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Near East/South Asia Report

DEVELOPMENTS IN SYRIAN TRANSPORTATION

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6 FEBRUARY 1987

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

DEVELOPMENTS IN SYRIAN TRANSPORTATION

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 [various pages]

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NATION'S HISTORIC, PRESENT ROLE IN TRANSPORTATION REVIEWED

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 p 71

[Article by Khalil Abu-Zaki: "The Transportation Sector In Modern Syria"]

[Text] Since ancient times, Syria has enjoyed a strategic importance due to its geographic location in the heart of the ancient world. Syria was, like the Arabian Peninsula and Ethiopia, a crossroads connecting East with West, North with South.

The great British historian Arnold Toynbee likened ancient Syria to an isthmus stretching from the desert in the east to the Mediterranean in the west. Along the shores of this isthmus were the land ports--Halab, Hamah, Hims, Damascus, and Petra--receiving caravans coming from all over the world, and the sea ports--al-Ladhiqiyah, Tartus, Arwad, Jubayl, Sidon, Tyre, Haifa, Ashkelon, and al-'Aqabah--receiving ships from all over the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

The Syrian isthmus has continued to enjoy this distinction to this very day. Modern Syria is still a principal crossroads for the region, which gives it strong political and economic influence. Nevertheless, many details have changed. Most important, perhaps, is the fact that the means of land and sea transportation have changed dramatically. Camel caravans have been replaced by truck caravans, and sailing ships by giant cargo ships. Airplanes, oil tankers and oil pipelines have been added to the list as well. Furthermore, like Syria, the Arab world, including Turkey, has developed into a international communications crossroads. The importance of the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, 'Aden and the Arab Gulf must be pointed out as well.

As the end of the Twentieth Century draws near, observers are remarking that Syria's ports, roads and airports are more regional than local. Damascus, the oldest city in the world, is still an important land station for land transportation traffic, for both Syria and the entire region, while the port of al-Ladhiqiyah has been constantly growing, thus becoming the largest and most important port at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Tartus Port is

also rapidly expanding, and has become a truly regional port. The entire Syrian road network is a communications hub linking the Turkish, Jordanian and Iraqi road networks with each other, and, in a larger sense, Arab Asia with Asia Minor.

The most striking feature of the Syrian transportation sector is the railroad network's expansion, unmatched in any other such sector in the Middle East. Thus Syria, as it enters the Twenty-first Century, is retaining its ancient heritage in land and sea transportation.

There remains air transportation. Today the Syrian Arab Airlines' name shines in the skies of 40 of the world's cities. It is continually expanding and adding new planes to keep up with growing local and regional demand for its routes.

The vitality of the Syrian transportation sector must be emphasized. The political leadership has successfully developed this sector according to a comprehensive theory which is both historical and modern. The recently-formed Transportation Ministry has successfully mobilized the available resources and has introduced a joint transportation sector in addition to the public and private transportation sectors, so that these three sectors can work together to meet all needs. In conveying the extent of the Syrian transportation sector's great mission, it is enough to say that it has been able to meet the population's needs, which are increasing each year, and has also been able to meet regional demands for its services.

The following dossier will shed some light on Syria's transportation sector.

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MINISTER OUTLINES PLANS, HOPES FOR TRANSPORTATION SECTOR

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 pp 72-74

[Interview with Syrian Transportation Minister Engr Yusuf Ahmad: "We Are Working to Achieve Plans To Link the Arabs;" date and place not specified]

[Text] In the far-flung Arab world (14 million square kilometers), transportation is the key to any economic strategy. In 1974 the Syrian leadership, aware of the importance and seriousness of transportation, decided to establish a transportation ministry. In the following interview, Syrian Transportation Minister Yusuf Ahmad discusses the growth of the Syrian transportation sector and some of his hopes for Arab transportation.

[Question] Could you give us a picture of transportation conditions in Syria? In what areas does the public sector operate?

[Answer] On the level of the national economy, the main function of the transportation sector is to ensure transportation and the movement of goods. It is linked to the other economic sectors by bonds of mutual interest, since there can be no growth in the commodity or service sectors without growth in one or more branches of transportation. Many times such growth is an essential precondition for growth in other sectors.

Therefore, in the early Seventies, following President Hafiz al-Asad's reform movement, the state began giving increasing attention to this sector, as manifested in the creation of the Transportation Ministry in 1974. All the various departments and organizations which had been scattered among several ministries, such as Economy, Communications, Village and Municipal Affairs, and Defense, were placed under the direct supervision of this ministry, which then worked to develop the various areas of this sector through supervision, guidance, planning, organization and legislation. It also worked to expand its facilities, modernize its equipment, and enrich it with specialized personnel.

There is no better proof of this sector's obvious, rapid growth than for us to cite some statistics and accomplishments achieved through investments in several consecutive 5-year plans, comparing 1970 figures to 1985 figures, in order to grasp the extent of this growth (see Table 1).

The following accomplishments have been achieved.

1. A new passenger lounge, capable of handling 2.5 million passengers each year, has been built at Damascus International Airport.
2. Halab and al-Ladhiqiyah Airports have been updated, with Halab Airport becoming an international airport.
3. Tartus Port is nearing completion; its piers are finished, as are most of its loading areas, warehouses and service buildings.
4. Most of the expansions at al-Ladhiqiyah Port have been completed. Its main breakwater and piers are finished, its loading areas have been laid out, and construction has begun on service buildings and warehouses. It must be pointed out that the new piers are deep enough to accomodate large cargo ships.
5. The Syrian merchant marine fleet has been strengthened by the addition of five medium-sized cargo ships, bringing the number of commercial ships up to 50.

This growth in the infrastructure has been accompanied by a general growth in transportation activity and the offering of better services to the citizens (see Table 2). It should be noted that the public sector operates alone in all areas of air and railroad transportation, while the private sector participates in maritime and road transportation.

The Private Sector's Role

[Question] How would you assess the private sector's activity in the transportation field? Do you plan to increase its role and effectiveness in this area?

[Answer] The private sector plays a large role in transporting passengers and goods via roads, and owns most of the means of transportation. To the same extent, it plays the same role in maritime transportation. It therefore receives encouragement and support from the state in order to protect its ownership of its particular means of transportation and to ensure that it has everything it needs to carry on its work in the best possible manner.

In Syria we practice comprehensive planning, which means that we prepare our plans so as to include both the public and the private sectors. Our economic policies and measures reinforce the private sector's role within the context of these plans, in such a way as to achieve their goals.

The Goals Of the New 5-Year Plan

[Question] What are your plans for developing transportation in Syria, particularly as regards the new 5-year plan?

[Answer] As I mentioned earlier, in Syria we have relied on the principle of comprehensive, balanced planning. The transportation plan is part of, and a basic component of, the state's general plan to keep up with economic development in Syria during the 15 years since the reform movement. We have drawn

up detailed studies, analyzed current conditions, and established 5-year plans in order to arrive at a broad estimate of the available resources and the demands on them. In light of these studies, the goals of the past 15 years' 5-year plans can be outlined as follows:

1. Using the various transportation resources available, particularly the railroads, in the best possible way, and integrating the various types of transportation and ending competition among them by distributing transportation projects in a manner in keeping with the nature of the goods being transported and the special features and specifications of the means of transportation;
2. Relying on pricing policy as a tool for directing cargos;
3. Giving priority to completing resources under construction, such as roads, railroads, ports and airports;
4. Increasing the volume and efficiency of usage;
5. Building infrastructures on the basis of economic feasibility, and integrating them with existing infrastructures;
6. Providing specialized means of transportation for passengers and goods;
7. Showing concern for railroad transportation, while considering the existing railroad network and the projections for completing those rail lines under construction, and providing the necessary locomotives;
8. Reinforcing and improving the passenger and cargo air transportation fleet, as well as the merchant marine fleet, and training the personnel needed to operate them (operation and maintenance); and
9. Giving increased priority to creating administrative frameworks and drawing up regulations for increasing administrative efficiency.

The provisions of the new development plan can be summarized as follows:

1. Completing Tartus Port and expanding al-Ladhiqiyah Port, so as to ensure 13.5 million tons of port capacity a year, and equipping them with the proper modern equipment;
2. Strengthening the Syrian Arab merchant marine fleet by adding four multi-purpose commercial ships;
3. Completing the railroad network by adding about 550 kilometers of main lines and about 230 kilometers of branch lines, so as to connect Syria with neighboring countries, particularly Arab countries;
4. Providing enough locomotive equipment to increase operating efficiency;
5. Providing city bus transportation in order to better serve the public;

6. Finishing construction at the Damascus, Halab, and al-Ladhiqiyah International Airports, and installing modern, advanced equipment;
7. Strengthening the passenger and cargo air transportation fleet; and
8. Providing inter-city transport, including trucks, buses and tour vehicles.

Arab Cooperation In the Field of Transportation

[Question] It has been remarked that Arab interaction in land, maritime and air transportation is still backward, compared to Europe. Do you have any proposals for joint Arab projects in this field?

[Answer] It is truly unfortunate that this should be true of the transportation sector. However, I have hopes that the Arab states will get together and establish a council of Arab transportation ministers and an executive bureau, of which Syria would be a member, which would be a good start in seeking serious transportation cooperation among Arab countries.

I would like to make the following points in my proposal for achieving constructive cooperation among Arab countries:

1. Connecting the countries of the Arab world by a communications network (railroads, highways that meet international standards, and modern means of transportation);
2. Coordinating and integrating the Arab maritime, air and land transportation organizations and companies;
3. Applying and expanding Arab agreements concluded in various areas of transportation, in an attempt to achieve economic integration of Arab transportation organizations and companies.

I can say that we in Syria, with President Hafiz al-Asad's guidance, have done our best to establish means of communications with neighboring Arab countries, and we are still working on implementing plans to link the Arabs with railroads and highways. Our sixth 5-year plan included important projects in this area. In addition, we have built international roads linking Syria with Lebanon and Jordan, and we have drawn up several Arab integration projects for future consideration.

[Question] There are difficulties and complications at all the Arab border points, which are affecting commercial traffic and transportation among Arab countries. Are these problems due to the improper application of transit and transport agreements?

[Answer] It may be that they are due to the non-application of such agreements. Here it should be pointed out that Syria is the first country which goods bound for neighboring Arab countries have to cross. Syria applies the agreements concluded with these countries in good faith, and grants full facilities to the carriers, the goods transported, and the means of transportation both at the borders and within Syrian territory.

It is worth mentioning that Syria treats all Arab citizens, be they in transit or in residence, just as it treats its own Syrian citizens.

The Railroads

[Question] When it comes to railroads, the Arab countries are still backward. What do you think of the Syrian railroad network? Do you think that the Arab rail networks can indeed be linked together?

[Answer] During the last reform movement, Syria witnessed a qualitative leap forward in the construction and utilization of railroads and their increased participation in transportation. At the direct instructions of President al-Asad, this mode of transportation has been given priority in the country's development plans. As I pointed out earlier, at the end of our sixth 5-year plan we will have completed a rail network linking all the governorates and all the production and consumption areas, and we will have provided the necessary advanced equipment and maintenance so as to ensure optimum performance.

We can be proud of what we have achieved in this field, especially since we built this entire network ourselves, through our national railroad construction company.

We hope that the Arab countries, individually or as a group, will make efforts to achieve better rail transportation.

As we pointed out before, we are trying to link our rail network with those of neighboring Arab countries. We hope that our Arab brothers will link their rail networks to those of their neighbors, so that an advanced Arab transportation network can be achieved.

The Damascus-Hijaz Line

[Question] What are the possibilities of rebuilding the Damascus-Hijaz line? Is its reconstruction subject to commercial considerations alone?

[Answer] We are serious about rebuilding this line. We have completed the studies and land appropriation measures, and have allocated the necessary investments in our sixth 5-year plan, in implementation of the decision taken by the Supreme Hijaz Railroad Authority at its 1981 meeting in Riyadh, which called on every country to rebuild that portion of the line situated within its territory. We hope that Saudi Arabia and Jordan will begin building the rest of the line. During my last visit to Jordan, I met with the Jordanian transportation minister, and asked him to pursue the matter of rebuilding this line with Saudi Arabia.

As for the second part of the question, we cannot adopt purely commercial criteria, for there are other criteria which must be taken into account, the most important being the project's nationalist and social aspects and the development the line might generate. As we pointed out at the beginning of this interview, transportation projects are quite often considered essential preconditions for development, and will strengthen Arab economic integration.

Table 1. Growth of the Transportation Sector, 1970 to 1985

<u>Item</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1985</u>
Length of Roads	kilometers	11,687	25,000
Vehicle Fleet	vehicles	60,096	353,259
Length of Rail Lines (1)	kilometers	1,259	2,002
Engines and Motorized Cars (2)	number	1,991	5,521
Length of Piers, Tartus Port	meters	1,730	6,033
Length of Piers, al-Ladiqiyah	meters	2,087	4,218
Capacity, al-Ladhiqiyah Port	million tons	1.9	4.0
Capacity, Tartus Port	million tons	2.5	7.5
Inland Transport Buses	number	148	1,550
Airplanes	planes	5	14

(1) The Halab-Hamah-Hims and the Hims-'Akkar railroads have been updated by an additional 268 kilometers, in addition to about 175 kilometers of branch lines and 235 kilometers of station lines.

(2) Including engines, baggage cars, and various other cars.

Table 2. Growth in Transportation Activity, 1970 to 1985

<u>Item</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1985</u>
Goods Transported by Sea	million tons	5.8	22.75
Goods Transported by Rail	million tons	0.58	4.55
Passengers Carried by Rail	million passengers	1.1	3.5
Airport Passenger Traffic	million passengers	0.37	1.6
Air Passenger Kilometers	million kilometers	-	1,410

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JURISDICTIONS OF TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY OUTLINED

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic, Nov 86 pp 75-76

[Article by Wahid Mas'ud Qasim: "The Transportation Sector and Its Economic Role In Syria"]

[Text] Progress in transportation is a yardstick of a country's economic and developmental progress. For this reason, improving and developing means of transportation and making them widely available have become primary development goals, and investments put into this public utility are part of the social capital so essential for economic development. Furthermore, transportation is an infrastructure on which the production sectors depend. In order to achieve these goals for Syria, the Ministry of Transportation was created, under President Hafiz al-Asad's guidance. Socialist Decree No. 93 of 1974 assigned the new ministry the following functions:

1. Developing and ensuring transportation of goods by land, sea and air, and regulating it in accordance with the country's economic development and the growth in commercial exchange and transit transport;
2. Developing, providing and regulating land, sea, and air passenger transportation, and updating it to keep up with societal growth and with travel and tourism within the country;
3. Promoting, developing and improving the various means of transportation in order to meet the country's needs, and working to expand and develop the maritime, air and land transport fleet and urban transportation;
4. Coordinating the efforts of those departments, organizations, companies and authorities engaged in transportation and related services, and working to develop and integrate them;
5. Working with specialized agencies in order to set transportation tariffs and fees, and in general handling everything pertaining to transportation and vehicular matters.

The following agencies come under the Transportation Minister's jurisdiction:

1. The State Directorate for Civil Aviation
2. The Syrian Arab Airlines Organization
3. The Syrian State Organization for Maritime Transport
4. The State Company for al-Ladhiqiyah Port
5. The State Company for Tartus Port
6. The Syrian Maritime Shipping Company
7. The Shipping Agencies Company
8. The State Directorate for Ports
9. The State Organization for the Hijaz Railroad and Its Reconstruction
10. The State organization for Syrian Railroads, the State Railroad Construction Company, and the Middle East Railroad Engineering Institute
11. Supervision of inland transportation companies in Damascus, Halab, Hims and al-Ladhiqiyah
12. Supervision and regulation of the transfer of funds from goods, agricultural produce, industrial products and livestock by means of the goods transport offices located in each governorate
13. Supervision and regulation of joint sector passenger transport.

In keeping with Syria's comprehensive development plans, the transportation ministry established and modernized the national transportation system. In the last 2 years in particular, 1985 and 1986, the ministry worked to provide everything needed for drawing up and putting into practice modern operations systems for the transportation sector and integrating and coordinating all its subsidiary sectors so that they can in the future better meet the demand for transportation by ensuring efficient usage of means and facilities of transportation.

In order to achieve the goals of the fifth 5-year plan's projects for 1981-85, the state provided all the appropriations and financial requirements necessary for development. During this plan, investments for transportation projects amounted to about 4 billion Syrian pounds, and were distributed as follows: 2.4 billion pounds for rail transportation, 813 million pounds for air transportation, 58 million pounds for inland transportation companies, and 33 million pounds for road transportation.

By the end of the plan, approximately 75 percent of the allocations for most of the projects had actually been spent. It should be pointed out that up to 1970, 744 million pounds in investments had been spent on transportation

projects. From 1971 to the end of 1980, such expenditures totalled 2.9 billion pounds, and from 1981 to 1983 the figure was 2.3 billion pounds. At present, fixed assets for transportation projects amount to roughly 15 billion pounds.

The most important material resources and fixed assets belonging to some of the organizations and departments are as follows:

1. The State Organization for Syrian Railroads: 1,686 kilometers of rail lines, 195 locomotives, 22 motorized cars, 615 passenger and baggage cars, 4,308 assorted freight cars, and 95 service stations;
2. The State Organization for the Hijaz Railroad: 311 kilometers of rail lines, 18 steam locomotives, 43 passenger cars, 320 freight cars, 31 water tanks, and 37 service stations;
3. Syrian Arab Airlines Organization: two Caravelles, two Boeing 747's, three Boeing 727's, four TU-134's, and three modified TU-154/M's;
4. The State Directorate for Civil Aviation: two international airports (Damascus and Halab), three domestic airports (al-Qamishli, Dayr al-Zawr, and al-Ladhiqiyah), and a network of navigational aids;
5. The State Company for Tartus Port: 4,000 meters of piers, 77,614 square meters of goods warehouses, 172,000 square meters of covered storage areas, 95 assorted cranes with 10- to 100-ton capacities, 11 assorted vessels with 100- to 1,000-horsepower, 21 iron barges with 65- to 250-ton capacities, and 200 tractors, trucks and containers;
6. The State Company for al-Ladhiqiyah Port: a 3,162-meter breakwater with 14 docks covering 145 hectares, 435,000 square meters of storage area, 72 grain silos with a capacity of 45,000 tons, 200 pieces of assorted marine equipment, 85 assorted cranes, and 82 assorted vessels and barges;
7. The Syrian Maritime Shipping Company: three modern ships for maritime shipping; and
8. Road transportation: more than 300,000 tourist vehicles, trucks, and tank trucks throughout the governorates.

Finally, we must mention the economic activities carried out by the various transportation sectors.

During 1982, 4.7 million tons of goods were transported within Syria, for fees amounting to 198 million pounds, over a total distance of 55.7 million kilometers.

Outside Syria, 5 million tons of goods were transported, for fees amounting to 280 million pounds, over distances totalling 84 million kilometers.

During 1984, about 3.9 million tons of goods were transported by railroad, along with 3.1 million passengers, the equivalent of 757 million passenger-kilometers.

As for air transportation at Syrian airports, during 1985 1.7 million passengers and about 3,600 tons of import and export cargo were transported by air.

During 1984, about 2,500 ships passed through Syrian ports, bringing 11.2 million tons of goods into Syria and taking on 7.7 million tons. Some 15,000 passengers arrived by sea, and 9,000 passengers departed by sea.

As for the movement of goods through al-Ladhiqiyah Port, 1.3 million tons of goods were imported and 362,000 tons exported. At Tartus port, 3.3 million tons were imported and 964,000 tons exported, and through Baniyas Port 6.7 million tons were imported and 1.6 million tons exported.

Syria's transportation sector is constantly growing, and huge projects have been included in the sixth 5-year plan for 1986-90, with the intention of making Syria more developed and keeping up with the developed countries.

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CIVIL AVIATION DIRECTORATE UPDATES NATION'S AIRPORTS

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 pp 80-81

[Article: "The State Directorate for Civil Aviation--Ongoing Renovation of Syrian Airports"]

[Text] Syria has been and still is a link between East and West by virtue of its outstanding strategic location connecting the continents. Therefore, ever since the dawn of Syrian independence, the State Directorate for Civil Aviation has been constantly improving and expanding existing airports, building new ones, and providing navigational services and modern radio communications to keep up with, and meet the needs of, the world-wide growth in air transportation and to attract air traffic to these airports.

Because of President Hafiz al-Asad's concern for this facility, the past 10 years of civil aviation have been characterized by the implementation of ambitious development plans, the development of Syrian airports and the improvement of their services, the formulation of a successful air transport policy, and participation in Arab and international activities and efforts, in addition to the completion and modernization of the administrative and organizational framework and the sector's contributions towards economic growth and national income.

During the past 2 years, a new change can be observed in this facility-- a trend towards innovation, organization, evaluation of past achievements, formulation of projections for the future, and promotion of better work. Under Minister of Transportation and Member of the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Engr Yusuf Ahmad's guidance and concern, civil aviation has begun to rely on itself and on its own abilities to carry out its mission.

Accomplishments

By looking at the accomplishments of the fifth 5-year plan, we can see just how efficient this facility has been. During the course of the plan, the state directorate spent about 370 million Syrian pounds out of an original 633 million pounds in investments--a 58 percent rate of expenditure.

The projects were divided into three categories:

1. Basic improvement and renovation projects aimed at maintaining uninterrupted service and improving performance at existing airports;
2. Completion of projects carried over from the fourth plan, including finishing the Damascus Airport passenger terminal, installing equipment and electrical lines, constructing taxiways and widening turning lanes, improving the customs building, and installing navigational aids and equipment, as well as finishing the al-Ladhiqiyah, Halab and al-Qamishli Airports;
3. New projects including vital infrastructure projects for Syrian airports and the provision of modern equipment and technology.

In the area of economic growth, the State Directorate for Civil Aviation has taken a qualitative leap, achieving high returns for the national income from the fees and revenues acquired from airline companies. During 1985, such revenues amounted to about 250 million pounds, 85 percent of which was in foreign currency, and these revenues are expected to rise to 310 million pounds in 1986. The state directorate is reviewing these fees on the basis of actual costs.

As for the development of air transport, 44 bilateral transport agreements have been signed, and several new agreements are planned. Some 29 scheduled international airline companies land at Syrian airports, as opposed to about 65 scheduled and 78 unscheduled airline companies which pass through Syrian airspace about 70,000 times each year. This is what gives Syria its distinction of being a continental link.

In 1985, air transport at Syrian airports was as follows: 21,994 planes landed at and took off from Damascus International Airport; there were 1,505,279 arriving, departing and transit passengers; 5,037,782 tons of goods were imported and exported through the airports; and incoming and outgoing mail amounted to 995,834 pieces. Overall airline traffic at Halab, al-Qamishli, Dayr al-Zawr and al-Ladhiqiyah Airports amounted to 2,714 airplanes carrying 88,077 passengers.

The Directorate's Mission

The State Directorate for Civil Aviation's mission can be summarized as follows:

1. Conducting any necessary studies and research and drawing up plans for developing civil aviation;
2. Establishing and operating Syrian airports and supervising airplane and passenger services;
3. Drawing up the state's air transport policy and making sure that national and foreign air transport organizations comply with it;

4. Representing Syria in Arab and international civil aviation organizations and authorities;
5. Conducting the necessary negotiations for concluding bilateral agreements pertaining to the regulation of air transportation;
6. Supervising the airline companies' air and ground activities at the airports and in Syrian airspace;
7. Preparing and training the necessary technical personnel, and issuing and approving certificates and permits for airline pilots; and
8. Investigating airplane accidents, supervising search and rescue missions, and providing firefighting services at the airports.

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INLAND TRANSPORTATION GRAPPLING WITH OVERCROWDING, TOURISM

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 p 84

[Article: "The Land Transportation Sector--Public, Joint Sector and Private Means of Transportation Working Together To Carry Passengers and Goods"]

[Text] In Syria, the inland transportation sector is one of those sectors being given absolute priority. Because it links all parts of Syria and provides the public with relatively cheap means of transportation, it is a vital artery for economic, social, cultural and recreational activities, and a basic factor in bringing about human interaction. For this reason, the Syrian government has given special attention to inland transport, assuming the major responsibility through the State Company for Inland Transportation, leaving the lesser but no less important responsibility to the private sector.

This company was made subordinate to the Transportation Ministry in 1979, as part of a structural reorganization in which Decree No. 1941 dissolved the State Organization for Inland Transportation and re-named it the State Company for Inland Transportation, subordinate to the Transportation Ministry. The state company's mission is to provide public transportation in all Syria's cities and to connect them to the capital, Damascus, at the lowest possible cost, and to prevent any exploitation of the public in this field. The company has distributed its variously-sized inner-city and inter-city buses throughout all the governorates.

The phrase "distributing buses" may not truly express the efforts made to scientifically distribute these buses on the basis of studies and statistics. The company is not primarily concerned with just low-cost, reasonably-priced transportation, but also with providing adequate transportation at the right time, particularly in the capital and in the other cities, whose populations are constantly and rapidly increasing. The company has concentrated its efforts mainly on the cities, and has provided them with more large passenger buses, which now number in the thousands. It is a fact that Damascus is always congested because it is the main center for services, commerce and university education. The company is trying to lessen the public's sufferings

from this overcrowding, which is particularly bad in Damascus because of its dense population. The company also intends to play a greater part in transporting citizens from the cities to the suburbs.

The population explosion has led to administrative problems which the company is trying to solve. Its officials recently met at its Damascus headquarters to deal with inland transportation problems, adopt more stringent measures towards negligent employees, correct mistakes, and find alternative ways of coping with overcrowding on some vital lines. The meeting resulted in several decisions aimed at scheduling bus traffic and adding more buses on some lines.

Because of Syria's urban population explosion and the increasing number of foreign and Arab tourists and vacationers who come to see the tourist sites for which Syria is famous, such as the holy places, the Roman and Arab ruins, and the castles located throughout the country, the authorities have decided that every resource must be mobilized to provide a tourism infrastructure, such as hotels, resorts, transportation and the like. Therefore, the joint tourism sector was established, and the private sector helped set up a fleet of buses to provide transportation for tour groups visiting Syria. The experience of the Syrian Company for Transportation and Marketing has been yet another indication of the success of the joint sector. All this has been on the public and joint level. On the private sector level, there is individual and group ownership of thousands of buses, taxis and trucks. Private transport has developed into private transportation companies which have performed very efficiently in helping ease the crisis in passenger and goods transportation.

In addition to the state- and ministry-owned truck fleets, the private sector owns large trucks of various sizes which are helping cope with the problems of transporting goods from one governorate to another and inside the cities. With state encouragement, passenger transportation companies have proliferated, and are now operating between the capital and other cities. It can be said that Syria has a very good land transportation network, in spite of the congestion in Damascus. This problem is basically the result of the population density, and is receiving more radical treatment.

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MARITIME SHIPPING COMPANY SEEKS NEW SHIPS

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 pp 86-87

[Article: "The Director General of the Syrian Maritime Shipping Company Says, 'We Will Need 30 Ships By the Year 2000'"]

[Text] Syria's political leadership, headed by President Hafiz al-Asad, is well aware of the general importance of the transportation sector and the part it is playing in building Modern Syria, and the position occupied by maritime transport vis-a-vis other means of transportation, especially since more than two-thirds of the world's trade is carried by sea. Having a merchant marine is a sign of national sovereignty and a cornerstone in implementing a country's development projects. The Syrian leadership is also aware of such a fleet's role as a nationally-owned means of transporting exported or imported goods, freeing the country from the control of monopolies imposed by foreign shipping companies, and thus saving and augmenting the country's hard currency holdings.

Because of these facts, Republican Decree No. 17 of 1977 was passed, establishing an executive committee whose function is to buy and operate commercial ships on behalf of the Syrian Maritime Shipping Company, which was created at the same time by Republican Decree No. 27 of 1977, which defined this company's functions as follows:

1. To buy, sell, lease, rent and equip all types of ships and equipment needed by the company;
2. To carry out various maritime transport operations on ships owned or leased by the company;
3. To establish multi-national shipping companies with other Arab and foreign companies; and
4. To seek out the Arab and foreign expertise it needs to pursue its activities.

Board Chairman and Director General of the Syrian Maritime Shipping Company Commodore Ahmad Rida Musaylimani said that in accordance with this decree, the company has acquired ownership of the following three ships, purchased by the executive committee:

1. The Damascus, built in West Germany in 1963: registered weight 3,600 tons, total length 91.15 meters, mid-ship width 14.63 meters, greatest draft 7 meters, average draft 6 meters, total hold capacity 5,255.80 cubic meters or 186,617 cubic feet, one deck, hold length 28.5 meters, hold width 14.6 meters, six 5-ton and two 8-ton cranes, speed 12 knots;
2. The al-Ladhiqiyah, built in Holland in 1969: registered weight 3,360 tons, two decks, Mac Gregor hatch covers, total length 81.84 meters, mid-ship width 14.85 meters, average draft 5.24 meters, total hold capacity 4,899 cubic meters or 187,196 cubic feet or 102 20-foot containers, two holds, three 12-ton cranes, speed 13.5 knots, ventilated holds with 30 air exchanges per hour, equipped to transport fruits and vegetables;
3. The Arwad, built in West Germany in 1972: registered weight 3,200 tons, total length 80.5 meters, mid-ship width 15.6 meters, greatest draft 6.48 meters, total hold capacity 4,987 cubic meters or 189,746 cubic feet or 136 20-foot containers, two holds, two decks, Mac Gregor hatch covers, four 5-ton and two 15-ton cranes, speed 13.5 knots, ventilated holds with 20 air exchanges per hour, equipped to carry fruits and vegetables.

Accomplishments

Commodore Musaylimani went on to say that even though the Syrian Maritime Shipping Company owns only a few ships, from 1975 to 1985 it transported a total of 778,960,592 tons of goods from various world ports to Syrian ports and vice-versa, and was able to achieve several major goals, the most important being the following.

1. The company created a real environment for competition with other shipping companies operating shipping lines. This led to a relatively large drop in rates for shipping to Syria, particularly since the national commercial fleet, with its public, joint and private sectors combined, carries no more than 15 percent of all exports and imports. The fact that the company has avoided joining any international shipping conventions has contributed to the success of this competition.
2. The company was able to collect huge amounts of foreign currency by collecting transport fees from foreign companies in foreign currencies. It also released the national export-import organizations from paying in hard currency by accepting shipping fees in Syrian pounds.
3. The company provided a national maritime transportation capacity for the country's major exports, such as cotton, and in the long run helped find additional markets for this item by approving reduced shipping fees, which led to a drop in the price of exported cotton sold on a "safe" basis. This is particularly significant considering the competition which Syrian cotton has met with in recent years.

4. Job opportunities were created for skilled seamen, thus keeping them from going to work on foreign ships under hardship conditions.

The Shipping Lines

Musaylimani explained that the company's ships run the following shipping routes:

1. The Adriatic-Middle Eastern ports line: two company ships are now running this line once a month. This route includes the ports of al-Ladhiqiyah and Tartus, Piraeus, Venice, Trieste, Rijeka, and any other port along the line which has enough goods to ship; and

2. The western Mediterranean line: one ship runs this line every 45 days. It includes the ports of al-Ladhiqiyah and Tartus, Sousse, Barcelone, Valencia, Genoa, Marseille, and ports in west Italy.

Musaylimani added that the company expects to run a line from Syrian ports to Soviet ports in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov beginning in March 1987, since an agreement has been signed by the Syrian Maritime Shipping Company and the Azov Company. At present the agreement is subject to study and ratification by the authorities in both countries.

Horizons For Development

The company has great hopes for development and expansion, but these hopes are realistic and within the company's resources. In this connection, Commodore Musaylimani said, "The basic goals of any plan to develop the Syrian Maritime Shipping Company, which was created in order to become a nucleus for a merchant marine fleet, is and always has been supplying new ships for the company, increasing the company's efficiency, expanding its shipping lines, and actively helping serve the national economy. I have made studies on buying multi-purpose commercial ships, and have drafted a memorandum for the company's development up to the year 2000."

He continued, "Even though there have been no positive results from the company's offers to buy commercial ships, it is still hoped that the company can obtain new ships, since this matter is of the utmost importance. The necessary studies are now under way for purchasing two oil tankers for the Syrian Maritime Shipping Company.

"The company also hopes to buy specialized ships such as roll-on-roll-off container ships. Maritime transport studies made by the Louis Berger Company have confirmed the need for more than 30 ships, each with a cargo capacity of 6,300 tons, by the year 2000, to allow Syria's goods to be transported according to United Nations codes."

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LEASED SHIPS, SCHEDULED LINES USED IN MARITIME TRANSPORT

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 pp 88-89

[Article: "The Syrian State Organization For Maritime Transport--Supervising and Regulating the Entire Maritime Sector"]

[Text] The Syrian State Organization for Maritime Transport is a cornerstone of Syria's shipping sector. Organization Director General 'Abd-al-Karim al-'Ali summarized the organization's development for us, explaining that it was founded in 1959 by Law No. 88 to perform the following functions:

1. To formulate Syria's general shipping planning policy;
2. To support maritime shipping and transport in every way possible;
3. To express its opinion on bills and decisions pertaining to maritime shipping and transport;
4. To regulate and coordinate maritime transport;
5. To provide maritime transport for ministries and government agencies on a contractual basis; such contracts can be concluded either directly or through intermediaries, as long as it is done on behalf of the organization;
6. To represent Syria in all aspects of maritime shipping activity, and to follow up such activity through international conferences; and
7. In general, to supervise the maritime sector and everything relating to sea transport and maritime safety. Law No. 88 made the organization responsible for all transportation by sea, be it export or import, goods or passengers.

The organization has made remarkable profits ever since its founding--profits which could be many times greater if all the conditions and requirements for optimum production were available. At present, the organization operates in two ways: leasing ships and using scheduled lines.

The Organization's Most Important Activities

Al-'Ali pointed out that the organization's most important function is to make sure that the public sector's exports and imports are shipped at the best prices and under the best conditions. This will mean savings for our industrial establishment, which will have favorable results for the various public sector bodies which ship via the organization.

For shipments weighing less than 1,000 tons, the shipping is usually done via scheduled lines or through our agents, who have offices around the world. Individual shipments of goods weighing between 1,000 and 7,000 tons are shipped on ships rented in the following manner. When a public sector agency asks us to ship goods imported or exported from various shipping zones around the world, our organization first contacts a public sector shipping company, and then a national shipping company which uses ships flying the Syrian flag. As for larger shipments, our organization contacts foreign shipping companies which have good reputations in the shipping market and whose ships meet the highest technical standards. These companies' offices are usually located in the more famous shipping centers such as Hamburg, London, Odessa, Burgas and elsewhere.

After that, a rental contract is drawn up between the shipowner or his legal agent and the organization, which is considered the lessee and the representative of the public sector importer or exporter. The rental contract is the document which regulates the shipping operation, and has been adopted by international shipping organizations such as BIMCO.

By way of explanation, the major clauses in the rental agreement are:

1. The name of the ship and its full specifications, including its weight and when it was built. The carrier can change the ship, as long as he substitutes a ship having the same general specifications as the ship originally named;
2. The shipping schedule, showing the expected date of arrival at the port of loading. Prior to this, some previous indication should have been given as to when the ship might arrive at the port of loading;
3. A description of the cargo;
4. A statement of the carrier's responsibilities. The carrier agrees to look after the cargo during the ocean trip and to bring it safely into the port of unloading. However, there are some exceptions to this responsibility;
5. The names of the ports through which the shipment will pass, and a statement as to whether they are free of such dangers as war or ice;
6. A determination of shipping fees and how they are to be paid, whether by vouchers or upon presentation of bills of lading, as well as the commission (the organization's commission) on the shipping fees;
7. A bond presented by the carrier to guarantee proper execution of the contract;

8. The name and address of the legal agency to be resorted to in case of any dispute between the two contracting parties. This agency is usually the Syrian court system, since Syrian laws and regulations apply. Alternatively, resort can be made to arbitration in order to resolve the dispute peacefully;

9. Other conditions relating to technical matters.

Referring to the organization's operations, the director general said that since 1980 the following goods have been shipped via the organization:

1. 1980: 94,000 tons of iron and fertilizer, 1,960 cubic meters of wood, and 235,000 head of sheep;
2. 1981: 161,025 tons of fertilizer, sugar, copper and cement, 18,360 cubic meters of wood, and 200,000 head of sheep;
3. 1982: 158,500 tons of sugar and fertilizer, and 100 buses;
4. 1983: 113,100 tons of sugar, fertilizer and iron sheets, 7,500 cubic meters of wood, 100 combines, and 200 tractors;
5. 1984: 2,325 tractors, 75 combines, 20 threshers, 13 service vehicles, 94,665 cubic meters of wood and canvas, 51,441 tons of iron, pipes, mineral oil, sulfur and cement, 150,000 head of sheep, 10,130 tons of iron sheets and wood pulp, 600 tons of fertilizer, and 40,000 tons of sugar;
6. 1985: 900 tractors, 100 Jeeps, 100 combines, 190,000 head of sheep, 400 cubic meters of wood, 500 tons of bean seeds, and 30,000 tons of white sugar; and
7. As of 31 August 1986: 228,514 tons of wheat, 10,607 tons of sugar, and 10,000 tons of flour.

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JOINT COMPANY SERVES SYRIAN, JORDANIAN FOREIGN TRADE

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 p 91

[Article: "The Syrian-Jordanian Maritime Shipping Company--A Successful Model For Joint Arab Action"]

[Text] The Syrian-Jordanian Maritime Shipping Company was founded in 1975, out of a desire to strengthen joint Arab activity in maritime transport. This company's charter stated that it was founded in order to carry out various maritime transport operations so as to serve the foreign trade goals of both Syria and Jordan. In pursuit of this goal, which determined the general context of the company's work, two ships were purchased, the Barada and the Yarmuk, both of which have cargo capacities of 6,300 tons. They were placed in service on 30 March 1979 and 31 December 1979 respectively, operating regularly together between ports on the north-west Europe line (Hamburg, Bremen, Antwerp and Rotterdam) and Syrian ports.

Since its founding, the company has, within the bounds of its resources, made the following important accomplishments.

1. The company's two ships have efficiently and successfully carried various goods, most of which were imported or exported by the country's public sector agencies. An average of 70,000 tons have been carried in both directions each year.
2. In spite of the prevailing slump in maritime transport markets in recent years, the company has been able to achieve reasonable returns on its investments over the past few years.
3. The company has gained a good reputation for itself because it has kept to its schedules and because its ships are fast. Lloyds of London, whose appraisals are reliable, considers it one of the most important scheduled shipping lines operating between north-west Europe and the Middle East.

These accomplishments of the Syrian-Jordanian Maritime Shipping Company prove beyond a doubt that given sincere intentions and the proper seriousness, joint Arab action is appropriate.

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FULL SERVICES BEING PROVIDED FOR SHIPS, TANKERS

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 p 92

[Article: "Director General of the Shipping Agencies Company Discusses Full Services for Ships and Oil Tankers"]

[Text] The Shipping Agencies Company (SHIPCO) offers essential services for ships and tankers docking at Syrian ports. The company aims to achieve economic, social and financial goals, as embodied by contributing to development by earning foreign currency for the country, providing services for ships and oil tankers, and disbursing funds for investment projects from fixed assets, buildings and equipment (self-financing) and from company budget surpluses and profits.

In a special interview, SHIPCO Director General 'Aziz Shahhud outlined this organization's role in meeting the needs of the shipping sector. He said that the company was created by Socialist Decree No. 347 of 1969, which defined its mission as the provision of all essential services for ships and oil tankers docking at Syrian ports. Thus the company assumed the functions which had previously been performed by private sector shipping agencies, replacing 92 agencies to become the country's sole agency for serving ships and oil tankers. It also took over representation of protective and workmen's compensation associations, inasmuch as these are an integral part of shipping activity. In addition, it provides unloading equipment and maintenance for ships and goods.

The company's activities have continually grown. It is expanding and improving its services according to yearly plans geared towards keeping up with other world ports in providing services.

The company has been able to offer all essential services for ships and oil tankers docking at Syrian ports, as well as for unloaded goods.

Shahhud mentioned that the company's general management, headquartered in al-Ladhiqiyah, has two branches, one specializing in ships carrying containerized imported goods and the other specializing in ordinary ships and oil tankers.

A branch in Tartus provides full services for ordinary ships, container ships, and oil tankers, and a branch in Baniyas provides full services for tankers docking there. There is an office in Damascus to maintain liaison with state departments and organizations, interview and assign seamen, and receive packages sent to ships via Damascus International Airport. There is also a section which specializes in passenger tickets and travel matters. Other branches will be set up to specialize in container and roll-on-roll-off shipments.

He added that the company's general management, branches and offices possess all the shipping expertise and scientific know-how pertinent to its operations, and its legal agency has more than 30 lawyers to defend the rights of commissioned seamen in court and to offer legal advice.

The general management, its branches and its offices have all kinds of communications equipment, such as VHV and telex equipment and direct telephone lines to the Tartus and Baniyas branches, as well as boats and vehicles.

The director general concluded by saying, "We cannot possibly mention all the accomplishments of this company, but we can say that it provides the best services and has satisfied everyone who has dealt with it."

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AL-LADHIQIYAH PORT'S ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE DISCUSSED

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 pp 94-95

[Article: "Director General of al-Ladhiqiyah Port Company Cites Constant Growth To Keep Up With Progress In Maritime Communications"]

[Text] Discussing the importance of developing al-Ladhiqiyah Port in order to keep up with the constant growth in maritime communications, Director General of the al-Ladhiqiyah Port Company Ramdan 'Atiyah said that the port is important because of its international standing in world trade, which is due to its Mediterranean location, which has endowed it with an excellent maritime transportation position. Even before man put his hand to it, it was a natural harbor, and the only improvement it has required has been to allow it to keep up with modern advances in shipbuilding and shipping methods.

He explained that after Syria became independent from the French, who cared little for the port, the local authorities had the idea of building a modern port which would meet the needs of modern ships and shipping activity, and which would also develop Syria's foreign trade and that of neighboring Arab countries and orient it towards Europe and North Africa. For this reason, the al-Ladhiqiyah Port Company was founded in 1950. It started out by building the new port, the infrastructure and facilities of which were completed in 1956, and putting it into operation. At that time, it had 1,146 meters of piers in addition to special docks; however, larger ships would still tie up at sea. In 1958, new grain silos and a special pier for loading and unloading grain by machine were built. Subsequently, port improvements became urgent because the national economy was growing, maritime transport activity was increasing, it became necessary to be able to accommodate large commercial and specialized ships, and better ways were found to receive and transport goods. In addition, transit trade through Syrian ports was increasing because the railroad network was being expanded.

'Atiyah pointed out that the port was developed in stages. The main breakwater was lengthened to 3,162 meters in order to protect the 145-hectare dock basin. Fourteen moorages were built for ships being loaded or unloaded by barges, in addition to other moorages for ships being loaded or unloaded at

the piers. Some 11 piers with a total length of 2,100 meters and depths ranging from 10.8 to 13.3 meters were built, in addition to a pier 215 meters long and 6.8 meters deep. Some of these piers were designated for miscellaneous cargo, while others are for container and roll-on-roll-off ships. As for land construction, the depositories cover 180,000 square meters, and include 25 warehouses covering 95,500 square meters, a 1,500 square meter roofed area, and other areas paved with reinforced concrete for depositing containers. Outside the port area there are 158,000 square meters of lots. The grain silos were also upgraded, with each silo having 72 chambers and a storage capacity of 45,000 tons of grain. In each silo the grain can be sifted, sterilized, dried, packaged and moved by machine to the ship at the rate of about 150 tons per hour. They can also receive grain from ships through suction machines, at the rate of 200 tons per hour. Additionally, the storage capacity of the refrigerated warehouse was expanded to 1,500 tons distributed over several refrigeration and freezer rooms, in which the temperature can be lowered to 40 degrees below zero Centigrade.

The director general went on to say, "Since these major maritime and land facilities exist, there must be equipment to service them and the ships which dock at the port. Therefore the management has installed modern equipment to serve ships and cargo in the best possible manner." He listed the port's assets and equipment as follows: 16 electric cranes, 68 other cranes with capacities ranging from 3 to 70 tons, two 132-ton cranes, 18 tugboats and pilot boats, 76 transport vessels, 22 assorted service vehicles, 35 tractors and engines, 55 150-ton cargo barges, eight grain suction machines, a ship repair ramp with a capacity of 900 tons, and four container cradles.

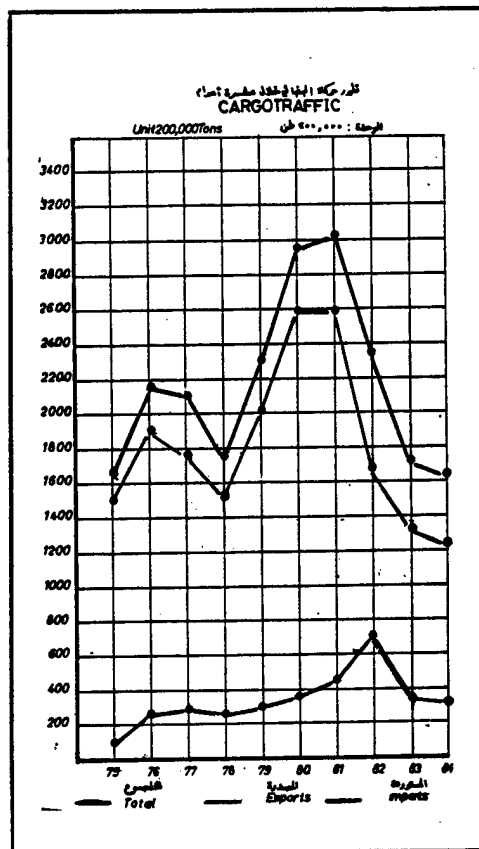
Projects Under Construction

'Atiyah stated that in spite of its limited resources, the port management has been able to cope with the overcrowding crises of recent years through redoubled efforts and constant work. The management has started expanding and improving the port, adding four warehouses covering 40,000 square meters and building a 22-kilometer railroad network and a 47-kilometer electricity grid. The improvements also include building water tanks, large pumping stations equipped with lighthouses and signal lights, and various service buildings.

Future projects

He added that the management is working on future projects, beginning with the second stage of expansion, which will enable the port to accommodate ships carrying a total of 15 million tons each year. The port will have the most modern facilities and advanced equipment to provide whatever services are needed.

Chart 1. Cargo Traffic Over the Past 10 Years



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HISTORIC PORT OF TARTUS BEING UPDATED

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 pp 98-99

[Article: "Tartus Port In Its Twentieth Year--Increasing Its Capacity To 10 Million Tons A Year"]

[Text] Syria occupies a geographic location of extreme strategic importance to the countries of the Middle East, which gives Syria's seaports and airports their strategic significance. Also, we must not forget that for the ancient world, Damascus and the other Syrian cities were land ports for caravans.

Tartus Port, which entered service in 1966, may be one of the foremost ports in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, as well as a vital facility for the Syrian economy. What makes it even more important is its location at the middle of the coastline of Greater Syria (which historically extended from Antioch to Gaza), its proximity to the industrial countries, the production centers, and the sources of oil, and its rail connections with neighboring countries and the other Syrian governorates.

Tartus (population 65,000) is an ancient city dating back to Phoenician and Roman times. Ptolemy refers to it as a flourishing Roman city and a crossroads for world trade. The Romans built a port there, traces of which remain to this day.

The modern port of Tartus, work on which began in 1960 and which entered service in July 1966, was built according to the most modern scientific methods used in port construction around the world. Construction was started by the Yugoslavian Bomorsko Grad Company, which completed the two breakwaters and some of the piers.

In 1969 a decree was issued establishing the State Company for Tartus Port, a state company which however operates on a commercial basis. Its mission is to provide all necessary shipping, unloading and storage services. Its head office is in Tartus, and it is connected with the Transportation Ministry.

The company operates all the port's installations and equipment, with the assistance of other agencies which deal more particularly with certain types of goods, such as the State Phosphate and Mining Company and the State Consumption Organization, in coordination with the Ports and Customs Authority.

The piers can handle 6.5 million tons a year, and when construction is finished the port's capacity will rise to 10 million tons a year.

The docks, surrounded by two breakwaters varying in height from 4 to 12 meters, cover 120 hectares, allowing the accommodation of various types of ships with drafts up to 32.5 meters and cargo capacities of 40,000 tons. The founding decree stipulated construction of 4,600 meters of commercial piers, and so far 3,200 meters have been completed and equipped with modern machinery and equipment. The port has a special pier for exporting phosphate, fuels and coal, as well as silos and storage facilities for such substances. This pier also has a pumping station which can pump 2 million tons a year. It has been decided to build a dry dock for repairing ships with capacities up to 80,000 tons.

The port has warehouses, storage areas, roads, workshops, buildings for various purposes, and silos, thus providing full shipping, unloading and storage services. It also has two lighthouses, a power plant, a 5,000-cubic meter warehouse for storing goods, a livestock corral, a pumping station to provide drinking water for ships, and a fuel pumping station. The port is connected by land (railroads and roads) to all the country's governorates and all the neighboring Arab countries. A free zone has been set up near the port, and a petroleum outlet is located nearby to load and unload oil tankers.

The warehouses, storage areas, buildings, roads and machines cover a total of 1.8 million square meters. There are two types of warehouses at the port, covered and open. There are four roofed warehouses covering 34,000 square meters located at the southern pier on Jetty No. 2. Two other warehouses covering 8,800 square meters are being built at the northern pier on the same jetty. There is also a 5,000 cubic meter refrigerated warehouse. Roofed warehouses covering 10,100 square meters are under construction.

The other kind of warehouses are 671,200 square meters of open areas being built according to modern technical methods, since they are being paved with reinforced concrete. As of now, about 50,000 square meters are ready for use and the remainder is under construction.

There is a considerable amount of equipment at the port, including 67 15-ton mobile barge cranes, four 20-ton barge cranes, two 40-ton cranes, two 70-ton cranes, three 30-ton land cranes, two floating cranes, each of which can lift from 32 to 100 tons, 250 electric cranes capable of lifting from 3 to 6 tons, as well as stackers, container cradles, barges, water barges, and hundreds of other machines.

It is a very modern port, continually growing and developing, located on the oldest spot of land in the world.

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BROAD JURISDICTIONS OF PORT DIRECTORATE OUTLINED

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 p 100

[Article: "The State Directorate for Ports--Supervising and Overseeing Maritime Matters"]

[Text] The State Directorate for Ports is a state organization, subordinate to the Transportation Ministry, which is concerned with maritime matters, maritime transport and ports, and which has broad jurisdictions in these areas. It consists of the following directorates:

1. The Financial Affairs Directorate, which is concerned with maritime inspections, licenses, technical port matters, planning, and international relations and agreements;
2. The Marine Inspection Directorate, which is concerned with applying international agreements on ship and cargo safety, issuing the necessary certificates, inspecting logs and ship ownership records, supervising compliance with international agreements aboard foreign ships entering Syrian ports, issuing licenses to fishing ships; and other matters pertaining to ships crews and the issuance of visas for them;
3. The Port Affairs Directorate, which is concerned with keeping the sea's waters safe from pollution, helping burning or disabled ships, and keeping the ports and territorial waters safe and secure from smuggling and piracy, in addition to collecting fees and applying regulations pertaining to arrivals, departures and lighthouses;
4. The Technical Affairs Directorate, which is concerned with constructing any buildings needed by the directorate, building observation and guard posts all along the Syrian coastline, and conducting studies on building more lighthouses if necessary. This directorate has built two radio stations at al-Ladhiqiyah and Tartus to communicate with commercial ships, shipping agencies, and ports;

5. The International Agreements Section, which represents Syria at all United Nations conferences on trade, development and maritime organizations.

Therefore, the functions of the State Directorate for Ports are extremely important, especially considering the departments it represents. It is responsible for maintaining and expanding maritime ports and maintaining lighthouses. Its mission includes studying, designing and building new port projects and installing the necessary equipment, implementing laws, decrees, regulations and decisions pertaining to maritime shipping, commerce, ports and sea fishing, and drawing up new plans in concert with the pertinent authorities. In 1974, Legislative Decree No. 93 attached this directorate to the Transportation Ministry.

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RAIL NETWORK SEEN CRUCIAL TO NATION'S LAND TRANSPORT

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 p 102

[Article: "The Railroad Sector--The Syrian Rail Network Is Becoming More Advanced, With New Plans For Laying 600 Kilometers Of Track"]

[Text] The Syrian railroad is the backbone of the land transportation sector, has a prominent role in economic development, and is virtually a major artery of the Syrian economy. The railroad could never have played such an important role without the comprehensive development and expansion operation undertaken by Syria's leaders ever since 1970. Some 2,934 kilometers of rail lines have been laid throughout the governorates, 1,800 kilometers of which were laid in the last few years, and there are 600 kilometers under construction right now. Syria can be said to have the most extensive rail network in the Arab world.

This network connects most of Syria's cities--Damascus, Hims, Halab, al-Ladhiqiyah, al-Qamishli, Mahni (site of the phosphate mines), Tartus, al-'Akkari, Hamah, and Marhadah. New lines are being built, such as the 85-kilometer Tartus-al-Ladhiqiyah line, which is a major rail line because it connects Syria's two main ports, al-Ladhiqiyah and Tartus. This line is about 75 percent complete. Construction has begun on the Damascus-Dar'a line, part of the Damascus-Hijaz line, which the Syrian state has agreed to rebuild up to the Jordanian borders. This line is extremely strategic, since it links various parts of Syria and passes through remote areas, enabling them in time to become developed and civilized. At the same time, this line ensures linkage with the Jordanian and Saudi rail networks, thus helping develop Arab transportation and facilitating shipping among Arab countries. There is another 145-kilometer line connecting Dayr al-Zawr in the north with the Iraqi border at Abu-Kamal.

The railroad network has helped strengthen the Syrian national economy by carrying Syrian products and imported goods. In 1985, about 3.41 million passengers used the trains, and about 4.54 million tons of goods were shipped by rail.

In the past few years the number of trains has increased, and the State Railroad Organization, headquartered in Halab, has come to own 340 tourist- and first-class passenger cars, 178 diesel engines of various sizes, 45 modern sleeping cars, 224 "Automotris" motorized cars, 38 dining cars, and about 4,100 freight cars of various types and sizes.

The organization has a great many specialists. It has about 9,200 employees, including engineers, specialists and trained staff. In its early stages, the organization lacked specialists, and had very few engineers or technicians. In 1974, an engineering training institute, the Middle East Railroad Institute, was established by Law No 52, which placed the institute under the jurisdiction of the Transportation Ministry and the State Railroad Organization. Law No. 4 of 1978 created the Supreme Council for the Middle East Institute, which would provide the appropriate technical training in all areas of specialization. Many students are enrolled at this institute, and in 1985 700 students in all areas of specialization graduated from it.

Therefore, it can be said that the development of the Syrian railroads, and the official concern for this sector, particularly that shown by the Transportation Ministry, has provided the right conditions for developing Syrian governorates and constructing an infrastructure for the various economic sectors, particularly industry and agriculture. While it is true that in the advanced countries the railroads came into being because of industrial development, it is also true that extending these arteries leads not only to industrial growth but also to the development of regions and governorates which just yesterday were considered remote and backward.

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SYRIA

RAILROAD OFFICIALS MEET IN DAMASCUS

Beirut AL-IQTISAD WA AL-A'MAL in Arabic Nov 86 p 102

[Article: "Fifth Conference of Middle East Railroad Directors"]

[Text] The fifth conference of railroad directors, held in Damascus on 15 April 1986, discussed several important administrative topics related to rail transportation. The participants examined Syria's experience in this field and the ways it has resolved many of its difficulties.

Syrian Transportation Minister Engr Yusuf Ahmad delivered a speech at this conference which expressed the Syrian leadership's awareness of the importance of this sector and outlined future plans for its development.

Board Chairman and Director General of the State Railroad Organization Engr Ghassan Qaddur chaired the conference sessions, which were attended by Secretary General of the International Federation of Rail Transport Engr Jean Polliet, the general directors of the Lebanese, Iranian, Turkish and Saudi railroads, and delegates from the Jordanian Hijaz Railroad Organization, the al-'Aqabah Railroad Organization, the Syrian Hijaz Railroad, the International Refrigerated Transport Company, and the International Containerized Transport Company. The conference accepted the Saudi Railroad Organization as a full-fledged member of the association of general directors of Middle East railroads.

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