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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Radio Monte Carlo Profiled, Manager Interviewed

91AE0070A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
19 Oct 90 pp 56-60

[Article by Rashid Fayid; includes interview with Jacques Takih in Paris; date not specified]

[Excerpt] For news on every event in the Arab region, radio listeners tune in to Radio Monte Carlo. From the Lebanon War to the Palestinian people's intifadah on its land, to the invasion of Kuwait and its development into a regional and international crisis—this Arabic language, French-affiliated radio station emerges as a source for which there is no alternative for examining developments and events.

Although it is primarily a French station, or a French window on the Arab world, as its general director, Jacques Takih, emphasizes, it has not hesitated to devote primary attention to the Gulf crisis. It has also devoted, and is devoting, primary attention to the oppression to which the Palestinian people are being subjected under occupation, to the extent that Tel Aviv accused it a while ago of transmitting coded messages to the occupied land to direct intifadah activity.

AL-MAJALLAH visited Radio Monte Carlo, toured its studios, and spoke with its director, his assistants, and journalists working there.

"The French announcer had not even gathered the papers of the news broadcast in French, which she had just finished reading, when she picked up the telephone to respond to an Arab listener, who gave her a lesson in the geography of the Arab region: Ba'labakk, the Lebanese historical city, is located in the al-Biq'a' in eastern Lebanon, not in southern Lebanon."

Mr. Jacques Takih, the General Manager of Radio Monte Carlo, which is beamed toward the Middle East, relates this incident not only to explain the extent to which Arab citizens follow Radio Monte Carlo, but also to demonstrate the listeners' connection to the station, and their desire not to have any mistake recorded against it. The fact is that Radio Monte Carlo has almost become, or has become, the cohort of an Arab generation, and more, because it has accompanied many Arabs in [the development of] their political, cultural, and artistic awareness and has become a daily source through which they look at world events and new developments.

This state of affairs did not develop suddenly. Rather, it is the result of an accumulation of experience and daily practice that began in the early 1970's, when the voice of Radio Monte Carlo reached Arab listeners from two small rooms, one in Paris, from which the news was broadcast by Antoine Nawful and Rawwad Tarabiyah, and the other in the principality of Monaco, where Sana' Mansur and Huda al-Husayni broadcast songs, tunes, and artistic commentary.

It did not occur to listeners that this broadcast, which contrasted with the monotony of the "veteran" broadcasts to which they had become accustomed, would transmit its media eloquence and elegance from two different facilities so distant from each other (separated by about 1,000 km), and that a third facility in Cyprus would receive their transmission and beam it to the Arab region.

The competition was unequal. It matched Radio Monte Carlo—an Arabic language broadcast from France armed with a youthful voice and content, filled with enthusiasm and exuberance, and liberated from the constraints of monotony, its microphone opening every news broadcast with a rapid delivery and pleasing cadences—with stations adhering strictly to broadcast traditions verging on austerity, a characteristic shared by local broadcasts and foreign broadcasts, such as those of London (the BBC), the Voice of America, or even "Here is Moscow."

Even recently, official Arab radio stations, whether they began in the same period or developed their capabilities and extended their transmission beyond their national borders, have been unable to hold their ground in the face of Radio Monte Carlo. They have become envious of Radio Monte Carlo, which expresses the French style and has provided a new model for Arab radio stations. However, they do not want to apply this style due to differences in their respective natures and functions. Thus, Radio Monte Carlo has become the "miracle child" among its opponents in the region. [passage omitted]

Takih's Storm

Radio Monte Carlo's formula or structure proved very successful, even at the expense of other stations' decline. Its internal situation continued without any basic change, or to put it more precisely, any attempt to change it failed, until the appointment of a new general manager on 17 October 1989. Jacques Takih, who provoked a great controversy, assumed responsibility for the station for a number of reasons, including:

First: To transform Radio Monte Carlo into a "French window on the Arab world," for which Mr. Takih came with extensive authorities and clear support from the French Foreign Ministry.

Second: To extricate the station from its doldrums and deteriorating listenership ranking by undertaking radical changes in the station's administrative makeup.

Third: To reactivate the station economically after it had recorded an agonizing decline in advertising revenues in 1988 from 35 million French francs per year to about 4 million, and after it had recorded an accumulated financial deficit over a four-year period (1984-1988) of about 50 million francs, of which 20 million were recorded last year.

This decline in revenues was accompanied by a reduction in the station's budget from 36 million francs (about \$7 million) to 12 million.

Fourth: To extend the station's transmission coverage to any area where there is an Arab presence (Canada, United States, London, Rome, and others).

The Gulf Crisis at Monte Carlo

About 14 months after Takih assumed his responsibilities at the station, the Gulf crisis occurred, confronting Radio Monte Carlo with a test of its effectiveness and credibility. Its success in passing this test is indicated by the increase in its listenership, as Takih himself states to AL-MAJALLAH, adding:

"This encourages me to take two steps:

"The first step is to transform the evening slot, which begins at five o'clock Greenwich time, into a news slot, in the broad sense of the word—in other words, without dispensing with the musical segments.

The second step is to begin implementing an agreement with Canada International Radio to broadcast our programs in Canada on short wave."

Before Takih speaks at length about the future, we bring him back to the present, asking:

[Fayid] You came to Radio Monte Carlo with the slogan of change and development. After roughly a year, do you believe that you have achieved that?

[Takih] I came to the station under the shadow of three crises that were reigning over it: the station's difficult financial position and the need to rebalance it; the lack of success, to say the least, of the commercial bureau, and the need to create an adequate commercial bureau to replace it; and third, the lack of personnel and production changes since the station was founded, which is stressed in reports on the station's situation, and the need to revitalize everything related to programs and the news.

Therefore, I was facing three major areas of action. The station's financial position was delicate, because advertising revenues between 1985 and 1989 had declined from 35 million francs to 3.9 million. Among the reasons for the decline are the start of advertising on Saudi television, the Iraq-Iran War, the reduction in the price of a barrel of oil, and the decline of the dollar.

In this regard, I have made efforts to organize a new method for soliciting advertising, which entails commissioning a media organization, Links International—in other words the Shuwayri, Safir, and Masbunji group—to handle advertising starting in January 1990. The merits of this choice have been evident since the first months [after it was made]. However, the moment we began to prepare to reap the fruits of this effort as a station and an advertising organization, the Gulf crisis began. We will not know before the end of the fiscal year

how the crisis will affect the current phase, nor can we know how it will affect the coming fiscal year which will begin shortly. The crisis is affecting advertisers' decisions. Although radio stations are usually affected less than newspapers, our initial impression is that we are facing a period of stagnation. We can transcend this stagnation, especially if we possess creativity, which can help us profit even under the shadow of the current crisis, because, as a radio station, we cover not only the region of the current tension, but also the entire Arab region. Consequently, consumption will not cease. The second major area in which I made efforts pertains to regaining control of the station's financial situation. Advertising revenues were insufficient, which induced me to request assistance from the authorities. As soon as I assumed my responsibilities, I asked the relevant parties how much importance they attached to the station's survival. I then told them that they must provide means for it to survive if that was what they wanted. On that basis, I obtained significant financial capabilities from the Foreign Ministry for 1990. These capabilities are helping us to continue comfortably as we wait for the start of the harvest of expected advertising revenues.

However, three components are necessary for the station's success:

1. The possession of a listenership.
2. If we possess a listenership, we can then obtain advertising.
3. If we obtain advertising, we ensure revenues.

We have no reason to be apprehensive regarding our listenership. Television and the advent of FM broadcasting in several Arab countries are not a source of concern. The latest statistics on our listenership prove that not only have we maintained our ranking, but we have also seen an improvement in our listenership. We have the largest listenership among the radio stations that cover the entire Arab region. We are ahead of the BBC and the Voice of America. We have obtained this position because we have shaken the dust from our programming policy and have been making it more dynamic and lively since last December. Our programs include those produced in the Arab world and in Paris, where we cooperate with the Arab World Institute, Lafayette Academic City, and the Pompidou Cultural Center, in addition to programs dealing with everyday concerns, which establish a direct relationship with the public, such as the weekly medical program, on which a physician responds to listeners' questions.

This alone does not satisfy our ambitions. We have now decided to take a new step that entails dedicating the evening slot to news as of this October. This slot will begin following the Arabic news edition at 7:00 p.m. and will last until the end of the daily broadcast period. It will be devoted to news, without dispensing with the news edition times, as is currently the case. Also, the morning slot will be similarly devoted to news and will have a

special character reflecting cooperation between announcers and technicians.

I believe that one of the great functions of Radio Monte Carlo is its news role. I think that the guidelines offered to us in listeners' letters, to which we have become accustomed, will help us decide on the final form of the recommended slots, which we call news-music slots. These slots will allow the announcer or program presenter to be constantly ready to talk with any guest on the air regarding the guest's view on any political topic.

Is the Station's Main Attraction the News?

[Fayid] Does this change mean that the Arab listener usually follows the news more closely, or can the change be attributed to the Gulf crisis?

[Tahik] Both explanations apply. I would like to clarify that we had the idea [before the crisis]. Then, events occurring in the Gulf encouraged us to implement it. The new proposal would not result in the cancellation of our customary programs. On the contrary, they would remain. However, my desire is to grant the average evening program more freedom to present news without any fixed time constraints. The evening news slot would include a rebroadcast of important news programs broadcast during the day and a panoramic view of the day's events. In other words, the evening broadcast could be easily received in regions where our programs cannot be received during the day, and where television does not have a basic presence. Friends have told me that, in remote areas of Sudan, they encountered a camel driver riding his camel while listening to the Radio Monte Carlo news broadcast on his transistor radio.

While we are talking about the news, I want to draw your attention to the news broadcasts in the previous period. They did not continuously reflect the French position. True, we want to present all points of view. However, this radio station is primarily a French radio station, and it must create a formula that allows its listeners to hear views that they expect as well as France's view regarding any topic. Therefore, the station experienced a controversy, which I ended, because the station cannot be two-headed. I was provided with capabilities to end this trend. Since then, the station, in which persons from the Middle East work, has been dedicated as a rostrum that reflects all views, including the French position. We perceive this in the news editions.

[Fayid] How are the news broadcasts produced?

[Tahik] They are produced in the same way that they are produced in other media. In other words we rely on both the larger and the less important news agencies, in addition to our network of correspondents in the United States, Syria, Iraq, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan. Our correspondents' reports frame the agencies' news reports. Regarding the current Gulf crisis, our continued contact with our correspondent in Baghdad seems necessary, even though the information that he provides to us is subject to the sieve there. However, as

far as we are concerned, that falls within the scope of allowing a field for all parties to express their opinions. This applies to Iraq as it does to Saudi Arabia, Syria, or Jordan, inasmuch as our correspondents' reports reflect the concerns of public authorities in each country. Our correspondents cannot fail to take into account the circumstances of the countries from which they are reporting. Therefore, it is left to us to evaluate the share of censorship or political propaganda in the news that we receive.

Not Censorship, But Pruning

[Fayid] Do you broadcast a report on the air directly as it is, or do you evaluate it and delete some of its passages, or even all of it?

[Tahik] There are two types of reports. The first type is one that we request based on a news item carried by the agencies which we need to clarify, or regarding which we need to obtain details. The second type of report is one that the correspondent decides to provide based on information available to him. Such a report is not broadcast directly as it is. Rather, it is subjected to close scrutiny to avoid broadcasting news whose accuracy cannot be determined or investigated, or to avoid broadcasting other than important or basic details, such as a report on the reception by one head of state of another, which is inundated by the names of the persons in the receiving line or the fact that the reception was held near the staircase leading to the aircraft, or other secondary details of no interest to the listener in general. However, details about the climate and content of the meeting that took place are retained for broadcast. This is not a type of censorship. It is pruning, or a montage.

[Fayid] In Arab circles, some say that Radio Monte Carlo was previously an Arab broadcast from France, but is now a French broadcast in Arabic. In other words, has the radio station become devoted to conveying the French viewpoint?

[Tahik] This radio station is at a crossroads between these two worlds. It is not a radio station that broadcasts in Arabic and reflects Arab political sensitivities. Nor is it affiliated politically with one or another country.

As we learned earlier, if this station has an affiliation, it is to France of course. It is a French radio station that broadcasts in the Arabic language. It reflects the positions of all, especially France's position. Regarding the Gulf crisis, we have reflected the positions of all—the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the PLO. We invited the ambassador of Kuwait, which France still recognizes as an independent sovereign state, to the station to express his opinion in an interview. Thus, I have continued to maintain contact with Kuwait's ambassador just as I have maintained contact with the ambassadors of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iraq. However, none of them has imposed any position on us. Nor is any information being conveyed without me examining it and expressing my opinion on it, be it negative or positive. Radio Monte Carlo broadcasts in

the Arabic language and reflects the French position. I am French. I am vigilant about applying that fully. However, we also reflect the situation in the occupied lands, inasmuch as we have a correspondent who has a primary role in conveying a picture of what is happening there, so that we can understand the facts of the situation.

American and British Competition [Fayid] Has not the Gulf crisis led to an increase in competition with the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation, especially inasmuch as some maintain that the latter recently regained many Monte Carlo listeners, because Radio Monte Carlo's speed in reporting the news often comes at the expense of veracity?

[Taki] I am not in a position that permits me to speak about the veracity of the broadcasts. This is a relative matter. An evaluation of it would differ from one person to another. However, the fact of the matter is that we are pursuing a successful combination of speed and the verification of a news item. Sometimes we carry exclusive stories. However, we do not broadcast such stories before verifying them. If verification is impossible, we do not use the story. However, in any case, we do not have the slow logic of the BBC, which leads in the long term to a loss of accuracy. We convey the facts with practical speed. We are currently interested in adding an evening or weekend analysis that presents a close look at an event. For your information, we are now contracting, in the station's current group, the [most] expert political analyst regarding the region's affairs, with the exception of Mr. Paul Marie de la Geurs.

[Fayid] Regarding the true state of affairs of journalistic work, we do not find total impartiality regarding the Gulf crisis. What is Radio Monte Carlo's position?

[Taki] I can affirm to you that I carefully guard against the demonstration of any discrimination through the station, in terms of the amount of air time given to a position or the conveyance of the view of a particular party, including the regional and international parties to the conflict, among which, to be specific, is France, so as to preclude accusations that we are hand in glove with Baghdad, Riyadh, Washington, or even France itself. I am making tireless efforts, so that Monte Carlo provides news without siding with one or another party. On the contrary, Radio Monte Carlo must be a voice of wisdom, calm, and peace, which can unify the Arab peoples, especially given that we are a popular radio station before being a radio station of the political elite.

[Fayid] Am I to then understand that you are opening the door to all parties to reflect their positions, while leaving it up to the listener to determine his own position based on all of that?

[Taki] Whoever seeks to make his opinion known through Radio Monte Carlo, and is not allowed to do so, may contact me, especially if he actually has something to say.

[Fayid] Has the station's transmission been subject to jamming recently?

[Taki] Jamming has been isolated and contained. Our situation is better than that of the BBC in this regard.

[Fayid] Do you intend to strengthen your transmission in Arab regions where it is currently difficult to receive the broadcast, even in the evening?

[Taki] If the transmission facility in Cyprus is maintained and strengthened, we will be able to cover the entire Arab region. This will happen at the end of the coming year. The relevant French authorities are going to great lengths so that our transmission directed toward the Arab world will become better. This transmission will, at the same time, be directed toward where we see a large presence of Arabic speakers. Our plans include covering, in the first phase at the beginning of this October, Canada and the United States over short wave. For your information, during the summer, we also have been covering the Riviera region (Southern France) over medium wave. My goal is to continue to expand over short wave, and when circumstances permit, over medium wave.

Abu-Samra: Concern With Objectivity

General Manager Taki's remarks regarding Monte Carlo's orientation do not differ much from the remarks made by Deputy Editor-in-Chief Antoine Abu-Samra. In his opinion, the station is concerned about maintaining objectivity. He adds: This objectivity is what has granted Radio Monte Carlo its success in the Arab world since its establishment. Of course, we in the Arab world are now experiencing the problem of defining the specifications of objectivity, because of the split that has arisen in the Arab world due to the Gulf crisis. In other words, the current reality is devoid of a scope for objectivity or impartiality, in the manner of the proverb that says, if you are not with me you must be against me. However, we are nonetheless continuing to be objective.

[Fayid] However, is not Radio Monte Carlo accused of partiality?

[Abu-Samra] If it has been accused of partiality in the current Gulf crisis, this partiality should be evaluated by returning to international society's position on the crisis in its entirety, to all of the resolutions of the Security Council, and to the positions of the majority of heads of states. If we convey these positions and resolutions in a biased manner, the media apparatuses of the world are biased.

In any case, if the accusation that we are biased is correct, we would not grant freedom to all of our correspondents in the region. Without exception, they convey to us, through their verbal reports, the most important opinions of the countries in which they work, including Iraq.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Hawatimah, Habash on PLO Policy Directions

91AE0064A Nicosia AL-HURRIYAH in Arabic
21 Oct 90 pp 5-6

[Article: "Details of Palestinian Central Council Session; Emphasis on Importance of Linkage Between Region's Issues and on Bolstering Intifadah and Climate of Confrontation with Imperialism"]

[Excerpts] Tunis Dispatch—[Passage omitted]

Nayif Hawatimah's Address

On the following day, comrade Nayif Hawatimah, the Democratic Front secretary general said:

I will begin with the conclusions brother Abu-'Ammar made in the address he delivered yesterday when he linked the intifadah with the Gulf developments. Let me stress from the outset that we have entered the 35th month of the failure of all the schemes to contain and liquidate the intifadah. For 35 months, attempts have been made by the United States to contain the intifadah, beginning with Shultz's plan and ending with Baker's plan. They have all failed. The same attempts have been made by "America's Arabs." Camp David's Egypt has played a pivotal role, beginning with Mubarak's proposals to suspend the intifadah for six months and ending with Mubarak's unblest ten points. All these endeavors have ended with failure. The attempts to liquidate the intifadah have ended. Whenever the enemy perpetrates a massacre, as he has done in 'Uyun Qarah and in Jerusalem recently, the intifadah fires rage more strongly.

Hawatimah added: Under the pressure of the intifadah and of the failure of U.S. attempts, the U.S. administration suspended the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue. When Washington proposed new conditions, it received from the intifadah and from the main forces nothing but determination to continue the struggle and to reject the U.S. schemes.

The intifadah is the consequence of objective factors. It is the product of national unity and the PLO's cumulative political, organizational, and armed struggle. Consequently, the intifadah cannot be stopped because the political and social elements and elements of struggle for the continuation of the intifadah are hidden in the intifadah itself. The question facing us is: How do we develop the intifadah? The problem here pertains to the intrinsic factors of politics, organization, and struggle pertaining to the PLO and its organizations. The question raised here is: How do we transform the Unified Command from a coordinating body to a field command, and how do we open the paths to a broad national unity encompassing the Islamic forces, including Hamas and others? Moreover, how do we revive the people's committees that have withered and turned into party committees? How do we revive these committees and

transform them into the people's authority replacing the occupation authority? Furthermore, how do we restore the sectorial social life in the occupied territories, and how do we channel money toward the provinces in such a way as to meet the interests of the broadest masses. A total of 180,000 workers employed in the Israeli establishments can perform miracles when they declare a comprehensive national insurgency and when the all-out clash with the enemy materializes. The PLO should hold a working session to deal with intifadah affairs and with how to revive the comprehensive national role.

Hawatimah added: In addition, how do we transfer the struggle into the body of Israel proper so that the Israelis may feel the ramifications of the intifadah on their conditions. Here, the role of the 1948 Palestinians [Israeli Arabs] and of the Israeli democracy and peace forces kicks in. Besides, how do we revive the role of the camps of steadfastness in Lebanon and of the armed operations from South Lebanon to pressure the enemy along more than one axis?

Hawatimah then talked about the Gulf crisis and referred to the current international circumstances, saying: The Camp David regime in Egypt has now been exposed, and all efforts should be exerted for the brave triangle: the intifadah, the PLO, Iraq, and Jordan.

The international dimensions that enable us to create a new international equation, which exerts pressure in the direction of wrenching a new Security Council resolution that rehabilitates international legitimacy and the Palestinian peace initiative—these international dimensions have now become clear.

We are fortunate that this coincides with developments in the Gulf. All the oil is now on the negotiating table dealing with the Middle East crisis. The situation was not this comprehensive in 1973. If the Americans are thinking of the 1967 experience and, consequently, of catching the Iraqi whale as the big Egyptian whale was caught in 1967, then our people aspire to turn the current situation, whether peacefully or by war, into another Suez in which they score a clear-cut victory. All the oil is on the table, and all of Iraq's capabilities are on the table. The situation has turned into a comprehensive strategic issue. The Americans want not only [to have] the oil but also to strike Iraq's capacity to secure the situation. It is well-known that the Americans plan to enter Kuwait on 6 October.

He added: The important cards in the intifadah's hands are oil, Iraq's capability, and the democratic transformations in the region. These are sources of strength for the intifadah. We must establish broad and firm linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Middle East crisis and between the Gulf crisis and international legitimacy. Those who call for avoiding linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian issue speak with a defiled logic. The United States and "America's Arabs" want to separate the Gulf crisis from our national issues. No to

internationalizing the Gulf issue, yes to internationalizing all of the Middle Eastern crises. If we cannot accomplish such internationalization, then it is yes to Arabizing the Gulf crisis.

Hawatimah wondered: Moreover, how do we strengthen the Iraq-Jordan-intifadah trench, how do we bolster this with popular steps, and how can the PLO contribute to building a popular Arab front supporting the intifadah and Iraq? If the possibility of war is 45 percent, as brother Abu-'Ammar has said, then we must work under the pressure of this possibility and present to the Arab peoples a new agenda that obstructs the possibility of the outbreak of war. But if war erupts, then we must understand clearly our responsibilities in the occupied territories, in the territories taken in 1948, and in South Lebanon. We must draw up our plans so that we are not caught by surprise.

Finally, I repeat that it is important to achieve democratic reform in order for the PLO tree to shed its autumn leaves and remain green and verdant. We must accomplish the process of democratic reform in the interest of the intifadah and in order that we may accelerate the accomplishment of our national objectives of independence.

Concluding, Hawatimah stressed that it is impossible to find an alternative to the PLO and that the efforts to find such an alternative did not succeed in the early 1980's and will not succeed under the umbrella of the intifadah. [passage omitted]

Dr. George Habash's Address

The address by comrade George Habash, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine secretary general, focused on several issues. After lauding the Palestinian stance on the Gulf crisis, he focused his address on the issue of the intifadah and on the need to develop and entrench it and to ensure its continuation, while simultaneously ensuring the continuation of the democratic reform process, which requires the highest levels of organizational unity between the Unified National Command factions and Hamas. He also focused on ways to improve the delivery of financial aid to our kinsmen in the occupied territories. In his address, Habash stressed the Jordanian arena's importance in supporting and escalating the intifadah. Regarding the Gulf crisis, Habash spoke about the existing political and military options and warmly lauded the effort made by brother Abu-'Ammar to achieve a political solution. [passage omitted]

EGYPT

Mubarak's NDP Membership Viewed As Obstacle to Democracy

91AA0065A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 24 Oct 90 p 3

[Article by Muhammad 'Ismat]

[Text] The monopolization of the ruling party leaves no alternative to the opposition in Egypt other than to

boycott the election. For the past 15 years, the opposition has unflaggingly demanded a democratic constitution and laws that are not decided by the government and that guarantee free political exercise, expressing the people's conscience and concerns. However, the government has plugged its ears and has perpetrated every serious offense of monopolization. The opposition has entered every election campaign knowing that guarantees of freedom and fairness were lacking. However, it did not lose hope that the government would become ashamed of its practice of intimidation and falsification. The nature of the [ruling] National Democratic Party [NDP] got the better of itself, and the People's Assembly ultimately became falsified and unconstitutional. During previous years, the opposition also demanded that President Mubarak—and before him, President Sadat—resign the chairmanship of the NDP, so that this party would not exploit the "vehicle of the presidency" to attain power when it did not enjoy mass support on the Egyptian scene. When President Mubarak became president in 1981, he promised that he would be satisfied to be the president of all Egyptians. Nonetheless, after nine years, the NDP is still protected by President Mubarak's mantle and is exploiting all governmental and state capabilities to remain in power in spite of the masses. Sound principles of democracy require the president to resign the chairmanship of his party upon being elected president to ensure equal opportunities for political action on the part of all parties.

Political Deterioration!

Dr. Muhammad 'Usbur, a member of the Supreme Organization of the Wafd Party, emphasizes that President Mubarak's presidency during the past 10 years has led to an objective deterioration in political activity and an absence of real political control over the government's behavior, because, under the ruling party's government, [members of] the People's Assembly cannot reasonably monitor the president when he is the chairman of their party. Furthermore, asks Dr. 'Usbur, how is real political control over political activity possible under a presidential system that grants extensive authorities to a president who personally heads the ruling party as well!!!? Such a situation would be acceptable under a parliamentary system. However, under a presidential system and a comprehensive constitution, it is a real disaster.

Dr. 'Usbur adds:

A remedy for this problem should not be separate from a remedy for all forms of currently existing democratic deterioration. The truth is that we need to frame a new constitution and adopt a parliamentary system to replace the presidential system.

Enormous Advantages

Mustafa Kamal Murad, the chairman of the Liberal Party, emphasizes that Mubarak's chairmanship of the

NDP grants that party material and immaterial capabilities, because Mubarak, as the leader of the executive authority, appoints the cabinet, governors, and company chairmen in the country. In addition, the constitution grants the president many exceptional authorities, such as the authority to declare a state of emergency, dissolve the People's Assembly through a referendum, and present draft legislation to the People's Assembly. Based on all of that and more, a party headed by a president who enjoys all of these authorities is doubtlessly a pampered party that enjoys many more advantages than any other party in Egypt.

The chairman of the Liberal Party adds:

Nor is there any doubt that Mubarak's chairmanship of the Supreme Police Council, which supervises elections, is another advantage enjoyed by the NDP. In addition, several mayors of cities and villages, if not all of them, support the NDP or its chairman, and the government possesses enormous material capabilities, such as the public sector, which it uses as an "estate" from which to distribute bribes and positions to its followers.

It is certain that if President Mubarak were to relinquish the chairmanship of the NDP, a large portion of these advantages would be eliminated.

Extensive Authorities!

Husayn 'Abd-al-Raziq, a member of the General Secretariat of the NPUG [National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party], stresses that, regardless of differences between legal and constitutional interpretations of the president's chairmanship of one of the parties, he ['Abd-al-Raziq] prefers, in order to ensure the soundness of elections, that the president, upon being elected, relinquish his chairmanship of any party, regardless of the party. If this tradition is in effect in a country such as France, we are in more dire need of it in Egypt, because of the extensive authorities enjoyed by the president and the president's significant influence over all executive and administrative apparatuses in the government. Nonetheless, I believe that this problem must not divert us from measures that guarantee fair elections and prevent any fraud regarding their results. Mubarak's relinquishment of the chairmanship of the ruling party would certainly facilitate, relatively speaking, the start of reforms regarding conditions for democracy, which still suffer limitations that are obvious to everyone in Egypt.

The President and the Spirit of the Constitution

Dr. 'Atif al-Banna, a professor of constitutional law at Cairo University, states: There are no stipulations that prohibit the president from belonging to a party. However, the spirit of the constitution requires the president to relinquish the chairmanship of the NDP, because the Egyptian constitution grants the president extensive executive and legislative authorities, such as convening parliament, submitting draft laws, etc. That requires the president to be neutral among the parties, especially inasmuch as central authority in Egypt has a long legacy

in our history, going back 7,000 years, of which the 38 years "since 1952" are the equivalent of 7,000 pharaonic years [as published]. All of that requires speed in starting the reform of our political system.

Dr. al-Banna continues: To give a push to our stagnant political life, there must be competition between the different parties in an atmosphere of fairness and equal opportunity. That will not be achieved in the shadow of President Mubarak's chairmanship of the ruling party. In this regard, why do we not benefit from the experience of the Zionist enemy who applies democracy. Elections are supervised there by an impartial administrative agency that has the power to prohibit the prime minister from appearing on television news broadcasts if such an appearance would grant him a greater opportunity than others to campaign for votes. This happened regarding Begin's meeting with Sadat before elections for the Israeli Knesset. The agencies supervising the elections prohibited the event from being televised, so that Begin's party would not be granted a greater opportunity than others in the elections. In Egypt, all television stations, with all of their influence, continue to be in a state of constant mobilization before elections to praise, indirectly, the ruling party's "achievements."

Dr. al-Banna adds: Mubarak's chairmanship of the NDP places all state apparatuses in the service of the ruling party. Hence, I emphasize with utmost impartiality that if Mubarak were to relinquish the chairmanship of this party and elections were held freely and fairly, the NDP would not obtain a majority in parliament, and its members would perhaps not even enter the People's Assembly.

IRAQ

Expatriate Community Leaders Discuss Gulf Crisis

Conditions for Return Discussed

91AE0049A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
16 Oct 90 p 10

[Article: "Iraqi Expatriates: We Will Return When Saddam Husayn Falls; 1.7 Million Iraqis Have Been Evicted or Have Taken Themselves and Their Families to Exile; Ten Percent of Iraqis Live Outside Their Country"]

[Text] Ten percent of the Iraqi people are expatriates. They are scattered in the United States, Canada, Australia, the Scandinavian countries, England, Syria, Iran, and Turkey. They number 1.7 million people who have left Iraq to flee a tyrannical regime, a despotic ruler, and laws that change overnight and that have been promulgated to serve Saddam Husayn's whims and interests.

The emigration of these Iraqis is different from the emigration of other Arabs. This is because the reality of this emigration is wet with tears and molded with fear.

Saddam Husayn pursues these emigrants, keeps them worried, and tampers with their children's future. Few among them expressed any wish to talk to us about their hardship. But the words of those who took a stance have been mixed with sorrow, grief, nostalgia, and the desire to topple Saddam Husayn and to return to Iraq.

In the (following) report, AL-MAJALLAH will convey a part of the saga of dispersal lived by the Iraqi expatriates in their own words, their verses, and their positions.

He arrived in Britain in the mid-1960's, and he knows the Iraqi community's history by heart. What is happening now in Iraq pains him. What pains him more is to be famous, and openly. He says: "By nature, Iraqis don't like to emigrate. They are people deeply rooted in their soil. They are not like the coastal people, including Lebanese and Palestinians, who seek their fortunes in God's vast lands. But the Iraqis did begin emigrating as of the 1940's. Their emigration then was different from the 'coercive eviction' or the 'precautionary eviction' that occurs these days. The emigrants were students on scholarship or rich merchants. Their numbers did not exceed thousands. But in the wake of the July 1958 movement, the number of Iraqi scholarships increased, and so did the number of scholarships supported by the oil companies that were prospecting for oil in Iraq. After 1963 and the start of the political feuds, the door of political emigration was opened. The first elements to emigrate were pre-1963 notables who requested political asylum in the countries to which they emigrated. But the political struggle in Iraq was intensifying, and the patriotic elements began to depart. Some sought political asylum and others, especially well-to-do people, settled in the west.

"In that period and, as a consequence of persecution and oppression, the Iraqi Government began in the days of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's administration to withdraw the passports of some politicians and opponents. Consequently, emigration increased, and with it the search for political asylum either in the west or in Damascus. The class of rich merchants, the elements seeking freedom, and a large number of Kurds departed Iraq at that time.

"Vast numbers of Kurds emigrated to Britain where there are now no less than 30,000 Iraqi Kurds, most of whom are refugees and who have cultural, social, and student organizations. The past 20 years have witnessed the emigration of numerous Iraqi opposition elements and Christian Assyrians who have been given priority in Britain and in the United States.

"When the Iraq-Iran war started, the features of Iraqi emigration to Britain in particular changed. Large numbers of rich families arrived and settled in Britain, smuggling their children out to avoid their forceful military conscription. This is why a broad class of very wealthy and middle-class Iraqi citizens is spread throughout Britain. There is also a class of thinkers and intellectuals."

The Iraqi emigrant goes on to add in his interview with AL-MAJALLAH: "There has been an Iraqi brain drain. This drain continues because the proper conditions are not available in Iraq and because the state of war has squandered the scientific and cultural force of this intellect and has dumped it on the death fronts. If war in Iraq—and I do not mean here the Iraq-Iran war but the state of war—came to an end and, if the current regime were turned into a democratic regime, not a single Iraqi would stay outside his country."

The Iraqi immigrant further added: "There is another kind of evacuee. A large number of people amounting to nearly 200,000 individuals were evicted at the start of the Iraq-Iran war. They were moved criminally and forcefully by Saddam Husayn's government to the borders with Iran on the pretext that they descended from Iranian origins. A large number of these people have moved to Syria and settled close to the shrine of al-Sayyidah Zaynab. These people come from the poor and working class, and 99 percent of them have been unjustly sentenced to this coercive migration."

Regarding the Iraqi opposition, this emigrant said: "The Iraqis in Britain and the Iraqis abroad in general, whether political refugees or opponents or supporters of Saddam Husayn's regime, suffer great hardship from the fact that their assets are frozen, their transactions are delayed, and they are despised just because they are Iraqis. This harassment intensifies the feeling of injustice and oppression. Generalization in such matters is rejected."

Writer on Internal Situation

91AE0049B London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
16 Oct 90 pp 10-11

[Interview with Iraqi writer 'Arif 'Ulwan; " 'Arif 'Ulwan: Saddam Husayn Gives no Thought to How Many Victims He Claims;" date, place not given]

[Text] 'Arif 'Ulwan, an Iraqi writer, has said: "I left Iraq in 1972 because of the terror and the lack of democracy which dominated the domestic climate. No intellectual had the opportunity of free expression, not even under the umbrella of a semi-democratic system. This is why I felt that my continued presence in Iraq posed a danger to my security.

"I did not consider returning to Iraq when Saddam Husayn assumed power and when it was said that he would establish new democratic foundations because I was certain that it was a maneuver on his part to plant his feet firmly and that he would engage in oppression the moment he found himself capable of engaging in it."

[AL-MAJALLAH] In terms of oppression and terror, is the situation worse now in Iraq than it was in 1972?

['Ulwan] At the outset of Saddam Husayn's administration, there was an attempt to cover up the terrorism. The position that some parties took helped them. But now

the oppression and terrorism have climaxed. However, Saddam may raise them to a higher peak. Saddam gives no thought to how many victims he claims. He is rather interested in trying anything in order that he may remain top dog. He may lead the Iraqi people to a worse phase than the current one.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Have you tried to reflect these conditions and this oppression in your literary work?

[U'lwani] I have tried to be more comprehensive. The Iraqi regime has been providing me with good symbols to portray, and I use them in my literary works. When a reader reads these works, he immediately thinks of Iraq.

[AL-MAJALLAH] When will you return to Iraq?

[U'lwani] If democracy is achieved and if the citizen's security is guaranteed in such a way that he can enter, depart, and write [freely]. It is impossible for me to return while Saddam is in power because I do not trust this man.

Journalist on Opposition, Present Regime

91AE0049C London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
16 Oct 90 pp 11-12

[Interview with lecturer and writer 'Abd-al-Halim al-Rahimi; "Al-Rahimi: Majority of Iraqi People Oppose Saddam Husayn," date, place not given]

[Text] 'Abd-al-Halim al-Rahimi, an Iraqi journalist and writer, has said: "I departed Iraq a few months after the arrival of the crew that is now in power in the wake of the coup of 17 July 1968. I departed to flee the oppression. I had expected a black future for Iraq but I did not expect it to last long. However, the wait has lasted 22 years during which many amnesty decrees were issued. But I was confident that those decrees were for maneuvering. Our expectations proved correct. The capacity for oppression is growing year after year."

[AL-MAJALLAH] There is talk that the Iraqi opposition is ineffective and that it is censured for numerous faults.

[Rahimi] This is largely true. But I view the opposition in any country as a general popular tendency, not as organizations. This is why opposition at home is the most important. All the political parties and tendencies have been struck down. If we consider the religious sects, we find that all of them have also been struck down, and so have the provinces (Kurds and Turkomen). This is why the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people from the various factions, ethnic groups, and political parties are opposed to Saddam Husayn's regime. As to why this opposition is not [more] visible, it is because of the severe oppression and the killings. This is at the domestic level. Abroad, the situation is a reflection of what is happening at home. A strong party abroad must be able to stir things up domestically and to stage a demonstration or a strike. As a consequence of its violence and oppression, Saddam Husayn's regime has severed the link between home and abroad. Therefore,

the opposition at home is young and is moving without leadership. This is why the task of the opposition with its three tendencies has been the task of preserving its presence in the media, but without engaging in major action at home. The opposition abroad can, if united, influence the domestic front. The Iraqi opposition abroad has been weakened by the external elements and circumstances, by the Iraq-Iran war, and by the maneuvers of Saddam Husayn, who has tried to engage in dialogue with the opposition from time to time and to offer this opposition some concessions. At one time, Saddam offered concessions to the ethnic parties and formed a front with them—a front which opposed the Islamists. Another time (1971-75), he concluded an accord with the Kurds. Saddam has split the domestic opposition and this split has been reflected on the opposition abroad. At a later time, the various tendencies agreed, despite their ideological difference, to oppose the regime. But disagreement continued to exist in all the meetings held in Tehran or Damascus over the nature of the regime that is to follow Saddam Husayn. Every side wanted to know what gains it would make under the new regime. This obstructed movement and unity. There is now a broad accord between the Iraqi opposition in Damascus and Tehran to agree to hold a general conference in which all the tendencies are represented to elect a unified central leadership capable of stirring matters at home and of addressing the world and the international and regional forces on the basis that this leadership represents the legitimate opposition embodied in these forces. All the countries that have been influencing the opposition tendencies have agreed that it is necessary that the opposition unite in order that it may be the alternative to Saddam Husayn's regime—an alternative capable of ending the crisis in the region. The overwhelming majority of the parties believe that the two faces to the conflict are Saddam Husayn's occupation of Kuwait and its consequences. They believe that Saddam Husayn's regime must be toppled first because this will pave the way for restoring Kuwait and for eliminating the justification for the presence of the foreign forces. The solution is to topple Saddam Husayn's regime. This analysis has led to concord among the opposition forces, and no tendency insists any longer that it must be the leader of the alternative regime but rather that there has to be a transitional government and democratic elections for the Iraqi people so that they may determine the nature of the system they want. These ideas are being debated, and they will make it easier to come up with a working document and with a coordinated leadership committee that offers itself as an alternative to the regime's political authority.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How long do you expect Saddam Husayn's regime to survive under the canopy of the current circumstances?

[Rahimi] This is up to the action of the forces at home. The forces abroad cannot do much to topple Saddam. If united, the forces abroad can influence the active forces at home. We now hear reports coming from Iraq about

real demonstrations and strikes in Karbala', al-Qa'im, and al-Mawsil. Saddam is capable of striking these demonstrations. But people will not remain silent. People say: "I have sacrificed three of my sons for the sake of the eastern gate, and here is Saddam returning the eastern gate to Iran. Therefore, I will not let my fourth son die for the invasion of Kuwait." What has happened there is an aggression against other Arab Muslim people. The Iraqi no longer has the option to live or die. His option is to die of sorrow and grief or die in one of Saddam Husayn's battles. This is why the Iraqi people will choose to die for democracy. This slogan is growing rapidly and forming an element stirring the popular tendencies in Karbala' and al-Mawsil. Since ex-Defense Minister 'Adnan Khayrallah was killed, the sector of officers surrounding Saddam comes from al-Mawsil. It is difficult for these officers to strike their families and their children. This fact permits the citizen in al-Mawsil to stir and demand an end to the war and demand, as well, bread and food supplies. All that Saddam Husayn can do vis-a-vis the people of al-Mawsil is to arrest them. For Iraqi people, arrest is like eating a salad dish. It no longer affects them. Saddam cannot use chemical weapons in Karbala' and al-Mawsil as he did in Halabjah, unless he attains the level of total ignorance. Under these circumstances, he cannot mislead his military commands, especially since he has acknowledged the Algiers treaty. The Iraqi people are convinced that if Saddam Husayn embarks on a new war, Iraq will be destroyed. Therefore, if this regime falls, Iraq will preserve its capabilities and its economic, military, and social structure.

Kurdish Leader on Opposition

91AE0049D London AL-MAJALLAH in arabic
16 Oct 90 p 12

[Interview with Kurdish leader Sardar Bishadri; Bishadri: "Iraqi People Will Take Care of Saddam Husayn," date, place not given]

[Text] Sardar Bishadri, a Kurdish leader, has said: "I enlisted in the Kurdish revolution until 1975. I held several positions of responsibility and rose to the rank of battalion commander. I was wounded several times. I then worked as a construction contractor. I left Iraq in 1981. When I arrived in Britain, I tried to make some contacts. I stood against both Iraq and Iran and with my people.

"After Iran agreed to the UN resolution, the Iraqi Government came and demolished my entire province, wiping out a district, two subdistricts, and 400 villages. They took people in military vehicles to southern Iraq where they lodged them in tents. I departed anew and went to the world media and to the House of Lords. Iraq denied what had taken place. But Imam Dalaki, a friend of mine and a well-known figure from the province, was a witness. He went to Saddam Husayn and took him gifts valued at 75,000 dinars so that he would not demolish the province. Saddam took the gifts and threw Dalaki in

jail where he stayed for three months after which he was released following pressure exerted by me and by the Human Rights Society."

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the Kurdish opposition's stance vis-a-vis the current situation?

[Bishadri] The Kurdish front does not speak with a single voice now. It is divided into three factions: A faction that supports Iraq, a second faction that supports Syria, and a third faction that supports Iran. We, as Iraqi Kurds, know that Saddam Husayn will inevitably fall. We, the new generation, must form a new democratic government—a government of construction, not of war.

[AL-MAJALLAH] There is talk about your forming a new party with a number of Kurds?

[Bishadri] We, a group of nearly 150 wealthy Kurds, have decided to allocate a budget to rebuild our region and to form a party called the Kurdish Republican Party. Neither the party nor its program has been proclaimed yet. But the party recognizes the geographic reality existing in Kurdistan because it is convinced that, under the current circumstances, it cannot change the world geography. It is a party that seeks to establish in Iraq a government that recognizes the Kurdish people's rights. We, as Iraqis, tell the world: Leave the matter of toppling Saddam Husayn to the Iraqi people.

ISRAEL

Post-Gulf Crisis Relations with US Analyzed

91AE0092B Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
26 Oct 90 p 2C

[Article by Yosef Harif]

[Text] At the end of last week President Bush was handed, for his authorization and signature, the draft of a response to the letter from Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. Days passed, but the response did not come. From secret clarifications obtained from within the presidential confines, it was learned that he was poring over changes in the original formulation with a "conciliatory" tone. Early Wednesday the letter arrived, formulated with professional skill—but still lacking conciliation.

Washington this week made an effort to delay discussion in the Security Council of Israel's refusal to accept a U.N. delegation on the Temple Mount issue and to put an end to the unfortunate complication the Americans created through lack of forethought.

In Jerusalem it was reckoned that this was the most serious mistake of the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Thomas Pickering, who stood behind the American initiative to condemn Israel. He, who contributed to the confusion with which the Americans acted, "sold" his emissaries on the notion that pressure on Israel would achieve its objective.

The administration that was deep in frustration over the difficulties that rained upon it in the internal arena—the “budget war” with Congress and the complication in the Persian Gulf—paid no heed to the warnings from Jerusalem. Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu warned the ambassador in Israel, William Brown, while there was still time, that Israel could not abide a resolution requiring her to accept a delegation that was essentially a U.N. investigating committee. But Bush and Baker preferred Pickering to Brown. That was the American administration’s big mistake. It wanted to whip Israel and wound up whipping itself. Now, they say here, signs are increasing that a process of wising up has begun in Washington. For the moment, Bush’s letter does not reflect that.

But perhaps the test of this appraisal will be in the willingness of Bush and Baker to listen to Israel and not ignore her.

Washington, Bush and Baker declared, does not want linkage between the Temple Mount issue and the Persian Gulf, and that by itself is correct. The Israeli fear was that the Americans really were interested in such linkage—on the political plane. Under Secretary John Kelly spoke of “the era after the Persian Gulf campaign” and asserted that then there would be a “different Middle East.” That is what set off the red lights in Jerusalem. If Kelly’s words reflect prevailing trends in Washington, then we might suppose that the American course—one-sided condemnation of Israel—was derived from the new policy now in its formulative stages, and that it had to be stopped. That was why the Prime Minister was “stiff-necked.” (“If I give in, who knows what the next step will be.”)

We can learn about this approach from the consultations in Jerusalem. It is an annoying fact that the administration heads found no need to talk to Israel before the resolution came down in the Security Council. A “low profile” not only on the military plane, but also on the political plane...

In Jerusalem, they are fearful of what is yet to come. If Israel were to reconcile herself with this American course, the Arabs would see it as a precedent and a victory for their thesis that there is no need to negotiate with Israel. American pressure on her is sufficient.

And is it not a fact that this American administration bowed to the Arab dictate: In the original American draft there was explicit mention of the attack on Jewish worshippers at the Western Wall, and they (the Americans) agreed to strike it out under Arab pressure.

The text of the Security Council resolution asserts that the U.N. Secretary General must report to it on the recommendations and conclusions of his delegation. Had the Americans wanted to avoid the confusing situation we were witness to this week, as they were pleading for a compromise—why did they agree to have the resolution say the issue should come back to the Council

and not to the Secretary General himself? Clearly, they were afraid to cast a veto so as not to undermine the “Arab coalition.”

In Jerusalem there was no hesitation over confronting the U.S. and asking: Where will the U.S. stop if its courses of action are derived from the question “What will the Arab coalition states say”? And perhaps this coalition is merely a means for achieving the support of public opinion and the Congress with the Bush-Baker anti-Israel line? Logic says “sit down and talk about it” since, to an even greater extent than the U.S. needs the states of the “Arab coalition” (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria), they need the U.S. in their war against their blood enemy Saddam Husayn.

The essence of Israel’s strong stand has nothing to do with acceptance of a U.N. delegation, even though the Prime Minister and the entire government are convinced in principle that the U.N. has no authority whatsoever in Jerusalem and should not be allowed to come and investigate there. Israel’s firm stand results from the recognition that the U.S. is trapped by the Arabs, who succeeded in forcing upon her a resolution that she herself did not like. Were this process allowed to continue, what would come after the “Gulf War”?

The ball is in the hands of the American government or, if you like, in the hands of President Bush. Smooth words alone will not be able to convince Israel in light of everything that has happened. This time there weren’t even “words.” In order to implant in her the feeling that the U.S. does not intend to continue to ignore her, the President must give voice to the new truths and honestly express his readiness to talk and consult with Israel. If not on matters of the Gulf, at least on matters that affect Israel directly.

LEBANON

Filling of Parliamentary Seats Discussed

91AE0160A Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic
12, 19, 26 Nov 90

[Article by Huda al-Husayni and Amin Sha'lan: “Parliamentary Appointments: Hot Dossier Creating Problems; Battle in Zgharta to Fill Vacant Seats; in Arslan Clan, ‘Brothers Are Enemies;’ at Orthodox Level: Hot Competition; if Inheritance Principle Is Excluded, There Are No Problems in Tyre”]

[12 Nov pp 20-21]

[Text] The rebellion has ended and implementation of the al-Ta’if accord has begun. A provision of this accord calls for the appointment of deputies. Considering that the executive authority has not been able to spread its authority over all of Lebanon’s territories and in view of the difficult circumstances being experienced by the country, the principle of appointment, to which two conditions have been attached, has to be implemented.

First condition: The appointment must be made after ratification of the new election law which stipulates that the governorate shall be the electoral district.

Second, appointments must be made all at once.

The question raised now is: Will the appointment principle create new problems in the face of the peace procession and of implementing the other provisions of the al-Ta'if accord?

In the Zgharta area, which is entitled to three deputies, we find that it is not likely that problems will develop between the five main clans in the area, especially since all have come to realize that the possibility of appointment by inheritance is the most likely. This is why we find the Karam clan and the Makari clan taking such a neutral stand toward this issue as if the matter has become a reality. As for the three clans whose seats in the Chamber of Deputies are considered vacant because of the death of their three deputies, namely Sam'an al-Duwayhi, Tony Franjiyah, and Rene Mu'awwad, they have no problems with each other. Each clan tries to maintain its seat without speculating on the two other seats.

Mu'awwad Clan

Mrs. Na'ilah Mu'awwad has retained her parliamentary seat without any intervention by the two other clans. But this does not refute the fact that she has a rival from the Mu'awwad clan, namely Tawfiq Mu'awwad. But he does not enjoy as much broad popular support as Mrs. Na'ilah Mu'awwad enjoys, considering that she has been able to complete the procession of her husband Rene Mu'awwad, the martyred president, well and has been able to gain the hearts of the Mu'awwad clan.

Franjiyah Clan

The same goes for the Franjiyah clan. Nobody from the other clans is competing for its seat, even though there was talk at one time or another about competition and about whether Deputy Tony Franjiyah should be succeeded politically by his brother or his son. But it seems that the decision has gone in favor of Sulayman Tony Franjiyah, the son, because he enjoys the support of a broad popular base which nobody can deny him.

On this point, ex-President Sulayman Franjiyah has said: The better and the worthier should replace the departed. The better and worthier could be wife, brother, or son, and it makes no difference. Ex-President Franjiyah added: As long as the number will be made up by appointment, then it is better that the appointee be a relative. We must make sure that the appointee represents the people as well as the deceased deputy did.

Regarding the status of the other clans which are not represented in the Chamber of Deputies, ex-President Franjiyah said: These clans are entitled to protest. But practically, the three clans have had a majority since 1972, and they must be represented in the new elections.

Regarding the problems that may develop between rivals from the same clan, ex-President Franjiyah said: Everybody will try to win and may whoever wins "enjoy it in good health."

Regarding his candidate, the ex-president said: This is up to the government and the ministers. They decide who will take whose place.

In a comment on the issue, Sulayman Tony Franjiyah has said: "To put it briefly, we do not favor appointment. We wish there were elections. Then, whoever has the ability and a broad popular base will inevitably win."

Al-Duwayhi Clan

As for the al-Duwayhi clan, the other clans cannot affect its seat in the Chamber of Deputies. But it seems that the competition in the al-Duwayhi clan is stronger than that in the Franjiyah clan or Mu'awwad clan. This competition is between Istifan al-Duwayhi, the nephew of Reverend Sam'an al-Duwayhi, and Yusuf al-Duwayhi who grew up in the presence of Reverend al-Duwayhi and learned his principles and ideas. He has been closer to the members of the al-Duwayhi clan than others.

On this issue, Yusuf al-Duwayhi has said: "A parliamentary seat is not property gained by inheritance. Parliamentary representation is a sacred principle, and it must correctly reflect the people's choice and will. But in view of the special circumstances being experienced by the country and, as part of the Lebanese congruence in al-Ta'if, the principle of appointing deputies was accepted. This principle is beyond our will, and we are dealing with it only as a result of the Lebanese Government's will. I hope that this appointment is exceptional."

Yusuf al-Duwayhi does not approve of the principle of appointment and favors the holding of free elections. He has said: "I am not trying to become deputy by inheritance. Rather, I have come as a result of selection by the people who have charged me with leadership responsibility. When Reverend al-Duwayhi passed away, there was no preconception of who would succeed him. Moreover, Reverend Sam'an was the product of a revolution against feudalism. He did not inherit the deputyship from his father. His clan is a free clan, and it selects its representative."

"Because Reverend Sam'an al-Duwayhi was a priest who did not marry and who had no children to inherit the leadership, a committee emanating from all branches of the al-Duwayhi clan was formed upon his death. This committee considered the clan circumstances, pondered the question of who could be put in charge of the clan, and did not find anybody better than Yusuf al-Duwayhi. Subsequently, a mini-committee consisting of eight members was formed. This committee visited the al-Duwayhi family members and polled them verbally and then in writing. The outcome was 75 percent for Yusuf al-Duwayhi, 9.3 percent (against), and 15 percent non-committal."

In this regard, Yusuf al-Duwayhi added: "They did not select me because of certain characteristics. Leadership is founded fundamentally on people's belief in an individual who can protect them and represent their free decision and who, at the same time, can be everybody's father, brother, and friend. It is on this basis that the selection was made."

As to whether he expects any problems to be created by the other clans, Yusuf al-Duwayhi said: "It is up to them to accept or not. But these vacant seats are places for the representation of much bigger clans, whether in numbers or in terms of modern political history. We wish there were elections and wish representation was based on a broad popular base. We have already said that we do not approve of appointment. But I consider my presence to be the result of an official referendum signed by all the voters and ratified by the mukhtar. This selection is a free selection. The other clans did not follow this method."

As to his opinion of the individuals appointed from the Mu'awwad and Franjiyah clans, Yusuf al-Duwayhi said: "Sulayman Tony Franjiyah is the man in the arena. He represents the continuity of Tony Franjiyah in the first place and represents a popular tendency in the second place. He is a young man whom nobody can ignore. As for Mrs. Na'ilah Mu'awwad, if a rival can be found for the Pope in Rome, then a rival can be found for Mrs. Mu'awwad."

As for Istifan al-Duwayhi, he considers himself the legitimate heir to Reverend Sam'an al-Duwayhi and believes that he alone is entitled to represent the al-Duwayhi clan in the Chamber of Deputies. But he has not been given broad support by the clan. The reason might be his remoteness from political life. Istifan did not emerge in the arena until 1989.

On the appointment principle, Istifan al-Duwayhi has said: The Lebanese system is a democratic system. Every citizen is entitled to select his representative. Therefore, elections are necessary. They will determine the fate of the new generation. Appointment is a parliamentary game that has come with the al-Ta'if accord. Those intended to be appointed must have popularity and must not be selected on an imaginary basis. If appointment is on the basis of the principle of popularity, then we fully support it.

As to whether he considers himself the al-Duwayhi clan representative, Istifan has said: Yes, I am the one who represents them at their request. There is no doubt that I am the heir to the legacy of the late Sam'an al-Duwayhi whom I consider to be our national line. I accept the parliamentary position for the sake of the country's salvation.

Regarding his relations with the Zgharta clans, Istifan al-Duwayhi said: My relations with Zgharta's leaders are excellent, especially with Sulayman Tony to whom we are tied by a single national political line on which we all agree. As for ex-President Franjiyah, he is the spiritual

leader of all the Zgharta clans and one of Lebanon's symbols. Regarding the relations with Mrs. Na'ilah Mu'awwad, they too are excellent.

Zgharta Clans

The oldest clans known to Ihdin are al-Duwayhi, Yamin, Iskandar, Sa'adah, and Makhluuf clans.

Initially, there were no major clans. These major clans emerged with the al-Duwayhi clan in the 18th century. This clan was the first to establish a feudal rule under a man called Jirjis Bulus al-Duwayhi. Thus, al-Duwayhi was the first ruling clan. Jirjis al-Duwayhi had a son called Yusuf who himself did not have any sons. But Yusuf had a number of daughters who were married to men from the Karam clan. Thus, the Karam clan inherited from the al-Duwayhi clan. The Karam clan attained the peak of its political influence with Yusuf Karam, and it continued to be one of the more influential clans during the mandate era when three new clans emerged next to the old clan, namely the Franjiyah, Mu'awwad, and Makari clans. Qabalan Franjiyah, ex-President Sulayman Franjiyah's father, was a deputy as of 1929. The clans became more prominent and gained parliamentary influence with the parliamentary elections. This is what entrenched feudalism and clan influence.

Regarding the emergence of the Franjiyah clan, ex-President Sulayman Franjiyah has said: Al-Sahyuni, a scholar from Zgharta, went to France where he was assigned to tutor King Louis XIV. Al-Sahyuni stayed in France. But he had a brother in Zgharta, and he missed this brother and wanted to see him. So the brother went to see al-Sahyuni in France where he stayed for a long period of time and where he became acquainted with [and married] a lady who had a difficult name and who could not speak Arabic. So they called her al-franjiyah [French woman]. She was widowed while still young. Whenever her husband's kinsmen wanted to visit her, they would tell each other: "Let us go have coffee at the house of the franjiyah." This franjiyah had sons who came to be known as the children of the franjiyah. This is how the name of the Franjiyah clan developed. But ex-President Franjiyah adds: There is no evidence to attest to the truth of this tale.

Ihdin and Zgharta

Ihdin is 1,500 meters above sea level, 124 km from Beirut, 38 km from the governorate center, and 30 km from Zgharta.

Zgharta is in the Governorate of North Lebanon. It is the winter capital of Zgharta District. It is 100 meters above sea level, km 94 from Beirut, and km 8 from Tripoli.

Ihdin's history:

At the outset of the Ottoman era, Sultan Salim, in Egypt at the time, dispatched in 1519 a troop headed by Minister Sinan Pasha and al-Ghazali to collect taxes from the city of Tripoli. This troop stopped over for

three days in Ihdin where the inhabitants welcomed them warmly. The troop commanders were surprised by the inhabitants' ability to live in snow and cold and asked them if they had a "winter place." When the commanders learned that Ihdin was the summer and winter place, they promised the inhabitants that they would ask Sultan Salim to secure a winter place for them. Sometime later, the troop's promise was fulfilled and Ihdin inhabitants were given a winter place. A decree was issued by the sultan asking the inhabitants to select an area to become their winter place. The clans proceeded and selected an area called Sayyidat Zgharta where there was a ruined citadel called Zghorto. At the time, the Syriac language was the language in use. The area was called Zghorto, i.e. the citadel. When Arabic became the prevalent language, the name was corrupted and became Sgharta. This name has another story which ex-President Sulayman Franjiyah will tell us later.

The first house to be built in Zgharta was the house of Bishop Jubra'il [Gabriel] al-Duwayhi. A church was built next to the house with the stones of the ruined citadel in 1620. This church was then enlarged and remodeled until it became as it is now. The move from Ihdin to Zgharta took long years for two reasons: First, the first to go to Zgharta were the well-to-do who were able to build their homes quickly. The second reason was the presence of families who had always lived close to each other. The first family to reside in Zgharta was a Duwayhi family.

There is no firm reference or script on which to rely regarding Ihdin's presence. However, there is a verbal tradition that says that Ihdin has existed since the days of "Adam and Eve." What is interesting is that present-day Ihdin was not in the same place in the year 4500 B.C. It was in an area called today Qawfa, i.e. the reed area, southeast of today's site. Even now, it is called al-Qusaysubah [small reed]. As a result of geological factors, the water spring there was sealed and other springs, known as the Mar Sarkis springs, gushed in the area. The inhabitants were thus forced to move to the source of life near the Mar Sarkis spring, previously known by the name of Mar 'Abduh. This is how Ihdin came into existence. The area in which Ihdin had previously existed and which was later called Qawfa has been called al-Firdaws [paradise]. Here, the name agrees with the verbal tradition which says that it has existed since the days of "Adam and Eve."

The name Ihdin originates from the word hidn, or cradle, which then became Idn and was afterward transformed into Ihdin. There is another interpretation that says that the origin of the name is the word 'adan [Aden] and that this then became Ihdin or Arun, meaning master or god. This word is connected with the days of the Amorites, a Semitic group that left its imprints on numerous Lebanese [place] names ending with the letters u and n, i.e. un, such as Masrun, Bnaz'un, 'Adlun, Humaysirun, and Adun. It is also said that Adon is an abbreviation of Adonis, which means strength, youth, and tranquillity. The equivalent of the word in Arabic is

ihdin, which means tranquillity and stability. The Semitic word adon means base and foundation or a mountain and its base.

As for the name Zgharta, ex-President Sulayman Franjiyah has said: "Initially, the inhabitants of Zgharta lived in Ihdin. Winter was too hard on them. An inhabitant of Ihdin went to Tripoli and, during his presence there, the governor of Tripoli was subjected to a plot from which the Zgharta [presumably meaning Ihdin] fellow saved the governor's life. So the governor told him: Ask for what you wish. The Zgharta fellow answered: A place on the coast on which my goats can lie. A week later, the governor had a grazing plot ready for the man. But it seems that the fellow wanted more. So he said to the governor: Thank you, but you have made it too small [zaghharta]. Since then, it has been known by the name of Zgharta."

Zgharta Deputies [Box on p 20]

The first deputy from Zgharta was Wadi' Tarabiyah, followed by Qabalan Franjiyah in 1929, by Hamid Franjiyah and Yusuf Karam 1934-37, 1943-47, and 1951-55. They were followed by Jawad Bulus al-Makari and then by Sulayman Franjiyah in 1960.

In 1964, Zgharta came to have three deputies, namely Sulayman Franjiyah, Rene Mu'awwad, and Sam'an al-Duwayhi. Tony Sulayman Franjiyah became deputy in 1970.

[19 Nov pp 16-18]

[Text] There continues to be a strong controversy on the issue of appointment to the vacant and newly-introduced parliamentary seats in accordance with the al-Ta'if accord. One Lebanese faction believes that it is essential to form a new cabinet before the appointments are made whereas another faction believes the inverse.

As the controversy is heating up on this aspect of the issue, competition is intensifying among candidates to fill the vacant seats. This competition has pervaded the single clan, even the same family.

In 'Alayh area, which is entitled to five deputies, we find that there is no likelihood of problems developing between the clans, especially since three of the area's deputies are still in the Chamber of Deputies, namely Tawfiq 'Assaf, Pierre Hilu, and Shafiq Badr. There are two vacant seats, one for the Orthodox community and one for the Druze, because of the death of deputies Majid Arslan and Munir Abu-Fadil.

Regarding the Arslan clan, the talk revolved initially around three rivals, namely: Khawlah Arslan, her son Talal Arslan, and his half brother Faysal Arslan. But Khawlah has withdrawn in favor of her son Talal. The competition continues to be between Faysal, Majid Arslan's middle son, and Talal, his youngest son who is close to the Junblat clan to which his mother belongs, whereas the Arslan clan has always been connected with

the Maronites. This comparison shows us the distance between Faysal who clings to the Arslan clan and Talal who is close to the Junblat clan. But they both agree that they prefer election to appointment.

I Prefer Elections

On this issue, Faysal Arslan has said: "I favor elections, undoubtedly. As long as the al-Ta'if accord contains a provision which stipulates the militias must be disbanded in 16 [as published] months, then I prefer that the appointments be postponed until we are able to hold elections. I also prefer that elections for mukhtars and municipal elections be held first and then the parliamentary elections. I am not opposed to appointments but I do support postponement. I don't know why we are rushing toward appointment in this manner."

Regarding the popular base he has been able to create for himself, Faysal Arslan said: Majid Arslan's base is present to start with. This representation is a result of the trust the inhabitants have in me. They always need somebody who will secure for them their minimum demands, such as water, electricity, schools, and medical care. I work to secure their demands.

On the question of whether he or Talal, his brother, is more entitled to succeed the father, Faysal said: "The matter is clear. We are in a democratic country and we favor this system. In the end, Talal is my brother. But I have been dealing with political, service, and social affairs for 25 years, and I ran for election with Majid Arslan three times, the latest of which was in 1972. If it were not for the 1975-76 incidents which obstructed the election, I would have now been deputy for a number of years and one of the current deputies who are told that their term is over.

"I demand my seat because I am entitled to it. If I were not, I would not demand it. Moreover, the people who enthusiastically support me are entitled to be represented by me. Try to conduct a popular poll, and you will find what the outcome is."

Faysal Arslan further added: "In 1964, I began to visit the villages at a time when Talal was not even born. He was born on 12 June 1965 (different from birth date given by his brother Talal) whereas I was born in 1941. In 1965, I was sharing the duties with my father. Upon his death, the Arslan clan supported me unanimously. When a ceremony was organized in Hasbayya to mark the one-week death anniversary of Majid Arslan, the clan attired me in the [leadership] robe in the presence of my brothers."

As to the reason why he kept his distance from political affairs in the post-1984 phase, Faysal said: "I left Lebanon when the government broke down and when services could be secured no longer. But this does not mean that I abandoned my position. There are numerous leaders outside Lebanon, but they have not abandoned their political missions. At the time, Talal was still in school."

As for his readiness to fill the vacant seat, Faysal Arslan has said: "We are engaged in numerous contacts, but without propaganda. I am working, trying, and coordinating the contacts at all levels. If I were not ready, I would not have embarked on this effort, and I would not have been projected [as candidate]."

As to the problems that may develop between him and his brother Talal, Faysal Arslan said: "I do not expect any problems to develop. I rely on a firm base, and my tendency is well known. I represent the district, and I have a significant base, not just a few supporters surrounding me. My brother will be my right arm. If he gets the vacant seat, I will help him. But election will, naturally, follow later, and there will be a democratic game. In the end, what is important is the continuity of the Arslan clan."

As to his opinion on the governorate as a single electoral district, Faysal has said that this principle is likely to eliminate the sectarian character. A deputy will thus represent all of Lebanon.

No Problem

As for Talal Arslan, the other candidate named to fill the vacant Arslan clan by inheritance, he believes that parliamentary appointments are not the ideal solution in a democratic country that enjoys a great degree of freedom. But in the wake of the 15-year war and until the state is able to regain its capabilities to build its institutions in the required manner and to implement the al-Ta'if accord with an absolute majority of the Lebanese people, it is necessary to fill the vacant seats, especially under circumstances that are not convenient for holding popular elections.

Talal Arslan believes that speeding appointments, establishing state control over all of Lebanon's territories, and strengthening the state institutions are likely to bring parliamentary elections closer. The country will have thus covered an important phase in implementing the al-Ta'if accord. Talal also believes that the al-Ta'if accord must be fully implemented first, and then a shift must be made toward free democratic action.

As to whether he has been able to secure a popular base through which he can get to the Chamber of Deputies through parliamentary elections, Talal Arslan has said: "The most important thing for a man is to gain people's trust. A politician can only gain this trust through certain stances which he takes at certain phases or junctures, provided that the juncture is a historic juncture. These junctures will either create trust between people and the politician or shake the trust in this individual. I hope that, with our action, we have secured enough popular trust in some of our stances—and praised be He who is infallible."

As to his right to succeed his father, Talal Arslan believes that the country can withstand no more inheritance

cases, that it has enough of this, and that it is unreasonable for one to tackle political affairs on a purely hereditary basis because (practically) and politically, ability must play its role. Judgment on these issues should be made on the basis of this ability. The issue must not be viewed from the angle of who succeeds whom. Ultimately, this right is a public right. A politician does not possess himself. If he succeeds in his life, his success belongs to whomever he represents. The issue is not one of inheriting a plot of land.

As to whether he believes that the principle of appointment is based on the principle of heredity, Talal Arslan has said: "We do not wish to dwell on the details. But it is not essential that mother, son, or relative [succeed the departed]. If ability exists within the family, then it lightens the burden, especially in the appointment issue. But if the required ability is not available, then appointment will be a failure, and it will later reflect negatively on the appointee."

As to the likelihood of the emergence of problems within the same family, he has said: "There is no difference between me and my mother. We wished that she would be appointed because she has played a permanent role. But she has rejected this position and has ceded the seat."

Regarding the possibility of problems between him and his brother, he has said: "I don't believe that problems will occur because the Lebanese, even within the same family, have to deal with respect for the counter opinion, that is if they believe in democracy."

Talal added: "The issue is not an issue of imposing one individual over another. Ultimately, whether it is Faysal, Talal, or somebody else projected from within the same clan, the popular base will be the umpire. There is among the people a certain political tendency that is no secret. I can only prove my 'popularity' through an election. However, we cannot consider the issue from the angle of numbers. A well-known Druze tendency has existed since 1983. It started with Bayt-al-Din meeting with the political leadership which is headed by Walid Bayk [Junblat], the paramount Druze shaykh, and myself. This Druze political leadership with which the Druze individual deals is not today's product, and it is difficult for anybody to 'mess up' this leadership. But with the appointment circumstances, it is easy to 'mess up.'" Talal Arslan also believes that the Druze representation is clear and that no problem is supposed to exist.

On the [possible] appointment of his brother Faysal, Talal has said: "Faysal has not been able to form the popular base that I have been able to form because upon our father's death in 1983, he left the arena during the Mount Lebanon war and lived in Cyprus for nearly three years. He was not here, whereas I, Walid Bayk, and my mother were. After this period Faysal became somewhat distant from the popular base by virtue of his special circumstances. Thus, he gave me the chance to have a

stronger presence than he had. Perhaps this is what has given me a greater momentum and push."

As to whether he has inherited or created his popular base, Talal said: "The foundation was there. Majid Arslan built a firm leadership in Mount Lebanon. Regarding inheritance in political action, the father always said: 'If I leave my son an asset and if he does not learn how to use and serve it and how to build mutual trust, then my asset may serve him for five or ten years.'" Talal believes that inheritance may put him at the beginning of the road but cannot enable him to complete the march. He adds: "Times have changed. The war generation knows who Majid Arslan is only from history, especially since our father was taken ill in 1972. This generation has been influenced by its grandparents and parents. I have been able to make this generation aware of its loyalty and to develop with it new friendships and a new base."

Regarding his readiness to fill the vacant parliamentary seat, Talal Arslan believes that he must be in the place where he can serve the country's unity. If conditions dictate that his place be outside the Chamber of Deputies, then he is prepared for this. He has added: "If Lebanon requires me not to deal in political affairs for the country's good, then I am prepared to do anything for the public good." Regarding the principle of the governorate as a single electoral district, Talal believes that this principle is a stronger guarantee of the country's unity, regardless of what is between the single electoral district and the governorate. "I am for abolition of the districts. The broader the participation, the broader the deputy's representation base. Thus, the deputy becomes more aware of a greater responsibility toward the country in its entirety. I have not considered myself confined to the representation of a certain area. I have dealt with the inhabitants of 'Alayh as I have dealt with those of al-Shuf, al-Matn, Rashayya, Hasbayya, and any other part of Lebanon. But the country's circumstances have not permitted me to broaden my relations even more, except within the Druze sect. But even within this framework, I have not viewed 'Alayh as my area, and I have not focused more on it than on other areas."

As to the creation of problems by other clans in connection with the Arslan clan seat, Talal has said: "I don't think so. To date, no proposals have been made. Ultimately, everybody is entitled. But to date, nobody has tried to nominate anybody else. However, I believe that when elections are held, numerous clans will try to have their candidates."

Orthodox Seat

Regarding the vacant seat allotted the [Greek] Orthodox sect, it seems that the competition for this seat is stronger than the competition for the Druze sect's seat. This competition is between Marwan Abu-Fadil, the son of the late deputy Munir Abu-Fadil; Khalil Khayrallah, the candidate who ran for election in several elections and emerged defeated; and Shawqi Khayrallah, Khalil's

brother. It seems that none of the three acknowledges the presence of the others as rivals. However, the two [brothers] agree on rejecting the principle of appointment whereas Marwan Abu-Fadil favors popular elections "but under the existing circumstances, an article of the national concord charter and a one-time amendment of the Lebanese constitution provide for the appointment of deputies to fill the seats vacated with the death of some pillars of the Chamber of Deputies and the new seats introduced by the same charter." Abu-Fadil added: "I don't believe that controversy over this issue is currently permitted, considering that the al-Ta'if accord is an indivisible whole and that we have all accepted it as a national concord document. The president of the republic has emphasized that parliamentary elections are imminent. This is why we have let these matters follow the course charted for them."

Regarding his readiness to fill the vacant parliamentary seat, Abu-Fadil believes that the condition being experienced by the country requires that one shoulder numerous responsibilities from which ensue numerous concerns to the bearer because the political, economic, and social situation needs daily followup and because the people are floundering in their problems. "Those wishing to run for election, if elections were held, are themselves prepared to be appointed. I again say that it is not a gift but a responsibility."

On the objection voiced by some clans against him, Marwan Abu-Fadil has said: "I am the heir to the Munir Abu-Fadil school. There has been no problem between us and any spiritual or political family in our area or in any part of Lebanon. My late father's school was distinguished by great credibility at a time when the others were lost in small and closed projects which time has proven to be a complete failure. Therefore, we welcome all the Lebanese families to the sound line which was represented by the late Munir Abu-Fadil throughout the crisis. I follow in these footsteps."

Abu-Fadil added: "I don't think that there will be any noteworthy objection. During my father's political life and during my political action since my father departed, no hostilities have been created with anybody, God be thanked. Time and developments have confirmed the soundness of our political line."

As for adoption of the principle of the governorate as a single electoral district, Abu-Fadil has said: "I am a supporter of the electoral governorate which will see the light in the first elected parliamentary assembly. I support it because it provides the opportunity for broader representation and for a mingling of the Lebanese spiritual families, thus ensuring that a patriotic candidate wins on the strength of his personal ability and qualities, in addition to weak sectarian components."

Khalil Khayrallah is opposed to the idea of the appointment of deputies, especially since the anticipated law, which will amend the basic electoral law, has not been

promulgated yet. The details and conditions accompanying the appointment process have not become known. He considers this process a new heresy for which no previous law, excluding the amendment provided for by the al-Ta'if accord, makes any provision.

Khalil Khayrallah has said that he will take a stance in light of the amendment provisions and that he (cannot take) a personal stance, keeping in mind that he is a candidate who lost five times to Munir Abu-Fadil, the late deputy. He still insists on running to represent his electoral district because he believes that, in the wake of the eviction and the devastation that have afflicted his district, it is essential to have people capable of shouldering the responsibilities of the coming phase.

As for his preparation for the coming phase, he has said: "I am prepared to shoulder all my responsibilities toward rebuilding my district. I am the sole chairman of the federation of the district's municipalities. I have never at any time stopped shouldering my developmental, as well as political, responsibilities."

As to his popular base and how it has been formed, he has said: "For 40 years, I have been shouldering the burdens of total and comprehensive educational effort for all of the district's villages. This effort has been focused in the Bhamdun Secondary School and the Arab Institute which I have founded and managed. In this period, I have shouldered the responsibilities of developing my area of Bhamdun Municipality. My second base consists of my political experience, in its profoundest sense, with the Socialist Party, with the ideological parties, and with the national liberation movement in my district. I have always been these national political forces' candidate for my district. I say this with respect for the deceased deputy who was Majid Arslan's candidate. The area's electorate has always supported me."

As to the presence of a rival competing against him, Khalil said: "I cannot predict who the rival or opponent will be in the nomination for the vacant seat. However, unless the ideological nationalist parties in the district decide to nominate another person, I believe that there is no other serious candidate to compete against me."

As to his opinion on adoption of the governorate as a single electoral district, he has said: "Even though adoption of the governorate as a single electoral district is hoped to encourage all unity-oriented factions to move against sectarian isolation, I believe that the adoption of this principle poses two major threats to free elections. The first is the added strength gained by political and sectarian feudalism against ideological candidates, especially if the number of deputies in each governorate is set without taking into account equality in the number of candidates of each sect, i.e., if one sect in the governorate is allowed to have more deputies than any other sect, as in the case of 'Alayh District where there are two Druze deputies, two Maronite deputies, and one Orthodox deputy. Khayrallah has expressed fear for the fate of the

minority sect which will not have, in this case, any weight in determining the outcome of the elections, regardless of its strength and its support for its candidates.

"As for the other threat, it lies in providing a greater opportunity for money and bribery to play the decisive role in the outcome of elections. He believes that the smaller division of the districts allows them to have an equal number of deputies from the sects and the smallest possible total number of deputies."

'Alayh Deputies [Top box on p 16]

Before 1960, 'Alayh had three deputies: Majid Arslan representing the Druze sect, Munir Abu-Fadil representing the Greek Orthodox sect, and George 'Aql representing the Maronite sect.

In 1960, 'Alayh was allotted five deputies. Majid Arslan headed a candidate list which included Munir Abu-Fadil, Khalil al-Khuri, the son of Bisharah al-Khuri, Emile Mukarzal, and Fadlallah Talhuq. This [winning] list was repeated in the 1964 and 1968 elections.

In 1972, there were two lists, one led by Majid Arslan and one by Kamal Bayk Junblat. Arslan's list won after it had been changed as follows: Majid Arslan and Tawfiq 'Assaf for the Druze sect, Pierre Hilu and Shafiq Badr for the Maronite sect, and Munir Abu-Fadil for the Greek Orthodox sect.

Prominent Clans [Bottom box on p 16]

From the town of 'Bayh, the capital of the Arab Tanukhid Emirate, branches of the Tanukhid tribes spread to Kfar Matta, where the Nasr-al-Din clan, which produced poet Amin Nasr-al-Din, settled. AL-SABA', one of the oldest Lebanese newspapers, was published from Kfar Matta. In Baysur, one finds the clan descending from al-Qadi Muhammad Ibn-Isma'il al-Tanukhi, the clan descending from al-Qadi Zayn-al-Din who built al-Qadi Bridge which separates 'Alayh District from al-Shuf District, and the clan of Amin al-Qadi, an officer of the army of al-Sharif Faysal and one of the heroes of Maysalun battle.

In 'Ayn Kusr, one finds the Tanukhid clan of Amin-al-Din, whose most prominent member is Shaykh Ahmad Amin-al-Din.

Al-Shuwayfat is the base of the Arslan clan which has given Lebanon and the Arabs a number of most prominent figures, of whom we will note Mustafa, Amin, Shakib, 'Adil, and Majid Arslan, a hero of the independence.

The political clans that have played a prominent role in Lebanon's political life include the Talhuq clan from 'Alayh. The most prominent members of this clan include Husayn the great who lived in the past century, Dr. Salim Talhuq, the minister of health in the cabinet of August Basha Adib, Dr. Jamil Talhuq, a deputy during the first independence era, and Fadlallah Talhuq, a

former deputy. As for 'Abd-al-Malik clan, their most influential members were Yusuf and Shibli in the past century, and Fu'ad 'Abd-al-Malik, a member of the Mount Lebanon Administrative Council. The Abu-Nakad clan in 'Bayh includes as one of its members 'Arif al-Nakadi who held several positions in Syria.

Al-Sa'd clan from 'Ayn Tarayz [Teresa] holds a prominent place among the district clans and counts among its members Habib Basha who was president of the republic in the 1930's, Deputy Amin al-Sa'd, and Attorney Fu'ad al-Sa'd, a parliamentary candidate. The same applies to al-Khuri clan in Rishmayya. This clan's most prominent members include Shaykh Sa'd during the Shihabi rule and Shaykh Bisharah al-Khuri, the first president of the republic after the independence.

The Abu-Fadil clan is from 'Ayn 'Annub, and it counts among its members Yusuf Abu-Fadil, the first Lebanese Greek Orthodox deputy in the constituent assembly, Dr. Amin Abu-Fadil, the doctor who served the Arab forces in Maysalun battle, Habib Abu-Fadil, the director of al-Shuwayr Province under (the Ottoman rule), and the late Munir Abu-Fadil, Habib's son who was deputy speaker of the Chamber of Deputies.

There is a large number of other clans that produced members who had their accomplishments in the scientific, religious, and administrative areas. Of these clans we will mention the al-Salibi, Hitti, and Shumayt clans.

Reminder [Box on p 17]

Faysal Arslan: He was born in 1941 and studied in several schools, moving from the Freres School in Furn al-Shubbak to Mashmushi, to Hammana, and to the Apostles School in Junyah. He then studied business management at the Jesuit University.

His early involvement in politics came in 1964 when he made election campaign visits to various areas with his father in 1964, 1968, and 1972.

He left Lebanon on 17 February 1984 and returned three years later. Since then, he has been engaged in politics as the parliamentary heir of the Arslan clan.

Talal Arslan: He was born on 12 June 1963 and received his elementary and intermediate education at al-Shuwayfat International Secondary School—Charles Sa'd school.

War conditions compelled him to depart for London where he received his secondary school education. He then enrolled in George Washington University where he obtained a B.A. in political sciences and economics. Afterward, he returned to Lebanon and enrolled at the American University in Beirut to get his M.A. degree. He studied there for four semesters, but political circumstances did not allow him the opportunity to complete his studies.

The first time he appeared in public was in 1983, the year in which his father died, when he was only 20. At the time, Talal was still a student in Washington, the United States. Side-by-side with his mother, he engaged in politics intermittently. His actual involvement began in 1988.

Marwan Abu-Fadil: He was born on 23 December 1958 and received his education at the French Lycee in Beirut. He completed his baccalaureate studies in France and received a degree in law from Paris University.

He stayed with his father during the last four years of his father's life. He became involved in politics in 1984, staying with his father and accompanying him on all his visits. Moreover, Marwan did all the administrative work and drafted all the documents pertaining to agreements.

Khalil Khayrallah: He was born in Bhamdun in 1925 and completed his studies at al-Hikmah School in al-Ashrafiyah. He has a degree in international law from the Jesuit University and a degree in political science from the American University. He is also about to submit for debate his thesis for a Ph.D. degree in political science.

He founded the Arab Institute and Bhamdun Secondary School in 1950. He has been Bhamdun mayor and chairman of the Federation of Bhamdun District Municipalities since 1952.

His involvement in politics began in 1951 when he waged his first campaign to be elected for al-Shuf and 'Alayh districts as a single electoral district. Since then, he has run for election in all the parliamentary sessions without interruption. But he has not been fortunate enough to win in any of his campaigns.

He was a member of the Socialist Party's Council of Guides but then left it in the wake of the disagreement which developed on the eve of the 1958 incidents.

'Alayh District Deputies [Box on p 18]

Under Ottoman rule, 'Alayh District consisted of three subdistricts: Lower al-Gharb subdistrict with al-Shuwayfat as its base and with its leadership bestowed upon the Arslan amirs; Upper al-Gharb subdistrict, with 'Alayh as its base and with its leadership bestowed upon the Talhuq clan; and al-Jard [Plain] subdistrict, with Batatir as its base and with its leadership bestowed upon 'Abd-al-Malik clan. It is thus obvious that this administrative division was founded on clannish political bases and not on geographic or sectarian bases. The three clans had both Christian and Druze supporters.

Since the mandate, Lebanon has been redivided administratively on the basis of the governorate consisting of a number of districts. 'Alayh District is one of Lebanon's major districts in terms of population, area, and importance to tourism. The most important summer resort villages, such as 'Alayh, Bhamdun, Sawfar, Shaniyah,

Suq al-Gharb, Shimlan, 'Aynab, and others, are located in this district. The district also has the second largest number of hotels after Beirut. The Beirut-Damascus international highway passes through this district which also has the largest number of silk factories in Lebanon. This has encouraged the district's economic growth and social development. It is to be noted that 'Alayh District is the district most severely damaged by Lebanon's war. All its hotels, totaling 30-40 hotels, have been destroyed. Seventy percent of the buildings of 'Alayh, the bride of the summer resorts, have been totally or partially destroyed, and so have 80 percent of Suq al-Gharb's buildings, and 90 percent of the homes in Bhamdun, both the village and the station, in Kayfun, and in 'Aynat. Forty percent of the homes in al-Shuwayfat, Baysur, 'Ayn al-Sayyidah, Bmakkin, and al-Qamatiyah have also been partially or completely destroyed. This is in addition to the large-scale eviction to which both Christians and Druze have been subjected. To put it briefly, the district has suffered a setback to which no other district has been subjected.

Administratively, the district consists of 73 villages in which the sects are divided as follows:

Forty percent Maronites, 40 percent Druze, and 20 percent Orthodox. Kayfun and al-Qamatiyah are Shi'ite villages. Politically, the district was divided among the well-known leaderships of Mount Lebanon: Majid Arslan, Kamal Junblat, Camille Sham'un, the constitutionalists, and Munir Abu-Fadil.

The region experienced a prolonged political alliance between Majid Arslan and Camille Sham'un and the first list of parliamentary candidates the two formed was destined to succeed as of the moment it was formed. As a consequence of the political developments of the 1970's, this alliance ended and another alliance was established between Majid Arslan and Kamal Junblat in the 1972 election. This alliance ensured victory for the list consisting of Majid Arslan, Munir Abu-Fadil, Pierre Hilu, Tawfiq 'Assaf, and Shafiq Badr. In 1957, al-Damur was part of 'Alayh District and the district deputies were Majid Arslan, Munir Abu-Fadil, and George 'Aql. In 1960, 1964, and 1968, the deputies were Majid Arslan, Munir Abu-Fadil, Fadlallah Talhuq, Khalil al-Khuri, and Emile Mukarzal.

Two parliamentary figures who were successful in [all] the sessions were Majid Arslan, who remained deputy from 1943 until his death, and Munir Abu-Fadil, who held his parliamentary seat from 1957 until his death. The question raised now is: How will 'Alayh District be structured after the war?

[26 Nov pp 22-23]

[Text] The fever of the competition to fill the vacant parliamentary seats representing the city of Tyre and its district has not yet reached a pitch that requires immediate attention. The reason is simply due to two fundamental points: First, the seats vacated as a consequence of death are confined to the parliamentary seat that

became vacant upon the death of Deputy Nazim al-Khalil. Second, it is the opinion of the majority of the district's notables that the city of Tyre and its district have now come to be known as Imam al-Sadr's city, with the subsequent influence this name signifies for the Amal Movement, one of al-Sadr's most important institutions in Lebanon.

In Tyre District, as in the other districts, the district capital has been the focal point in the parliamentary competition and in the effort to gain the district's political leadership. On this basis, the Tyre arena witnessed in 1960 fierce rivalries which continued until the last parliamentary session of 1972. The previous years of Tyre's parliamentary history had witnessed no noteworthy rivalry.

For the reasons we have noted, it does not seem likely that any disputes will develop in Tyre District on the appointment issue unless, as a city notable has said, some people try to endorse the principle of inheritance in appointing a successor to the departed deputy from among his sons, who are not outside political action in Lebanon, even though their political action has not managed to reach the arena of their basic district and even though it has been totally outside this district.

This firm fact does not totally refute the presence of a silent competition or, as some say, competition behind the curtains. Frequent visits are being made nowadays by those seeking a parliamentary position to the Islamic Shi'ite sect's symbols and leaderships, especially since Tyre is represented by three deputies, all of whom come from this sect. According to the reports, the visit bazaar was opened two months ago. But the features of the next deputy have not become clear yet. Ja'far Sharaf-al-Din, an ex-deputy from Tyre District, believes that the competition will surface as soon as the nomination conditions are announced and the required application forms are filled out.

Al-Khalil Clan

The al-Khalil clan might be "legitimately entitled" to inherit the late Kazim al-Khalil's deputyship. This is if one proceeds on the basis of the inheritance factor being discussed by the political circles in the Lebanese arena. But in Tyre District, the situation is totally different due to, first, the political considerations that are confined to the deep gap existing between the area's inhabitants and the sons of the departed deputy who are entitled to the inheritance and due, second, to the fact the few al-Khalil clan members still living in the city—or to put it more precisely, the descendants of al-Hajj Isma'il al-Khalil, the father of the late deputy Kazim al-Khalil and his brothers who formed for long years the district's traditional leadership—are all outside the political arena. Dr. Sa'dallah al-Khalil, the brother of the late deputy, is the only "clan notable" who has never withdrawn from the district. However, he has fully withdrawn and distanced himself from politics. He even refuses to discuss politics

and divides his time between his work at his hospital in Tyre District and his other private businesses.

In the context of explaining his rejection of the principle of inheritance vis-a-vis the selection of a successor to Deputy Kazim al-Khalil, a Tyre notable has said: This is totally rejected because it is incompatible with the simplest rules of democracy. The sons of the late deputy have no popular base whatsoever in the district. Rather, their death in the district came when, after a forced absence, they returned to the district in 1982 with the Israeli invasion. For these considerations, there is abundant talk in the district about the need to consider the existing political factors when looking for somebody to fill the vacant seat.

Sharaf-al-Din Clan

As for the Sharaf-al-Din clan which was represented in the Lebanese parliament for years by ex-Deputy Ja'far Sharaf-al-Din, it does not seem to be experiencing competition among its ranks at a time when its political loyalty is still bestowed upon the ex-deputy himself. No clan member has emerged to compete against him. Meanwhile, Ja'far says that he is prepared to assume the responsibility if the popular base asks him. "This is nothing new to me," added the ex-deputy. "Every time I ran for election to take the honor of representing the citizens, I did so in response to the wish of the voters themselves."

As to his opinion on the appointment issue, Ja'far Sharaf-al-Din asserted that appointment is rejected from the democratic aspect. "But what is called appointment in this phase is an election by two thirds of the Council of Ministers and is ratified by the Chamber of Deputies, especially since the current Chamber of Deputies is the only legitimate institution from which the three current chairmanships [president, prime minister, and parliament speaker] have emanated. Oh, how similar [the criticism made against] the appointment of the new deputies by the Council of Ministers in the manner I have mentioned, as well as appointment of the deputies to replace the departed ones, is to the criticism leveled at the appointments made prior to 1930 on the basis of secondary voters, i.e. on the basis of the country's election of what is known nowadays as 'key voters' who in turn elect the deputies. This is tantamount to a two-tier election."

As to whether he expects problems during the search for the substitute, Ja'far asserted that there is no likelihood of such problems, keeping in mind that he is opposed to confining the search to the well-known clans that alternated in representing Tyre in the Lebanese parliament. "We wish," added the ex-deputy, "the State of Lebanon would embrace the principle of candidacy on a political, not a sectarian, basis. In any case, I believe that the government should explain what the al-Ta'if accord says in connection with the appointment of deputies and should spell out the conditions for appointment."

As to his opinion on the question of inheritance of the vacant seat in Tyre District, Ja'far Sharaf-al-Din believes that democratically, a son can attract more of the father's support than any other candidate who is distant from the departed deputy. It is not necessary that this be applied to the city of Tyre and its district, especially since there are currently on the ground forces that attract broad popular support. These forces must also be represented and must get their share.

Mrs. Rabab al-Sadr

A figure that has recently gained prominence in the political arena without being consulted is Mrs. Rabab al-Sadr Sharaf-al-Din. Despite being the sister of [the late] Imam Musa al-Sadr and the wife of Husayn Sharaf-al-Din, a member of the political clan in Tyre and its district, Rabab does not like politics and does not wish to engage in it after spending nearly 27 years in social action and finding her desired object in it. She is aware, as she has said, that her name has been brought up by higher authorities within the context of the appointments. But she emphasizes that she is as distant as can be from this matter and that she does not desire it. She is not prepared or trained for it and she adds, wondering: If politics through deputyship or the cabinet constitute a field for serving people and pursuing their interests, then I am doing and accomplishing this from my social position. So, Mrs. al-Sadr goes on to add: There is absolutely no call for considering the matter. All must look for another person. The district has a lot of eligible people.

As for the selection issue, Mrs. Rabab does not interfere with it because it is entrusted to the political and religious Shi'ite Islamic leadership. But she does not deny that she is a part of this leadership.

Can it be said that Mrs. Rabab will reject appointment even if she is asked? She responds: Yes, I am not prepared or ready. As to the reasons that have caused the higher authorities, which she herself knows, to bring up her name in this regard, she has said: Perhaps the name was brought up in the context of introducing the women's element into the Lebanese parliament. There is also talk in connection with a number of women whom I esteem and respect. I don't think that there is any other background to the matter.

On the principle of inheritance in filling the vacant seat, Rabab al-Sadr absolutely refuses to respond. Perhaps this is an affirmation of what she has mentioned about the Shi'ite leadership's role in determining this issue.

Other Clans

A factor that reduces the element of competition and that, at the same time, removes the presence of any problems in appointing a replacement to the late deputy is the distance most of the well-known families have put between themselves and the political arena. On the other hand, this issue provides an important opportunity for new seekers from new families in the city of Tyre and in

its district. Some reports have noted that the new seekers and aspirants are numerous and that they are the ones engaged in ceaseless visits to the homes of the decision-making Shi'ite Islamic leaders.

At this time, it seems that the number of clans involved in the Tyre District political competition in the past has diminished considerably, especially since the 'Arab clan has distanced itself from the district's political arena after having been represented for years in the past by the late deputy Sulayman 'Arab and since 'Ali 'Arab failed to succeed him during the period of heated rivalries. The same applies to the Abu-Khalil clan. The competition, in case it exists, is between the three traditional clans of al-Khalil, Sharaf-al-Din, and Safi-al-Din. As for the new aspirants, and they are many, business leaders, especially expatriate businessmen, form a strong element in the competition which, the reports assert, is a heated competition behind the scenes. But according to the same sources, this competition will not exceed the bounds of legitimate competition and will not turn into problems because there is a decision-making authority, namely the Shi'ite Islamic leadership, that is empowered to take the proper stance. This is the consensus of all the forces and notables in the district.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the political facts existing in the city of Tyre and in its district contribute to a great degree to abolishing the element of disagreements, considering that they [Shi'ite leadership] control the decision-making in this regard and that they constitute, at the same time, the only gate through which any seeker has to pass to get to the Lebanese parliament and to fill Tyre's vacant seat.

District's Clans [Box on p 22]

Tyre's parliamentary history has seen a number of clans alternate nearly periodically in representing the district, namely al-Khalil clan, Safi-al-Din clan, and Sharaf-al-Din clan. These clans, who continue to be present in the political arena to this day, are not from Tyre originally. They all came to the city from the neighboring villages. Al-Khalil clan's origins go back to the village of Ma'rakah, those of Sharaf-al-Din clan to the village of (Shhur), and those of Safi-al-Din clan to the village of Sham' in the occupied border strip.

The other families that have ceased and disappeared from the political arena are the 'Arab clan and the Abu-Khalil clan. The present generation of these clans' members go for business rather than politics.

[Top box on p 23] Parties in Arena

What is interesting in the history of Tyre District's parliamentary history is that this district was the first to see the Lebanese leftist parties enter the arena and compete against the traditional clans in election campaigns. In 1960, 'Ali Tawfiq Halawi, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party executive officer, ran unsuccessfully for election as the district representative.

The Arab Nationalist Movement entered the arena by nominating Muhammad al-Zayyat in 1960. It was rumored that he was prevented from winning because of the political circumstances prevailing at the time. In the 1974 election, the Lebanese Communist Party tried to nominate Husayn al-Khishn but he withdrew before the election date.

[Bottom box on p 23] Tyre's Parliamentary History

The initial parliamentary action in Tyre District, which has a Shi'ite Islamic majority, was launched in 1937, and the late Kazim al-Khalil was the first deputy to represent the district. He held the seat until 1943. Unlike the present process, nomination was made at the time from lists representing the governorates. In 1947, Kazim al-Khalil was followed by Muhammad Safi-al-Din and Sulayman 'Arab who held their seats until 1951 when President Camille Sham'un dissolved the Chamber of Deputies. Kazim al-Khalil and Rida Wahid were reelected in 1957. In that election campaign, defeat was inflicted on Ahmad al-As'ad as candidate for the south, Sa'ib Salam as candidate for Beirut, and Kamal Junblat as candidate for al-Shuf. That was the first election held on the basis of districts and the first time for Tyre District to be represented by three deputies.

In 1960, Sharaf-al-Din clan gained prominence when Ja'far Sharaf-al-Din and his list, which included Muhammad Safi-al-Din and Sulayman 'Arab in addition to himself, won. The rivalry between this list and al-Khalil clan list, consisting of Kazim al-Khalil, Salah al-Khalil, and Ahmad Hasan al-Khalil, continued until the 1974 election. New figures have now gained prominence, such as Dr. 'Ali al-Khalil, a current cabinet minister, and Yusuf Hammud.

OMAN

Columnist Assesses American, Foreign Radio Broadcasts

91AE0060A Muscat AL-WATAN in Arabic
16, 17, 18, 19 Sep 90

[Commentary by "Sahran"]

[16 Sep p 2]

[Text]

The Voice of London

Radio London is still determined to continue its strained message, which has been repeating itself since the Gulf crisis began.

I will not once again give an account of that "entire hour that we devote, dear listeners, to following the development of the crisis in the Gulf region," for this hour has gotten to be a habit, and what is habitual becomes boring

after a while—an hour that ought to look for new events that warrant the creation or "fabrication" of a state of "ethereal tension."

I also do not want to mention the news which London confidently broadcast about the ship that they said had anchored in the Gulf of Oman and was on its way to Iraq, while minutes later the BBC denied what it itself had said.

Rather, I will point to a study done by a "magazine published in London," which said in its opening, "because it is easy to receive foreign radio waves transmitted through the ether, many states have exploited this means to reach public opinion targetted in any region of the world's countries, including of course the Arab world. Because of its 'geostrategic' location it was one of those points targetted by international broadcasts such as the BBC, the Voice of America, Monte Carlo, and others."

The study done by the magazine mentioned that only 51 percent of the sample [audience] believes what is reported in the news from London and that the rest say "no." Twenty-nine percent believe there is a "conspiracy," and 18 percent do not believe the news that is reported in it.

Naturally, there was fault-finding in the study when the magazine raised the question of Arab listeners' objections to the newscasts. They mentioned "long-windedness and delays in broadcasting the news and the lack of news coverage."

These figures and objections say many things to which we will devote an "entire" article, as our brothers in London would say.

[17 Sep p 2]

The Voice of America

As if the seven hours which the Voice of America devoted to addressing its listeners were not enough, the American president Bush issued instructions that the Voice of America increase its hours of broadcasting to the Arab region in Arabic to thirteen.

Why this increase? I do not know, but I cite the study done by the magazine, which reported that the Voice of America is heard in the Arab world by only eight percent [of listeners].

Perhaps the greatest indication of the confusion experienced by an Arab listener to the Voice of America is that the announcer tells you, "If you want to listen to a summary of the news at any time at any moment, look for the Voice of America at this number, and you will listen by yourself to a summary of the most important events. (!!!)"

In this respect, a listener told me over the telephone that he was tired of the broadcasts.

I said that it seems as if they are still dealing with us as if we had no sense.

He told me: "The world has changed, and they are not aware of the awareness that we have. This is the big problem: dealings with what is called the Third World remain as they were half a century ago."

I said that we are not the losers in any case, for the awareness that you and I and all of us have is in a rapidly ascending line, as indicated by the fact that you are talking to me scornfully about these voices broadcasted, which imagine that they will prey on me with their hasty news and analyses far removed from objectivity, with their unjustified positions, fabrication of the news, reading of palms and tea leaves, and fortune telling with regard to the crisis.

The civilized astrologers have lied, if only by "accident."

[18 Sep p 2]

The Voice of the Mind

Which is preferable, to receive true and accurate news based on a source or for a heap of news which is more like chatter to be flung into your ear?

The current events in the Gulf region have revealed that condensed, rational news which tells of what is in fact happening without exaggeration or hypnotics, is the best of all news.

We are at a time of crisis, and everything around us brings pain, so it is unreasonable that we should continuously get futile, inflammatory, and provocative news, especially that which accuses me as an Arab person of political and intellectual backwardness, or which makes that implication.

If progress means arousing confusion in the soul, and rousing doubt and self loathing, then a thousand welcomes to political backwardness, and no hello to the advanced people who manipulate the emotions and find in them an opening to moral destruction.

As I say this, I am thinking of that accusation directed against many of the Arab broadcasters and media that do not mobilize themselves to cover events in a sympathetic manner, as if the models were London Radio, the Voice of America, and Monte Carlo.

After more than a month and a half, experience has shown that this coverage based on repetition of the news, polarization of expectations, contact with those far from the events, forecasters, and the reading of political tea leaves are nothing more than oscillations that are gone with the wind.

The Arab ear, the Arab receiver, has the awareness which enables him to distinguish between the natural ether and ether filled with political carbon dioxide.

The oscillations of the voice of the mind are a thousand times preferable to the radio chatter which does no good and from which we do not benefit.

[19 Sep p 2]

The Voice of the Arabs

Just before the end of the broadcast of the Voice of the Arabs in Egypt, which can be received from midnight to 3:30 Muscat time, the announcer signs off by saying, "The Voice of the Arabs salutes you, and renews its commitment to you, O sons of Arabdom." Then you hear a voice overflowing with emotion: "You are noble, O Arabs, noble."

This scene is more than 30 years old, ever since Cairo established the Voice of the Arabs to be a pulpit for all Arab tendencies and an expression of the pulse of Arabism everywhere.

The words move me, and make the emotions of each one of us tremble when the announcer stresses the words "Arabism," or "noble, O Arabs, noble," affirming the feelings that many try to destroy by means of the sharp blade of painful events, and by means which much intrigue and the growth of civilization have tarnished.

Our "voice of arabism" is more sympathetic to us than all voices and any voice.

Our national voice of Arabdom will continue to flow in our blood, whatever wave of discord may exist amidst its waves, for it is impossible for a spot of carbon dioxide to affect a vast area of oxygen.

Our radio and television are more truthful than others. Believe me, those voices will have only a temporary dazzling effect that you will immediately forget because they rely on guesses and forecasts of many of the events and news.

How many times have we heard contradictions and variations that they imagine to be in accord, and opposites that they bring together with the goal of stirring things up and filling the gap in the ether?

Certainly, try to think over a piece of news you have heard, then watch it on television. You cannot but see that "the picture provides more reliable news than the voice!"

SAUDI ARABIA

Role of Press After Crisis Discussed

91AE0111A Jeddah ARAB NEWS in English
7 Nov 90 p 2

[Article by Fayza S. Ambah; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Jeddah, Nov 6—A media spotlight has been focussing on Saudi Arabia ever since the Iraqi invasion

of Kuwait and the subsequent massing of foreign troops on Saudi soil. The buzz word has been 'change' and according to several articles in foreign publications one of the areas to have been affected has been the Saudi press, described as going through a period of 'glasnost'.

Acknowledging the importance of a free press was an Arab News editorial on the first of September which stated that part of the blame for the rise of the Iraqi leader should be carried by the press and that the only way to "stop future Saddams" would be if the media, "including the Arab media, dare to face the truth. And print it."

Turki al-Sudayri, editor in chief of Al-Riyadh newspaper doesn't accept part of the blame. "Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was totally unexpected," he says. "It was the invasion that changed our perceptions of Iraq."

He also doesn't believe that the crisis has changed local reporting. "We reported on the crisis as we would have reported on anything that came before it," he says.

Dr. Hashim Abdu Hashim, editor in chief of Al-'Ukaz believes that change has come about because the crisis imposed itself on the Saudi press which had no choice but to rise to the occasion. "The crisis changed a lot of people's convictions and will leave a big impression on the Arabic psyche and the Arabic press," he says. "The results are still in the making."

Editor in chief of Al-Madinah newspaper, 'Abdallah al-Husayn, believes that not only has the crisis had a positive influence on the local press but that once the crisis is over newspapers will become even more outspoken. "The Arabic press must play a role in rebuilding the Arab nation, which is now in a shambles," he says, "and the only way to do that is with honest, responsible journalism."

As for the actual coverage of the crisis, "the English language press was better because it was more truthful and less emotional," says Ridah Larry, editor in chief of the Saudi Gazette.

"It's true," says Yusuf Damanhuri, editor in chief of Al-Nadwah, "that the Arabic press is more emotional than the English language press because Arabs in general, unfortunately, let emotion rather than reason dictate their actions." The reason, he believes, is because illiteracy rates are higher in the Arab world than in the West.

Khalid al-Ma'inah, editor in chief of Arab News, believes that the English language press covered the crisis better than the local Arabic press because it was competing with the international papers. "I had to supply my readers with facts and figures," he says.

Most of the Arabic papers' editors disagreed. "Unlike Al-'Ukaz," says Hashim, its editor, "the English language dailies relied heavily on the newswires and were not present at the sites where events were happening."

Al-Husayn believes that you shouldn't compare the Arabic language with English language press. "English language papers write for the foreign readers who might not care whether Kuwait is lost or Baghdad destroyed as my readers do," he says.

"I don't want to see Iraqis hurt," he adds, "I am an Arab and I write for Arabs, whose interests are not always those of the readers of foreign journals."

More than one editor talked of self-censorship and guidelines given by the Ministry of Information rather than outright censorship. Al-Sudayri explained that unlike at the former Kuwaiti newspaper offices, there is no official from the Ministry of Information present as an in-house censor at the local papers.

It shows how much confidence the government has in the press, says Damanhuri, that our country is at the brink of war and still our papers are not censored.

Most of the editors believe that the local press has shown some improvements but they all concede that it could do with more. Newspapers, believes al-Ma'inah, should not be "propaganda tools" or they will "lose their credibility." Another improvement, he adds, would be the presence of a wider range of opinions which would come about "by encouraging people of different opinions to write."

Damanhuri does a weekly column for Al-Madinah, Ridah Larry writes guest editorials for Al-Nadwah and a number of Saudi journalists write for two or three competing papers. According to Damanhuri, this phenomenon underlines the shortage of competent local journalists.

Almost all the editors, who are from a generation that studied abroad, complained that thorough training for journalists is not available locally.

"There are six communications departments in the universities," says Damanhuri, "which have been in operation since 10 years, and not one of our employees is a graduate from there." These colleges, he explains, concentrate too much on the theoretical and not enough on the practical.

So who are going to be the future editors in chief? "Ask the heads of the media departments," he says. "I bet you not one of those graduates is now a journalist."

Other reasons cited for the lack of competent journalists were that, unlike in the West, locally there is very little glamor associated with media work and journalism.

Also, the field is not made appealing to potential journalists because of long hours and wages comparatively lower than those in other professions.

The long hours and low wages of journalists, believes al-Husayn, shouldn't come into play. "A journalist," he says, "is like an artist." Journalism, a talent he likens to

art or literature, must be in the blood, he explains. "If you don't have the passion," he says, "don't get into journalism."

New Radio, TV Broadcast To Aim at World Audience

91AE0111B Jeddah ARAB NEWS in English
9 Nov 90 p 1

[Text] Jeddah, Nov 8 (SPA)—Custodian of the Two Holy Mosque King Fahd said here today that the Kingdom has decided to boost its information facilities. He told Saudi editors that besides the existing mass media like the radio, TV and the Saudi Press Agency, orders have been issued to the concerned authorities to set up soon the most powerful and advanced transmitter for radio and TV services to cover the largest possible area in the world. This will help in reaching the maximum number of people to highlight the Kingdom's real picture and its just policies.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Defense Minister Interviewed on Unification Army

91AE0154A Sanaa AL-JAYSH in Arabic
Oct 90 pp 24-27

[Interview with Defense Minister Brigadier General Haytham Qasim Tahir, by unidentified interviewer; date and place not given; first paragraph is AL-JAYSH introduction]

[Excerpts] The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH conducted an interview with Defense Minister Brigadier General Haytham Qasim Tahir and published it in a special issue on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the glorious 26 September Revolution. Because of the importance of the interview, AL-JAYSH magazine is reprinting the complete text.

No Comparison

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] At the beginning, I said to him: Incidentally, as we celebrate the 28th anniversary of the Yemeni Revolution, the revolution's second goal was to build a strong national army. To what extent do you think this important goal has been achieved?

[Tahir] With the coming of the 26 September Revolution, "the Mother Revolution," Yemeni liberals and militants raised the revolution's six famous goals. It was no accident that the second goal was to build a strong national army to protect the country and guard the revolution and its gains. This reflected the fact that the pioneers of the Yemeni revolution truly perceived that the revolution and its gains could not endure and be victorious if the revolution did not possess the ability to defend itself and protect the sovereignty of the beloved Yemeni homeland.

What a difference there is between yesterday's reality, when those who raised lofty goals found themselves struggling to realize these goals in the shadow of highly complex and backward conditions, and today's reality, when we as a people are reaping the fruits of the struggle of the heroes of the September and October revolutions and are carrying forward the banner of construction and defense, guided by the principles and goals of the glorious Yemeni revolution!

We have made very important headway in realizing this lofty goal, just as in the gains, successes, and victories achieved in the various [other] areas of life.

True, we have not reached the summit of our hopes and aspirations, but a quick comparison between the reality under which the goals of the Yemeni revolution were announced and today's reality is sufficient to see the extent of what has been accomplished in light of those goals, one of which was the building of the modern Yemeni Armed Forces. [passage omitted]

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Excuse me. To return to the present situation: with the establishment of a united country and merging of the military establishment that used to be under two systems of government, do you think there are any difficulties—technical, for example—standing in the way of a complete merger?

[Tahir] No difficulties stood in the way of the now accomplished merger of the September and October armies into a single Yemeni Armed Forces. The tasks and duties that were undertaken, as well as those that stand before our Armed Forces, are many and require everyone's effort. [passage omitted]

Military Colleges and Dichotomy

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] I felt it necessary to return to the area of merging the military establishment. I asked again: Regarding the academic qualifications of members of the Armed Forces, is there any dichotomy in the military colleges and their preunification training systems? If that is the case, have steps toward unification been taken?

[Tahir] Yes, there was a dichotomy in Yemeni military educational institutions before the unification of Yemen. However, this and other problems have been remedied. The most important point is that we have laid new foundations for designing courses of study. They have been unified at the various colleges, institutes, and other educational institutions.

As for the colleges, their main required courses are set insofar as the circumstances and appropriate facilities are available for the nature and conditions of the training.

Specious Outcry

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Excuse me. We must ask about another matter of concern. Brig. Gen. Haytham, what

about the decision to move camps away from the main cities? Will the decision apply to cities such as Ta'izz, for example?

[Tahir] You have undoubtedly heard the outcry that alleges that we have moved many troops to other positions. This is a specious outcry aimed at creating an atmosphere of tension with our fellow Arab neighbor countries. But nothing of the sort has happened, for the Yemeni political leadership is very concerned about the fraternal relations linking us to all the Arab countries. It is making every effort so that Arab solidarity regains its health and so that no Arab aims his weapon against members of his nation. In any case, I wish to point out that a decision to move camps should not be understood as a formality. Its implementation is linked to the defense policy of the Republic of Yemen. Concentration or repositioning of forces takes place when dangers exist that threaten national sovereignty—and this is what has not happened. We sincerely want Yemen to be able to direct its people's efforts and its resources toward peaceful construction. We do not want any problems to muddy Yemen's relations with its brothers.

In brief, I would say that this question—moving camps away from the cities—is being studied. Its implementation is not something easy, since it requires enormous resources.

Camps and Citizens' Problems

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Citizens have another concern. We sometimes see these camps interfering in citizens' problems that are the domain of agencies other than the army and the camp commanders.

[Tahir] We really have nothing to confirm this. We have no knowledge about anything you have referred to. Since we are striving to build a country of institutions, a country of system and law, every institution has its constitutionally defined functions and duties. This applies to the Armed Forces of the Republic of Yemen. Everyone should understand this.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Good. What about discipline in the ranks of the army, particularly since some people are accusing soldiers of being undisciplined, and one sees them carrying on various jobs outside the camps?

[Tahir] I have great confidence that the commanders and officers of the Armed Forces have a high spirit of responsibility toward the cornerstone of the military structure and the components of the Armed Forces. We feel pleased by the level of preparedness and combat readiness and the high morale of our Armed Forces, particularly if we take into consideration the confusion that occurred during the stage of merger, the transfer of some units from one place to another, and the changing conditions and climate. But the defenders of the homeland have shouldered their responsibilities. Today they are fully prepared. By their conscious discipline they embody their conviction that Yemeni unity and the Yemeni republic have enemies and that dangers are

possible. The people have entrusted to them the duty of defending the sovereignty of the homeland and the gains of the glorious September and October revolutions.

As for the isolated cases that may have emerged here or there, they are the exception that must give way so that the rule may remain the rule.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Excuse me. A complaint has been published in some newspapers that members of the Armed Forces—soldiers and officers—were discharged after unification. Is this true? If so, why?

[Tahir] (Answering quickly) It is not true.

Conscripts and the Defense Law

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] What about the new National Defense Service Law? Are you going to begin applying it?

[Tahir] As you know, there are a number of laws in the military area that have been proposed to parliament. Among them is the National Defense Law. When this law is approved, we will carry out its application.

Return of Discharged Officers

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] What about those who were discharged from military service for political reasons before unification?

[Tahir] In accordance with the political leadership's decision to allow the return of those who were discharged from military service for political reasons, the Defense Ministry is arranging for their return. Implementation arrangements have been completed for their return to military units according to their specialties and former jobs. There is no problem in this.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] I felt it necessary to shorten the list of questions, since despite the man's generosity and responsiveness, time would not permit, and he was busy with weighty tasks. So I gathered up my papers and asked my last question:

The relation between civilians and military men varies because of circumstances. How do you see the matter? How can this relation be improved?

[Tahir] The main goals and tasks for which armies are created are what defines the nature of the relation between the army and the people.

When an army is retained by a regime as a tool of repression against the people, its relation to citizens will never be more than that of repressor to repressed. The opposite is also true: when an army or armed force is created to protect the homeland, defend the people's dignity, safeguard the gains of the people's peaceful work, and provide a climate for the people to live without the terrors and dangers of war and woe, the relation will be one of growing love on the part of the people for their Armed Forces—and a relation of sacrifice, of constant readiness to offer their lives for the honor of the people, and of loyalty to the oath that

fighters swear when they have the honor of joining the Armed Forces of the Republic of Yemen.

Composition, Duties of National Defense Council

91AE0152A Sanaa AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 2 Nov 90
pp 1-2

[Article: "Presidential Decree Establishing and Constituting National Defense Council"]

[Text] Sanaa (SBA)—Presidential Decree No. 21 (1990) concerning the National Defense Council was issued. The following is its text:

The president of the Leadership Council, pursuant to the agreement proclaiming the Republic of Yemen, the constitution of the Republic of Yemen, and Presidential Decree No. 1 (1990) constituting the Council of Ministers, and with the assent of the Leadership Council, has decreed:

Section 1: A council shall be established named "The National Defense Council," to be made up as follows:

1. President of the Leadership Council, the supreme commander of the Armed Forces—chairman
2. Vice president of the Leadership Council and members of the Leadership Council—members
3. Speaker of Parliament—member
4. Prime minister—member
5. Minister of defense—member
6. Minister of foreign affairs—member
7. Minister of interior and security—member
8. Minister of information—member
9. Minister of finance—member
10. Chief of the General Staff—member
11. Leadership Council adviser for military affairs—secretary

Section 2: The National Defense Council shall be responsible for considering matters dealing with means to protect the republic and its safety. Without prejudice to the powers that the law shall grant to the National Defense Council, the council shall have as its task attending to the following duties and prerogatives:

Duties of the Council

1. Formulating public policy for preparing and mobilizing all the state's facilities and its human, material, intellectual, and spiritual resources, and for preparing these correctly for transformation from their peacetime state to a state of war as circumstances shall require, and supervising the implementation of this policy.
2. Decreeing states of emergency, states of war, and full or partial mobilizations.
3. Deciding the policy to be followed in training, organizing, and supplying the Armed Forces, and determining the size, strategic duties, and organizational structure of the Armed Forces in peace and war.

4. Studying the state of the Armed Forces' combat readiness, mobilization, training, and weapons and equipment supply.

5. Establishing plans and rules that will guarantee the production of cooperation between the Armed Forces and government and nongovernment administrations and departments, with the aim of strengthening the military effort in peace and war.

6. Designating the cases in which the Armed Forces will be used within the country and outside it, and approving the top-level implementation plans for such use.

7. Establishing a policy for defending the country, determining the means and measures that will need to be used to protect the state, guarding Yemen's revolution and national achievements, safeguarding the state's economy and the country's oil, mineral, and strategic resources, and protecting security and stability from any internal or external threats.

8. Considering proposed military agreements, military alliances, truce agreements, and peace treaties, and making appropriate recommendations concerning them.

9. Studying questions of Armed Forces development, instituting scientific planning of military policy and effecting factors, and creating new military formations.

10. Formulating top-level policy for civil defense in the country.

Council Sessions, Organization of Its Work

Section 3: The council shall be summoned to convene at a request from the chairman of the council, with its meetings to be no fewer than one every three months; however, in case of a proclamation of general mobilization or war, the council shall be considered convened on a continuous basis. The council may invite to attend its sessions anyone whose information or expertise it sees fit to call upon, without his having the right to vote on resolutions of the council.

Section 4: Upon a declaration of mobilization or war, the National Defense Council shall attend to all questions of mobilization, supervise their implementation, and be responsible for directing the war when it breaks out.

Section 5: The National Defense Council may form subcommittees from among its members or from external experts and specialists to study the issues entrusted to it for study according to the provisions of this law. These committees shall present reports of the results of their studies, with their recommendations and suggestions. These shall be presented to the secretary of the council, who shall be responsible for presenting these results to the council at the first meeting it holds.

Section 6: The National Defense Council shall have a secretariat under the authority and supervision of the chairman of the National Defense Council. The council's secretary shall administer the secretariat with the help of

a number of officers and officials with special competence. The secretariat shall exercise the following powers:

- A. drawing up the council's agenda and submitting it to the chairman, preliminary to its distribution to the members;
- B. recording and certifying the minutes of the council's sessions;
- C. announcing the reports and proposals connected with its activity and presenting them to the council;
- D. reporting the council's decisions and monitoring their implementation;
- E. sending out a call for the council to convene, after consulting the opinion of the chairman of the council; and,
- F. undertaking any other tasks that may be assigned to it.

Section 7: The chairman of the council shall issue the resolutions necessary to implement the provisions of this law after the approval of the council.

Section 8: Every legal text violating the provisions of this law is declared null and void.

Section 9: This decree shall have the force of law from the date of its issuance and shall be published in the official journal.

Issued at the office of the president of the republic, at Sanaa, on 13 Rabi' II, 1411 (1 November 1990)—Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, Prime Minister.—Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, President of the Leadership Council.

Leadership Council Decree

Leadership Council Decree No. 15 (1990) was issued yesterday constituting the National Defense Council. The following is its text:

The president of the Leadership Council, pursuant to the agreement proclaiming the Republic of Yemen, the constitution of the Republic of Yemen, and Legal Decree 21 (1990) establishing the National Defense Council and fixing its powers, and with the assent of the Leadership Council, has decreed:

Section 1: The National Defense Council shall be constituted as follows:

- President of the Leadership Council, the supreme commander of the Armed Forces—chairman,
- Vice president of the Leadership Council and members of the Leadership Council—members,
- Speaker of Parliament—member,
- Prime minister—member,
- Minister of defense—member,
- Minister of foreign affairs—member,
- Minister of interior and security—member,
- Minister of information—member,
- Minister of finance—member,
- Chief of the General Staff—member,
- Leadership Council adviser for military affairs—secretary.

Section 2: This decree shall have the force of law from the date of its issuance and shall be published in the official journal.

Issued at the office of the president of the republic, at Sanaa, on 13 Rabi' II, 1411 (1 November 1990)—Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, President of the Leadership Council.

INDIA

CPI-M Issues Statement on Jerusalem Troubles

91AS0209A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
11 Oct 90 p 7

[Text] New Delhi, 10 October—The Politburo of the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has condemned the attack by Israeli forces on Palestinian protesters in the old city of Jerusalem on the night of 8 October in which at least 22 people were killed and over 150 injured.

In a statement issued here today, the Politburo said it was "amazed to note that the UN Security Council could not agree on sending a commission to the Israeli occupied territory to investigate this massacre. The UN Security Council which till recently moved with great speed on imposing sanctions on Iraq following its occupation of Kuwait was obviously pressurized by the United States into not taking such a step." Reiterating its solidarity with the Palestinian people, who under the leadership of PLO have been struggling for their right of homeland for over 4 decades, the CPI(M) called upon international public opinion to condemn this "latest U.S.-abetted Israeli attack on the Palestinians.

Paper Reports, Comments on Indian People's Front

91AS0211A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 11 Oct 90 p 8

[Article by Arvind N. Das: "IPF Makes a 'Democratic' Debut in Delhi"]

[Text] New Delhi, 10 October—The massive Indian People's Front (IPF) rally in the capital on Monday proved that the so-called "Naxalites," their party, the CPI(ML) [Communist Party of India-Marxist-Leninist], and their mass organisations like the Kisan Sabha and the IPF have come a long way.

It is significant that the issues on which the rallyists patiently deliberated for hours referred not to minor factional concerns but to major national issues. The statement issued by the central committee of the CPI(ML) and resolutions adopted at the rally are testimony to the "mainstream" nature this political formation has now acquired.

The perception so far has been that significant groups of workers and peasant activists, described by the "catchy" label of Naxalites, are sinister cloak-and-dagger revolutionary anarchists who had no use for mass organisations and little regard for democracy.

One resolution affirmed faith in non-alignment as the cornerstone of India's foreign policy even in the changed global circumstances. This, it held, would protect India's national interests as well as its sovereignty.

Another greeted the democratic struggle and its victory in Nepal. Yet another welcomed the forthcoming visit by Dr Nelson Mandela. No major party takes any different stand on these issues.

The resolutions on national matters were similarly on issues of broad concern. Given the self-conscious "left opposition" stance of the IPF, it was evenhanded in its criticism of both the Congress and the National Front [NF] but its total opposition to the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] was evident.

While critical of the "traditional" left parties, the IPF appealed to them to join in forming a "political confederation" or at least evolve ways to "walk together for as far as possible." This shows that the approach is anything but sectarian.

The first resolution criticised the new industrial policy of the Janata Dal government. It noted the phenomena of industrial sickness and closures, mounting unemployment and spiraling prices. It expressed its apprehension about India getting pulled into a debt trap. The demand for checking inflation and enshrinement of the right of work was stressed.

Through another resolution, the IPF demanded the repeal of draconian laws which, it said, are used for the "systematic violation of civil liberties and democratic rights." The use of measures like TADA (Terrorists and Disruptionist Activities Act) to tackle trade unionism was deplored. These several formulations are identical with what the established left parties are saying.

For a formation which has long been branded as "anti-democratic" the IPF was particularly vehement in expressing itself on electoral matters. It demanded elections in Punjab "and concrete initiatives towards a negotiated political settlement" in Kashmir. At the same time, its chairperson, Mr Nagbhushan Patnaik, made it abundantly clear that the IPF is against any form of secessionism, terrorism and religious fundamentalism.

The rally was particularly aimed at fighting communalism. It expressed "its deep concern over the increasing menace of communalism (which has) engulfed a large number of villages and towns.... The communal frenzy being whipped up by VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad], Bajrang Dal and the BJP on the question of the Babri Masjid-Ram Janambhoomi has weakened the secular fabric of India."

It criticised the Congress for "satisfying vested interests" and some of its supporters even being "found engaged in incidents of communal violence." It cited the incidents in Gonda as an example of the latter.

The IPF also criticised "the effort of the Janata Dal to capitalise on the minority vote bank instead of fighting communalism." It commented on the Janata Dal's "continued dependence on the BJP." It felt that communalism could not be combated without also opposing the criminalisation of politics.

The IPF condemned "the unexpected rise in the defence budget" at the cost of "expenditure on development, welfare and social security." It called for cutting defence expenditure in the context of renewed efforts to promote regional peace, particularly with Pakistan—points which the Janata Dal itself was making prior to its translation to power.

While these discussions and resolutions expressed the IPF's integral position in the national political mainstream, the CPI(ML)-IPF combination has also been particular about distinguishing its position from that of other political formations.

Thus, while it generally supports reservation of jobs for Dalits and backward classes, the message from the central committee of the CPI(ML) to the rally makes it clear that "this support is not for the Lohiaite theory where the concept of socialism has degenerated to the politics of backwardism."

It also states that "the Mandal exercise of Mr V.P. Singh was nothing more than a calculated manoeuvre in a narrow factional game." Thus, the CPI(ML), says "Our support for reservation does not mean rallying the Dalits behind the aggressive backward castes in the latter's caste war."

At the same time, the IPF-CPI(ML) which draw its support largely from agricultural labourers and poor peasants, many of whom are Dalits, also stands up against the "Dalitism" of Mr Kanshi Ram's Bahujan Samaj Party. The statement says, "The neo-Brahmins emerging from among the Dalits are as much a target of our movement as the forwardised backwards. On the other hand, enlightened segments and poor people from upper castes are also joining our movement in large numbers."

The IPF-CPI(ML) formation is unfazed by the current decline in the fortunes of communists in the west. It says, "Regardless of whatever may be happening in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, in our country the left movement definitely has a very bright future." In that context, it calls upon the "traditional" left to unite with the emergent forces; "let bygones be bygones and let us look forward to the future."

With remarkably candid introspection, the CPI(ML) admits, "We have made a number of mistakes in the past; there may well be some weaknesses and mistakes in all that we are doing today. We are prepared to learn from our mistakes and history will testify that we are not prisoners of any dogma."

The IPF has still to prove that assertion.

Background of Front

91AS0211B Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 13 Oct 90 p 11

[Text] New Delhi—The Indian People's Front [IPF], which is emerging as a new force on the left, is not too well known outside the areas of its operation.

The IPF, a coalition of revolutionary democratic forces, was formed in April 1982. A conglomeration of more than 200 mass organisations and political formations all over the country and covering various segments of working people and youth, it has sought to bring together not only the elements of the traditional left, but also all those engaged in militant struggles of workers and peasants for the realisation of their rights.

Over the year, the IPF has gained considerable strength [in] several rural and tribal areas and emerged as a broad confluence of three basic ideological currents: the Naxalite movement, the traditional communist movement and various socialists stream like ex-Jayaprakashites.

The Indian People's Front differs from the CPI [Communist Party of India] and CPM [Marxist Communist Party] in that it lays greater emphasis on mobilisation and independent assertion of the oppressed masses.

As pointed out by party activists in contrast to the official left's policy of extending unconditional support to the Prime Minister Mr V.P. Singh government:

"We are playing the role of a left opposition. However, despite these basic differences, we are for an all Left unity-in-action on issues of common and for the assertion of the Indian left as a powerful national political force vis-a-vis the Congress, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and centrist parties like the Janata Dal.

The IPF describes itself as a party as well as a mass political movement. It enrolls two types of members: general and active. An active member has to recruit at least 10 general members and circulate 5 copies of IPF literature in any language. The general members also play an important role in supporting party activities and there are lakhs of such members spread over various states.

At the national level the party has a three-tier structure of leadership: a 12-member Central Executive Committee (CEC) comprising the national president and 11 national general secretaries, a 40-member Central Working Committee (CWC) comprising the CEC, 11 National vice-presidents and presidents of all state units and a nearly 400-member All-India Front Committee (AIFC) comprising the CWC, members of the state committees and presidents and secretaries of all the district units.

The party accepts dual individual members and also has room for constituent organisations such as the liberation group of CPI(ML). The IPF leaders also head various national and state level auxiliary organisations like the

All-India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU), the All-India Students' Association (AISA) and various peasant's women's and cultural organisations.

The party has its biggest base in central Bihar, where its name has become synonymous not only with militant movements of the rural poor on basic agrarian issues like land, wages, irrigation and various aspects of rural development, but also with a general, social, cultural and political awakening of the toiling masses, Dalits and women in particular.

With the recent successful blockade of Central coalfields in Hazaribagh in protest against automation in coal mines and a complete bandh in Romchi against killings in police custody, the IPF is fast emerging as a major political movement in south Bihar too.

In West Bengal, along with the Socialist Unity Centre of India (SUCI) and several Marxist Leninist groups, IPF is engaged in building a popular campaign against the Left Front's misrule. And on the national plane, IPF has consistently raised its voice against all kinds of violation of civil liberties and for people's democratic rights.

In the case of November '84 anti-Sikh riots, the party launched an active campaign against Hindu communalism. In June this year a seven-member team of the IPF headed by its president, Mr Nagabhushan Patnaik, visited the troubled Kashmir valley and in its investigation concluded that the Jagmohan administration had committed atrocities on the people, it called upon the government to give up repression and take sincere political initiative to combat secessions.

The party made its debut in electoral politics in February 1985 assembly elections in which it polled over two lakh votes in Bihar but did not secure any seat. In any case, the IPF said it was participating in the election to counter booth capturing rather than to win.

In the last elections, the party vastly improved its position, it now has one member in the Parliament (Mr Rameshwar Prasad, an ex-Jayaprakashite who won from Arrah, Bihar) and eight MLAs [Members of Legislative Assembly] in the Bihar state assembly mainly from the central region.

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