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

BRIEFS

DRIP IRRIGATION PROJECT--Work is in full swing to adopt a most modern 'drip irrigation' method in the UAE to economise on the use of water and boost agricultural production. Latest in the new methods of irrigation, 'drip system' is to be used over 400 hectares of farmland in different parts of the country. The first phase of the project is estimated at a cost of DH15.5 million. Besides saving about 13 million cubic metres of water, the new method will reduce the labour force by 30 percent. Drip system, he explained, will be used to irrigate vegetable farms while the sprinklers will be used on fruit farms. Survey work has already started and the entire project is expected to be completed within a period of 16 months. [Excerpts] [GF121144 Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 12 May 82 p 3 GF]

FUNDS FOR NEW PROJECTS--During its meeting today, under the chairmanship of Abu Dhabi heir apparent, Khalifah ibn Zayid the executive council agreed to allocate 73 million dirhams for several projects. The council agreed to allocate 40 million dirhams for road construction in al-'Ayn, 26 million dirhams for the expansion and planning of a road on the al-'Ayn-al-Fayda Road, 3 million dirhams for erecting a wall in the port area and 4 million dirhams for the construction of shops and houses. [GF161739 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 May 82 GF]

CSO: 4400/275

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

BRIEFS

SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN--San'a'--The YAR [Yemen Arab Republic] Government has allocated \$7 billions for the second five-year plan. This has been stated by Hasan al-Lawzi the YAR minister of information, in the wake of a special meeting of the YAR Council of Ministers. Al-Lawzi said that the plan seeks to develop the country's agriculture and industry sectors, to improve the health services offered to the Yemeni citizens and to provide work for citizens in the various spheres. It is worth noting that the YAR Government had allocated \$3 billion for implementation of the country's first five-year plan. On the other hand, the YAR Government has concluded in San'a' an agreement with a French company. In accordance with the agreement, the company will implement the regional microwave communications project which will secure telephone communications and radio and television transmission between the Kingdom [of Saudi Arabia], the two parts of Yemen, Somalia and Djibouti. The project, which will cost \$18 million, will include 18 telephone channels. Its implementation will begin next April and it will take 3 years to complete. The Arab Economic and Social Development Fund will finance the project in the four countries [YAR, PDRY, Somalia and Djibouti], excluding the kingdom. The agreement was signed on behalf of the YAR Government by Ahmad al-Ansi, the minister of communications and transport. [Text] [Jiddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 22 Mar 82 p 9] 8494

CSO: 4404/420

END