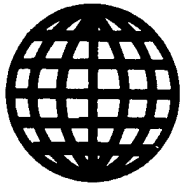


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Mahgreb Communities Face Violence in France

90AA0137A London AL-MAJALLAH
in Arabic 10 Apr 90 pp 14-21

[Article by Mustafa Yahawi]

[Text] The racist campaign in France against Arabs in general and North African Arabs in particular has escalated to the point where some observers regard it as a kind of "war" against anyone who is Arab. This "war" has assumed grotesque forms of a bloody nature, including acts of violence against Arab citizens, some with French citizenship. What are the nature, dimensions, causes, and forms of this "war"? AL-MAJALLAH attempts to answer these questions in the following investigative piece.

Fawziyah Zumur, 45, is a peaceful Algerian citizen and the mother of four well-raised children. She works as a volunteer social counselor in the small city in which she lives in the suburbs of Grenoble, the capital of the French Alps region. Before marrying, having children, and choosing humanitarian work, Zumur completed her University studies in social law. Instead of joining a law firm or a governmental administration, she preferred field work among the people of her homeland and nation. Most of them live in the Grenoble area, which attracted thousands of immigrant workers in the 1960s and 1970s. Some of these immigrants sought French citizenship for themselves and their children. Others preferred to retain their Tunisian, Algerian, or Moroccan citizenship in the hopes of returning to their countries of origin after retirement, leaving their children the freedom to choose their own nationality. It is well known that an Arab, regardless of his nationality and loyalty, will always remain an Arab above all in the eyes of the French, even if he adopts a French name or changes his religion and assimilates completely into French society.

Fawziyah Zumur knows all of that well. Every day, she experiences the tragedy of her people, who are subject to a racist campaign that pursues them like their shadows, and to racist bullets. Therefore, she armed herself with a law degree and field experience to serve Arab immigrants. She decided to oppose the daily provocations and aggressions carried out against Arab immigrants. She joined the SOS Racism organization, which has carried the banner of opposition to racism in France since 1984, and she became the supervisor of a local branch of the organization in the city of Saint Martin de Robert. Each day before work Zumur customarily exercised in the park near her home. On 18 March 1990, while she returning home, she sensed footsteps approaching her from behind. She turned around and saw a light-skinned youth with taut muscles, holding the flag of France. He grabbed her by her hair and threw her to the ground, hitting her head with his other hand, which grasped a steel device with sharp teeth, and saying, as she later related: "This is a blow for Jean Marie Le Pen, this is a second blow for the French Socialist Party, and this is a

third blow for SOS Racism." He then left her unconscious and went away. Zumur did not regain consciousness until several hours later in the recovery room of the Grenoble Hospital, where she learned that she was in a state of semiconsciousness, which continued for seven days. When she left the hospital and looked at her face in the mirror, she was frightened by the sight of her crushed head and the marks left by the serious wound, which had to be closed by 27 stitches after her head had been shaved. She has since remained secluded in her house, crying and seeming to repeat: "Is this the reward of one who does good in a country that maintains it is the homeland of human rights, and that promotes the motto of freedom, justice, and brotherhood?"

An Irrational Act

The French call such an attack a crime without cause that occurred by means of an irrational act. This is the view of the French majority, while a minority describes such intentional aggression as a racist crime. Nonetheless, such cases, which are recorded by the police as acts against persons unknown to the perpetrators, remain open for a long time so that the police can complete an investigation and collect readily obtainable evidence to help the examining magistrate identify the perpetrator of the crime, who could be well known by most people except the authorized agencies.

When a victim who has been subjected to a racist attack, such as Fawziyah Zumur, goes to the police, the police say "thank God you are still alive," which is to say that racist crimes in France against Arab subjects are frequently fatal. Each year, between 40 and 60 Arab citizens are shot and killed by racist bullets fired at them by ordinary French persons who justify their actions by saying that they hate the Arabs and want to "purify" France of them, or that they want to frighten and terrify them into leaving France under duress. Hence, harassment has become a daily occurrence. It includes vilification of Arabs, and refusal to sell them food or drink, rent them apartments, or sit with them at restaurants or coffee houses. However, the ultimate in racial harassment is being shot or stabbed in the head or heart with the intent to kill.

There are French who train their dogs to attack and bite Arabs. Some prefer to run over Arabs with their cars, leaving them dead, then heading to nearest coffee house to boastfully relate the details of their crimes to patrons. Such incidents are almost a weekly occurrence. They are reported in the sensationalist French newspapers, and some French readers have bored of reading about them. Three or four racist crimes have been recorded in the space of a week in France, as happened in the middle of last March. These crimes occupied the front pages of French newspapers and magazines, compelling politicians and the authorities to emerge from their silence and customary reticence about convicting and punishing perpetrators of racist crimes.

Other Victims

French cities such as Marseille, Rouen, and Saint Florentin are separated by hundreds of kilometers and differ from each other in many respects. What they have in common is that each of them has received thousands of foreigners, including many Arabs. These cities are laid out so that the French live in certain neighborhoods and foreigners live in other neighborhoods to minimize racial mixing. The two groups are in a constant war. Their language of discourse is stinging remarks, insults, and vilification. The mutual feeling between them is one of hatred, violent revenge, and cold retaliation. When an argument or dispute arises between two persons or groups, the last word is the rifle, pistol, or "crazed" car. In this way, racism in France has evolved and become uncontrollable. Frequently, the killer is light skinned and the victim is dark skinned. Such is the case regarding what happened one day last March. Claude Martin, 47, a French police officer, was driving a car transporting prisoners with two of his colleagues. Among the prisoners was a French citizen of Arab, Algerian origin, Sa'd al-Sa'dawi, 34, a hospital worker in the city of La Ciotat outside Marseille. Sa'dawi had fought at work with another worker, striking him. The police therefore had to arrest and transport him to court so that a summary complaint submitted against him by his adversary at work could be examined. Al-Sa'dawi's crime was not serious. Such misdemeanors are punished in France by a modest fine and one to two months in prison with a stay of execution and the placement of the sentenced person under temporary judicial monitoring at his place of work and residence. Since French police teams in effect treat Arab subjects as criminals, Martin and his colleagues considered Sa'dawi a dangerous criminal. They bound him and began to mistreat him. According to testimony by Arab subjects who have fallen into the hands of the French police, racial harassment knows no limits and is accompanied by slaps and kicks and other mistreatment to which an arrestee is subjected. Perhaps, Sa'dawi was subjected to such treatment while being driven to court, which compelled him attempt to escape by opening the door with his bound hands when the police vehicle stopped at a red traffic signal. While the captive was running near the car, Jean Claude Martin got out of the car, withdrew his revolver, and emptied it in the back of Sa'dawi on the pretext of defending himself and controlling a rebellious prisoner, as he stated to the examining magistrate. The six bullets struck the victim in the heart, killing him. In the evening of the same day, the Arab community in Marseille was exchanging news of another racist crime. While Sa'dawi's family was mourning his loss, the French judiciary ordered that the killer, Martin, be released six days after his arrest, and that he be placed under judicial monitoring until the start of his trial two or three years later, when a jury of two would issue a ruling. This happened while Sa'dawi's father was at the hospital for the purpose of identifying his son's body. Pinned on the father's chest were the military decorations and medals awarded to him by France when he was soldier in the French Army during WWII. Sa'dawi's

father fought in all of the colonies, including Algeria, where he fought against the Algerian Revolution Army. After independence, he fled to France and decided to settle there, as did more than 250,000 Algerian citizens, called the "harakis," who currently live in France with their children and grandchildren, and who suffer from racism against Arabs.

Another Crime

The incident in Marseille was followed by an incident in Saint Florentin, a small city in central France situated among grape farms and pine forests. A young French man and his wife decided to establish a club and restaurant in the foreign quarter of the city. The establishment was to serve French patrons primarily and foreigners secondarily. In order to enter the restaurant, the latter had to meet strict conditions that violate three French laws that, in principle, are in effect, having been enacted by the French parliament to combat racism in the services and commerce. The number of Arabs in the restaurant, which is located in the middle of their quarter, was very small. The owner of the restaurant intentionally harassed and annoyed them by allowing them to enter, and then claiming that all of the tables were taken, causing them to leave under duress. In March, three days after the Marseilles crime, the owner of the restaurant heard his wife calling for help. He hurried out of the kitchen to find her arguing with a group of French youths who had tried to enter the restaurant by force. He closed the restaurant and went up to his house, taking from it a rifle. He went out to the street in an agitated state, but he did not find the French youths. However, he noticed a group of Arab youths standing in front of the building in which they live. They had never harmed him. He aimed his rifle at them and started shooting, striking two brothers of Moroccan origin, Majid and Tawfiq al-'Abdawi, with a number of bullets to the head, killing one of them and leaving the other in a coma for a week and permanently disabled. When the killer was arrested and jailed, he stated to the examining magistrate that he had fired in self-defense. The fact of the matter is that the Arab youths were more than 100 meters away from his establishment according to the testimony of police officers, and the Arab youths had not harmed the restaurant owner. Why did this man choose to kill Arabs instead of the French youths who attacked his wife?

The humanitarian organizations that sympathize with the Arabs in France and criticize racist crimes are attempting to obtain an answer. They repeatedly state that racism in France is not an isolated phenomenon among French who are deranged, or suffering from incomprehensible states of anti-Arab aggression, as stated by the French authorities, which insistently deny the existence of brutal racism in the country. According to these humanitarian organizations, a French person who is attacked by someone, who might be French as happened in Saint Florentin, seeks revenge against the first Arab to cross his path or glance at him, because the murder of an Arab in France has become a crime that

goes almost unpunished. A person who commits such a crime is subject to temporary arrest and trial by a sympathetic jury that might issue a light sentence, which, in many cases, is not executed, thereby making the criminal a "hero" in his neighborhood and family. There is a campaign of deception that considers the Arab a criminal by nature and inclined toward violence! Such a deception makes an Arab an easy victim in the eyes of French racists, who would claim that any kidnapping, robbery, or murder was perpetrated by an Arab unless proven otherwise. Arabs are made to bear responsibility for every unattributed crime in France, which makes them prey for racist marksmen.

Eighty percent of the racist crimes, attacks, and acts of aggressions in France are directed against Arab subjects who represent less than 50 percent of all foreigners in France according to a report prepared by the Advisory Committee for Human Rights under the title "Racism and the Phenomenon of Hatred of Others in France," which was commissioned by French Prime Minister Michel Rocard. More than 100 different nationalities are represented in France, and tens of thousands of Africans, Turks, Yugoslavs, and Asians live there. However, they are rarely subjected to a racist attack.

'Deranged' Car

The city of Rouen was the site of the third murder crime in less than a week. The victim was a Young Moroccan man, not quite 18, who was killed premeditatedly solely because of the dark color of his skin. On the evening of Saturday, 10 March 1990, Sa'id al-Talib was at the secondary school in Rouen, standing with a group of his Arab friends, and evaluating the results of the sports competition which their city's team had won. As they were recreating the match, a car containing two French youths suddenly stopped near them. One of the French youths got out with a large dog. The youth addressed the Arabs saying: "Look at this dog... I have trained him especially to attack dirty nationalities of your type. He will bite anything that is black. Look at what he does to this black pillow. If he attacks it, he will rip it to shreds. He can also rend your dirty skin." He threatened to turn the dog on them and harassed them, calling them the ugliest names. When the youths sensed danger, they parted, running to their houses. Sa'id, like the others, was running for his life. The car of the two French youths blocked his way and continued chasing him for a long distance as he tried to evade it, but it hit him and ran over his body.

[Box on p 18] Muhammad Mabtul, a member of the Central Committee in the French Socialist Party, Tells AL-MAJALLAH: The Government Is Not Serious About Combatting Racism

There are more than 1.5 million French Arabs in France. They participate in political life through elections. Eighty percent of them vote for the left, which angers the right. By the end of the current century, there will be

more than 2 million Arab voters. Islam, with about 4 million adherents, is the second largest religion in France after Catholicism.

Muhammad Mabtul, a Frenchman of Arab origin, refused, like all Arabs, to adopt a French name when he chose French nationality. He has fought long in the ranks of the Socialist Party and has held limited responsibilities in it. In the last Rhin Conference of the party, he was elected to the party's central committee, which numbers 131 members distributed among five currents. He thus became the first Arab in France to occupy a prominent position in a political party. AL-MAJALLAH met with him and asked his opinion regarding the racist incidents in France. The French authorities, Mabtul believes, do not truly intend to combat racism. Mabtul is disappointed with the socialist Rocard government, which, given its control and the socialists' promotion of human rights, was expected to combat racism. Like other governments, Mabtul maintains, it has a disappointing record regarding the prosecution of racist criminals, and it has not done enough to ensure that the police and the judiciary deal harshly with racial violence. Mabtul believes that racism will not be strongly opposed as long as Arabs are far from positions of authority and responsibility for the enactment and enforcement of laws, legal provisions, and resolutions. He believes that France opposes racism with antiquated laws, and he is strongly critical of the French media, because it has attempted to inflate incidents to the detriment of Arab interests, while disregarding incidents that serve Arab interests. French newspapers devote every two out of five front pages to immigration, Islam, theft, coercion, and kidnapping over the course of a year, and they link these topics to Arabs and Muslims. This no doubt encourages racists to take revenge on Arabs and constantly feeds racism, which is becoming more dangerous daily.

Mabtul, who works as a television producer, adds that French television intentionally avoids presenting racism as a dangerous social phenomenon in news programs and documentaries, and it refuses to present racism as a topic of debate in which Arabs participate.

French Laws Against Racism

The French recognize that existing legal measures do not suffice to combat racism as a danger that threatens the security and safety of French society. It also recognizes that there are governmental agencies that are not serious about combatting this phenomenon, including the police. The socialist government fears that, if it took strict measures against racists, who comprise 40 percent of all the French, public opinion would turn against the socialists at the start of the next elections, which would benefit the right. This is what is compelling Prime Minister Rocard to seek a formula for mutual understanding with the rightist opposition in order to reach a consensus regarding the best methods for combatting racism, without one party outbidding another.

The French parliament approved a law against racial discrimination in public life in 1972 and an antiracism law. The two laws continue to be ink on paper, because the judiciary has rarely applied them.

[Box on p 19 and the top of p 20] Racism in Numbers

Reports and studies—including a government-commissioned report prepared by the Advisory Committee for Human Rights on “The Phenomenon of Racism in France” (550 pages), which was submitted last week to Prime Minister Michel Rocard—show that the number of racist crimes has steadily increased during the last six years.

Year	Number of Offenses	Number of Harassment Cases
1984	53	104
1985	70	-
1986	54	-
1987	46	-
1988	64	135
1989	53	188

In a public opinion survey conducted last week, a number of French persons were asked whether the presence of Arabs among them was intolerable. Eighty-six percent responded that they believe that the number of Arabs in France exceeds the acceptable limit. It should be remembered that Europeans, including 900,000 Portuguese, 550,000 Spaniards, 500,000 Italians, 250,000 Yugoslavs, and 150,000 Turks, comprise more than 50 percent of the total number of foreigners in France, which is about 4 million. In another survey, 36 percent of the French believed that hostility toward Arabs is a spreading phenomenon. Ninety percent believed that France is afflicted with the disease of racism, while 93 percent acknowledged that North African Arabs are the primary victims of racism.

In a third survey, 39 percent indicated dislike of Arabs; 28 percent indicated dislike of blacks; 20 percent indicated dislike of Asians; and 12 percent opposed other Europeans living in France. The same survey indicated that 56 percent of the French opposed the construction of mosques, only 22 percent of them consider Arabs born in France French, and 45 percent of them considered them Arabs above all.

Fifty-five percent of French persons with extremist views and opinions stated that their dislike of Arabs stems from differences in culture and lifestyle, while 48 percent stated that their dislike of Arabs stems from differences in religion and religious observances.

[Box on bottom of p 20] France Earns 10 Billion Francs From the Arabs Annually

In France, many voices are declaring the need to expel the Arabs, because Paris, it is claimed, does not benefit

much from their presence, inasmuch as they are a burden on its economy, treasury, and social insurance funds. This view is widespread in French public circles. In contrast, economic experts, social scientists, and persons knowledgeable about world affairs and future trends, emphasize the need for the Arabs to stay in France for a number of reasons. One such reason is that their expulsion would not create jobs for the French, because only two out of ten jobs vacated by Arabs could be filled by French persons.

The Arabs perform hard labor in construction, agriculture, industry, and the services, earning salaries that are much lower than those of the French. Also, the French population has remained stable for the past 10 years. All studies and social indices indicate that the number of French persons is unlikely to increase. Furthermore, the population increase recorded in recent years is due to an increase in the number of foreigners who obtain French citizenship, which is 150,000 per year. While major changes in central and eastern Europe are overturning social conditions and changing population and economic balances that have existed since the end of WWII, such as the emergence of a unified Germany that will dwarf France, we find that France needs to strengthen its population and economic capabilities and inject new blood and abilities into its society. This cannot occur, French experts and specialists believe, unless the country is opened to anyone who chooses to join French society. In addition, France has a limited domestic economic market and constantly requires stable foreign markets. Inasmuch as France has encountered many difficulties in entering European, Asian, and American markets because of intense competition with Japan and Germany, which have strong, vital economies that are active in export fields, France's hopes for economic expansion remain dependent on Mediterranean markets, especially Arab markets, which yearly achieve financial surpluses in their trade balances in the billions of francs. The Mediterranean is also the only region in the world in which French foreign trade has realized profits. And it should be remembered that France's foreign trade balance suffers from a constant deficit exceeding 100 billion francs per year.

French economists are targeting the North African market for entry. This market will have around 200 million consumers in 2020, and the French are now betting on attracting them to French products. France's trade with Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco is worth more than 55 billion francs per year, i.e., the equivalent of one-half the value of France's trade with the entire Arab world. The French trade balance also realizes a large surplus in the Arab Maghreb region. This surplus was estimated in 1989 at about 7 billion francs. France's exports to Algeria (22.90 billion francs) exceed its exports to Morocco (18.9 billion francs), Brazil, Tunisia (11.600 billion francs), and India.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Saudi Journalist Analyzes Saudi, Arab Press

90AE0029A London AL-MAJALLAH
in Arabic 6 Feb 90 pp 73-77

[Interview with Turki 'Abdallah al-Sudayri, editor of AL-RIYAD, by Matar al-Ahmadi in Riyadh; first four paragraphs are AL-MAJALLAH introduction; date not specified]

[Excerpts] Tarki 'Abdallah al-Sudayri, the editor of AL-RIYAD, a Saudi newspaper, is a brilliant, if not the most brilliant Saudi journalist. He is also an outstanding, if not the most outstanding, Saudi newspaper editor. He is certainly the longest serving Saudi editor, having been the editor of the Saudi capital's first daily for 16 years.

Al-Sudayri began his journalism career with AL-RIYAD in the middle of its first decade. He transferred among its different sections and become its editor before the end of that decade. He came to the newspaper as a journalist and remained one. He did not end up only as a writer. Rather, he played two roles, neither of them dominating the other.

The editor of AL-RIYAD faces his readers in a daily column, which he calls "Encounter", which does not imply that he welcomes press interviews, but rather that he reflects considerably, so that, after a number of attempts, he achieves the correct response.

During his 16 years at AL-RIYAD, Tarki al-Sudayri has matured as a journalist, writer, and editor. During this period, he raised AL-RIYAD's level of professionalism and distribution, so that it has become, at the very least, one of the most important Arab newspapers. Several weeks ago, AL-RIYAD celebrated its silver anniversary at a reception sponsored by Prince Sulayman Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the prince of the al-Riyad area. AL-MAJALLAH seized this opportunity to interview one of the longest serving Saudi newspaper editors.

[al-Ahmadi] What does the passage of 25 years since the start of AL-RIYAD mean to you personally?

[Al-Sudayri] It means experience accumulated by the AL-RIYAD newspaper. Twenty-five years is not a long period in terms of the human race. However, it is a long period for a newspaper to exist. AL-RIYAD's age assumes added significance, given that the press developed relatively later in Saudi Arabia compared to other countries. Twenty-five years is also significant in regional terms, inasmuch as the central region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was introduced to the press for the first time in its history [with the establishment of AL-RIYAD]. Personally, my association with the press began as an experiment. I did not really have it in mind as a career. However, I continued with it as a hobby and it later became a profession. Now, it is an inseparable part of me, taking up all of my time.

[al-Ahmadi] You were quite young when you became editor 16 years ago. Were you entrusted with this position too hastily?

[Al-Sudayri] I was not with the newspaper during all of its 25 years. However, I remember well at least 20 of those years, which is the length of my affiliation with the newspaper. My status as the longest-serving editor in the history of the newspaper can perhaps be attributed to the circumstances of those that preceded me. Some of them had nonjournalistic concerns, and left because of them, such as Ahmad al-Hawshan, who is a competent person. Initially, I was not deeply involved with the newspaper. My participation was marginal—an experiment or a hobby.

I first became involved with the newspaper during my last year at the university, although, before that, I was associated with it as an amateur journalist. I later become more and more involved, because of my acquaintanceship with the editorial board. I then worked in numerous sections, such as sports, and local and political news.

When I was selected to be editor-in-chief, there was a difficulty in the selection process due to a lack of available, qualified elements. The many members of press organizations, including the AL-YAMAMAH press organization, were businessmen whose concerns did not extend to journalism. Younger employees of the newspaper, who were not members of press organizations, were also not viable candidates owing to their lack of qualifications. Perhaps my selection as editor-in-chief was rash, but I hope that it will not be regretted in the end.

[al-Ahmadi] After 25 years, how does AL-RIYAD rank among Saudi newspapers. Is it the first?

[Al-Sudayri] It is rash to say that a newspaper is absolutely preeminent. Any given newspaper might be the best at a certain time, under certain circumstances, and regarding a particular type of journalism. However, other circumstances can arise that place another newspaper in the premier position. I can say that AL-RIYAD maintains a constant level of quality. It moves forward, not backwards, which makes it a constant, primary competitor. Some newspapers advance to a competitive level, but decline in some years or under some circumstances. AL-RIYAD has not experienced this situation or the unsettling situation experienced by other newspapers. I would not err in according preeminence to AL-RIYAD, but I would add that there can be more than one first-rate newspaper, because other newspapers can advance to become first-rate papers as well.

[al-Ahmadi] Does AL-RIYAD have the greatest distribution? Does another paper have greater distribution?

[Al-Sudayri] As you know, distribution figures are not publicized. I also understand that some countries that state such figures rely on incorrect distribution figures,

and resort to inflating them to attract advertisers. It is thus difficult to offer a definite opinion on distribution.

AL-RIYAD, like other Saudi newspapers, is subject to declining circulation during breaks and the summer. Distribution undergoes a big recovery in the work season and in the winter and spring. However, there is a certain limit below which distribution figures do not fall. Due to the lack of accurate distribution figures, I cannot provide a specific figure, especially since the precise distribution figure is an accounting number that relies on the newspaper's distribution based on demand, which is to say sales. The total number of newspapers that are printed is insignificant. There are newspapers that use the give-away system, and others that inundate schools and organizations with free editions, all of which cannot be considered circulation.

[al-Ahmadi] It seems that you are reserved in your response. Our precise question is: Is AL-RIYAD the foremost newspaper in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at present?

[Al-Sudayri] I believe that you, Matar al-Ahmadi, can answer the question, inasmuch as you work for another newspaper or another publishing house, have journalistic expertise, and are a veteran.

[al-Ahmadi] Has your being the editor-in-chief for 16 years been a factor in AL-RIYAD's consistency?

[Al-Sudayri] Stability is very important regarding everything, from states to companies, banks, and newspapers. It produces vision, calm decisionmaking, consummate development, and continuity.

[al-Ahmadi] There is traditional competition between AL-RIYAD and AL-JAZIRAH, because they are both issued in one city. Which one surpasses the other?

[Al-Sudayri] Sometimes, the governing factor in competition is not the particular level of the competitors, but the public that creates the competition. AL-RIYAD might be subject to weakness, but the public denies that, and insists on buying it because it is AL-JAZIRAH's competitor. Or AL-JAZIRAH might be subject to weakness, but the public is resolved to buy it because it is AL-RIYAD's competitor. Competition exists, but the public decides which party has the upper hand in this competition.

[al-Ahmadi] During this competition, you were a contemporary of the two editors-in-chief of AL-JAZIRAH, the earlier editor being Khalid al-Malik. The readers sensed this competition. Why?

[Al-Sudayri] There was strong competition, which, I believe, exceeded the desired limits of regular or traditional competition. Sometimes, it extended to the margins of tension and anger in relations between employees of the two newspapers, and this is wrong.

[al-Ahmadi] Do not some believe that AL-JAZIRAH surpassed AL-RIYAD during those periods?

[Al-Sudayri] If we wish to determine to what extent or in what way one side surpassed the other, we need precise details, which we lack. We do not have accurate figures regarding our distribution. For example, AL-JAZIRAH caused a controversy when someone returned from the southern area and reported that AL-JAZIRAH was distributed in that area. He may have seen one or two people, and visited one or two offices. This amounts to a great exaggeration. I do not blame AL-JAZIRAH on account of this person, because we do not practice this type of provocation at AL-RIYAD. However, basing an assessment of distribution on one person's opinion—a phenomenon that can be repeated with other persons from other areas—is unscientific.

[al-Ahmadi] Didn't Dr. Sa'id al-Harithi submit a doctoral dissertation in which he states that AL-JAZIRAH is the leader in distribution?

[Al-Sudayri] His view is also unscientific. I am aware of Dr. al-Harithi's view. It is not considered a precise, reliable measurement. In advancing these judgments while he was working as an academic specialist, Dr. al-Harithi could have perhaps been more knowledgeable and precise. Distribution, especially newspaper distribution, should not be measured on the basis of small, random samples. Nor does the total number of newspapers published provide an accurate distribution figure. The number of sales is the best factor for determining distribution. Unfortunately, press organizations refrain from taking this step. I would recommend to the Information Ministry that newspapers be required to announce their numbers. If this is not to be the case, they should at least substantiate their figures before the ministry.

[al-Ahmadi] Why doesn't AL-RIYAD start publishing its distribution figures?

[Al-Sudayri] That would be difficult given the existence of incorrect numbers. For example, I saw an announcement made by a newspaper in a foreign language that maintains that it prints 150,000 copies, and I know that it prints no more than 80,000 copies.

[al-Ahmadi] A Saudi newspaper?

[Al-Sudayri] Yes, a Saudi newspaper. Should this be considered a reliable figure? In response to this question and what I stated earlier about distribution competition between AL-RIYAD and AL-JAZIRAH, let me mention the following: A Saudi newspaper published, in English, an announcement, ascribed to a distribution studies institute in Kuwait, which provided Saudi newspaper distribution figures. It stated that AL-RIYAD's circulation did not exceed 15,000 copies, whereas AL-RIYAD sells more than 40,000 copies in the city of Riyadh alone. Should we consider the figure contained in the announcement an accurate measurement because it is attributed to an institute specialized in distribution studies? This is impossible.

[al-Ahmadi] Does the distribution of Saudi newspapers, AL-RIYAD in particular, regularly exceed 100,000 copies per day?

[Al-Sudayri] The distribution number sometimes exceeds 100,000. However, you must realize that the distribution figure fluctuates and is affected greatly by different circumstances and indicators such as school breaks, official vacations, soccer tournaments, holidays, the work season, and the summer. At the peak of distribution, the 100,000 figure is surpassed easily; in a slow period, it might be less than 100,000.

[al-Ahmadi] There is a phenomenon in the Saudi press, namely that many who begin their Saudi press careers in the sports section go on to become editors-in-chief, such as yourself, 'Uthman al-'Amir, Hashim 'Abdu Hashim, Khalid al-Malik, and others. How do you explain that?

[Al-Sudayri] I believe that sports attracts young people. Those entering journalism are young people, who thus have a primary interest in sports. The newspapers of course do not select their officials from among the elderly. They select them from among their younger people. When a newspaper has more than 30 editors in a 10 or 15-year period who work in the sports section, one or two are bound to succeed in attaining top positions in the newspaper. It is thus not a phenomenon.

[al-Ahmadi] Why are members of other sections not prominent?

[Al-Sudayri] Because the same attraction does not exist. Young people are attracted to sports, and the selection of personnel to fill top positions over time is made from among young people. [passage omitted]

[al-Ahmadi] What is your opinion of 'Uthman al-'Amir?

[Al-Sudayri] He is a talented, mature journalist. Opportunity came to him late and he deserves the position that he occupies. The opportunity should have come to him earlier.

[al-Ahmadi] Is AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, of which he is the editor-in-chief, entering the competition? Is this fair competition?

[Al-Sudayri] It is conscious competition, and we will mature because of it.

[al-Ahmadi] What is your opinion of Hashim 'Abdu Hashim?

[Al-Sudayri] Hashim is an intelligent man and an intelligent journalist who excels at social action.

[al-Ahmadi] It is said that 'UKADH is AL-RIYAD's competitor at present.

[Al-Sudayri] 'UKADH is an up and coming newspaper.

[al-Ahmadi] With AL-RIYAD's ranking?

[Al-Sudayri] I only said that it was up and coming.

[al-Ahmadi] And Khalid al-Malik?

[Al-Sudayri] A good administrator.

[al-Ahmadi] What about Muhammad Ibn-'Abbas, the editor of AL-JAZIRAH?

[Al-Sudayri] I know nothing about his administrative work before he entered the press. I believe that he is forming his view and impression of the field in which he is currently active.

[al-Ahmadi] You stated at the ceremony marking the passage of 25 years since the first issue of the AL-RIYAD that the editors call Prince Salman the real editor-in-chief. What does that mean?

[Al-Sudayri] Prince Salman has a rare ability to comprehend quickly, monitor comprehensively, and master culture. These characteristics are prerequisites for a successful editor-in-chief. If we add to them his close relations with the press milieu, from senior to low-level members of the press, and his patience, despite his many preoccupations, in solving the problems of the press and journalists in order help them successfully practice their profession and fulfill their duties, his highness is indeed "the editor-in-chief" with respect to all of the positive aspects that build journalism and unite the efforts of those working in this field.

[al-Ahmadi] As the editor-in-chief of an important Arab newspaper, how do you view the Arab press in general, and the Lebanese, Kuwaiti, and Egyptian press in particular?

[Al-Sudayri] The Arab press, like other extensions of social life, is doubtlessly affected by the same circumstances that affect Arab society. These circumstances have not been easy for many Arab locales. Moreover, some of their manifestations have been harsh, as in Lebanon, where the press has experienced a decline in its influence on the Arab world compared to before the Lebanese war and to a bygone era of Arab politics. Members of the Lebanese press have either immigrated, or they live under difficult circumstances in Lebanon. The Lebanese press has played an undeniably important role, as has Lebanon, in spreading awareness and providing information. However, the press, like Lebanon's economic and cultural entities, has been destroyed by the war.

In comparing the Kuwaiti press with the Egyptian press, we find that the Kuwaiti press is aimed not at Kuwaiti readers, but at Arab readers, whereas the Egyptian press has Egyptian readers in mind and gives others secondary concern, which is natural. The Kuwaiti press, with its many dailies and magazines, is large in relation to the population of Kuwait. Kuwait cannot be compared with Lebanon, which was a tourism country, whose population is augmented by visitors. The situation is different in Kuwait. Therefore, the Kuwaiti press targets the Arab

reader and the Gulf reader in particular. The distribution markets in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia play a vital role in the press's rate of diffusion.

The Egyptian press, given Egypt's high population density, enjoys a sufficiently concentrated diffusion. It is thus oriented toward fulfilling local needs through extensive local coverage, rather than dealing with Arab situations in general. I believe that the Egyptian press is well disposed to play a more expanded role because of its past experience and its human capabilities. We can perhaps sense this in the editing of some of the solid magazines, whose shortcomings are more related to technical rather than journalistic capabilities.

The Emigre Press

[al-Ahmadi] Is the issuance of Arab newspapers outside the Arab world justified?

[Al-Sudayri] If the issuance of an emigre newspaper abroad means a desire to disengage from the publication constraints in the Arab world, this represents a condemnation of the Arab world's sternness toward its press, and the press's resort to vagabondage. However, doesn't the entire emigre press suffer from its location? Does the content of this press differ greatly from what is published in the Arab world? The answer will determine whether the emigre press largely serves the Arab reader, or is engaged in a fruitless flight, taking into account the regional circumstances of some of these newspapers.

In this respect, I would like to ask: Why isn't there an emigre English press in English or French to serve the causes of the Arab world? Such an emigre press is required before an Arabic emigre press, which we can excuse only in the case of location or expression problems.

[al-Ahmadi] What is your opinion regarding Arab journalists and writers such as Ahmad Baha'-al-Din?

[Al-Sudayri] Ahmad Baha'-al-Din is a writer whose great merit is that he is not subject to political currents, which is not easy for a political writer. He wields a quiet pen, convincing readers more than provoking them.

[al-Ahmadi] Mustafa Amin?

[Al-Sudayri] A writer who writes about small concerns. This level of brilliance is easy not to attain for other writers, because Mustafa Amin looks out on the Egyptian scene, taking its concerns and giving to his readers. If he were to follow the path of provocation, he would be able to find much to say based on his experiences and knowledge. However, he deals with the people's concerns in his primary function as a journalist, as he did before he gained experience.

[al-Ahmadi] Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal?

[Al-Sudayri] An intelligent writer possessing a great deal of diverse knowledge. However, regarding some subjects of his political books, he employs this intelligence and

knowledge to serve his own ideas and affiliations. I do not think that we are in need of proofs. For example, his two books *kharif al-ghadab* [The Autumn of Wrath], and *sanawat al-ghalayan* [The Years of Ebullition] are filled with much of that. Regarding *kharif al-ghadab*, while many share his reservation towards the peace efforts made by President Sadat, they disagree with his inclination toward personal acceptance of the man through family matters and connections, which Haykal assumed had no bearing on the subject. Then, if he possesses this entire family archive about him, why did he not provide this archive to the concerned parties before he came to power? Regarding *sanawat al-ghalayan*, Haykal seeks to prove to the young generation of readers some inaccurate facts and hypotheses about what happened 25 years ago.

[al-Ahmadi] Ahmad al-Jarallah, the editor-in-chief of the Kuwaiti newspaper, AL-SIYASAH?

[Al-Sudayri] A successful man of business and connections.

[al-Ahmadi] And Michel Abu-Jawdah?

[Al-Sudayri] One of the earliest and most deeply-rooted political writers. The war has harmed him. Just as the Lebanese have all but forgotten the mountains of Lebanon and the sea of Beirut, they have all but forgotten that Michel's daily column was a regular part of their morning fare.

[al-Ahmadi] Minh al-Sulh?

[Al-Sudayri] An adept writer. His treatment of the Maronite problem in Lebanon has been very informative.

Stability for AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT

[al-Ahmadi] As the editor-in-chief of a daily newspaper, how do you view the AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT newspaper experiment?

[Al-Sudayri] I believe that AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, when its professional apparatus achieves stability, will be able to provide good journalistic work. We have not forgotten that it is the first attempt to create an Arab newspaper with distribution throughout the Arab world. However, it has suffered from fluctuations in its leadership. Our call for its stability means enabling journalistic ideas as well as operational plans to play their role.

Mystery, 'Fear' Surrounding al-Khiyam Prison Depicted

90AE0052A Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
27 Apr 90 p 9b

[Article by Robert Pisak, reporter for the INDEPENDENT in West Beirut]

[Text] They appeared at 11:10 on last 11 July. Three armed persons, in civilian clothes, in the small Shi'ite village of Balat. They stopped their Mercedes in front of

Selma Salim's door, entered, and took her to Israel's secret al-Khiyam prison in Southern Lebanon.

She has not been seen since then. Her widowed mother is not allowed to visit her. Her employers in the United Nations—she worked as a translator in the Norwegian U.N. battalion in Southern Lebanon—tried in vain to get information about her from the Israelis and from the Southern Lebanon Army [SLA], which is associated with Israel.

No one has heard anything about Selma Salim, aged 23, for more than eight months. Also, no one in Balat is interested in speaking about her fate. The very mention of the name al-Khiyam arouses fear in Southern Lebanon, and there is good reason for that.

Neither the Red Cross nor Amnesty International, nor any other humanitarian organization has been allowed to visit al-Khiyam. Within its walls are incarcerated prisoners who have been held without trial for five years—the period for which the longest-held of the Western hostages in Lebanon has been detained. There are those who spent long months in darkness and in complete isolation.

Those who returned from al-Khiyam told in a frightened tone of torture with electric shocks and of brutal beatings. The kidnapers of the Western hostages in Lebanon have demanded over and over again the freeing of the al-Khiyam prisoners. When Colonel William Higgins, the American U.N. officer who was finally murdered by his captors, was recorded in captivity on a video cassette, he specially noted the al-Khiyam prisoners.

The Israelis have said in confidential talks that they are likely to free the al-Khiyam prisoners in exchange for the missing Israeli soldiers or the Western hostages in Lebanon. Consequently, many Lebanese regard the al-Khiyam prisoners as hostages.

According to estimates, there are 325 men and women there. Some of them are imprisoned because they are suspected of participation in anti-Israeli activity; others, because their families identify with the Lebanese resistance movement.

Many are taken from their homes in the early morning hours, their heads covered and their hands bound. The youngest prisoner is 16 years old. The oldest prisoner ever held there is 80 years old. U.N. soldiers photographed persons whose heads were covered being taken from their homes, but none were permitted to interfere.

They are also not permitted to enter the al-Khiyam camp. The old and gloomy prison sits on a hilltop above the Christian village of Hiyam, deep in the Israeli-held region. It is a square structure, with guard positions made of stone and equipped with heavy machine guns. Detailed maps of the prison were drawn for me by former prisoners, and they show lines of narrow cells that were built within the walls. Steps lead from there to corridors of underground caverns.

There are still signs of fighting from the Second World War on the western walls of the prison, which was built by the French as a fortress during their mandate. Australian artillery shells hit them when the Allies attacked the Vichy French in Lebanon in 1941. The walls, which were crudely repaired, are covered with wire and spotlights. At the entrance, behind the main gate at the eastern end of the prison, there is a visitors room. Those who were suspected of guerrilla activity were tortured under the southern wall—according to the testimony of male prisoners—by attaching electrodes to their fingers and to their sexual organs.

The prison is guarded by soldiers of the Southern Lebanon Army, which Israel supplies with money and uniforms, and whose soldiers Israel trains. Israel has refused to give the Red Cross permission to visit the prison, arguing that it is under the control of the Southern Lebanon Army. But because the Israelis themselves control the Southern Lebanon Army, Red Cross officers told INDEPENDENT that they find the Israeli excuse unacceptable.

I saw an Israeli military vehicle pass by the prison, and according to international law, an army of occupation is responsible for activity conducted in the area under its control. Former prisoners, too frightened to give their names for fear that they would be seized and taken back to al-Khiyam, assert that when they were being interrogated with their eyes covered, they heard Israelis speaking Hebrew. The stories of many were similar, and the fear, as well. Since last spring, the Israelis cancelled all family visits at al-Khiyam.

A young man from a settlement near Hisbayah describes how he was taken from his home by SLA soldiers and beaten brutally on his back, his arms, and his face. He still bears scars on his forehead. "Please, don't tell anyone who I am," he pleaded. "They will come back to look for me. There were persons who tried to speak with journalists. They were taken back to al-Khiyam."

Neither the Israelis nor the SLA furnish a list of prisoners. They also are not willing to let the Red Cross draw up such a list. INDEPENDENT has the names of 58 prisoners, all of them from seven small villages in southeastern Lebanon. Two men—one of them 25, the other 30—were imprisoned for five years in al-Khiyam. According to photographs of the United Nations, they were accompanied there not only by SLA soldiers, but also by Shin Bet [General security Service] personnel, Israelis in civilian clothing. A young man of 20 has been held there since January 1987, and others since 1988.

The neighbor of a youth who was arrested in *kafr Shab'*—who had been himself in al-Khiyam for eight weeks—believes that the prison is actually intended to terrorize the local Lebanese population.

"This is the way in which the Israelis hope to keep us quiet," he says. "Everyone here knows what happens in al-Khiyam. They want us to know. I was there in solitary

confinement for eight weeks, in total darkness, sometimes clothed, at other times naked. During the first week, I was bound hand and foot and I was beaten. Afterwards, the treatment improved. The men and the women that they arrest for interrogation go through a difficult period at the beginning. When the SLA or the Israelis know that someone has planted an explosive device or attacked the militia, that man should expect no mercy. He will be tortured."

If the main goal of al-Khiyam is to repress the Lebanese, there is no doubt that it is the cheapest method for that purpose. For example, in kafr Shuvah, at the foot of Mt. Hermon, 10 young men were taken to al-Khiyam. But in the village I managed to find one youth who dared to talk with me about the prison. He said that three of the men were soldiers in the Lebanese Army and had remained loyal to the army of President Elis Harawi, while one had served in the SLA, but was accused of having hid his rifle for the purpose of rebellion.

Selma Salim is one of 12 men and women who were taken from the Muslim village of Balat to al-Khiyam. She has three younger brothers. One of them, Nazim Salim, aged 18, was captured by armed men and taken to al-Khiyam one month before his sister disappeared. He, like her, disappeared within the prison without anyone being able to communicate with him. Another brother fled the region due to rumors that he had driven a car bomb.

The official report of the Norwegian U.N. battalion on Selma Salim says that she had done excellent work as a translator, and that both the battalion and the citizens of the village regard her as a most trustworthy person.... No information was given either to the family or to the United Nations about the reason for her arrest or when she will be freed.... It seems that the General Security Service, as the United Nations calls Lebanese militia police, is not willing to give them any information about the incident." [quotation marks as published]

[Box, p 9b] There and Here

[Article by Me'ir Bilayikh] "What you see from there, you don't see from here," and that's the reason why on this page there are two articles that were published recently in the London INDEPENDENT.

The report by Robert Pisak tells about al-Khiyam prison in southern Lebanon. We know about this prison, in the security strip, only because of items published in foreign newspapers. Therefore, this version is one-sided, and, apparently, will remain so, as long as the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] chooses not to respond. When a condensation of this report appeared in MA'ARIV at the beginning of the week, the response was that the IDF does not respond officially, because the prison is within the jurisdiction and under the control of the SLA. At the same time, it was related that the IDF is aware of problems in the prison and is not ignoring them.

The unofficial response said that this report contains no Israeli response, no condemnation of the terrorist organizations, and that the newspaper continues with its policy of describing "Israeli brutality" versus "Palestinian and Arab wretchedness." It is worth noting that the reporter Robert Pisak, who has been living in Lebanon for many years, first for the London TIMES and afterwards for the INDEPENDENT, has an anti-Israeli "record." When the IDF was in Lebanon, he sent dispatches that described the activity of its soldiers in black tones. He did this many times by reporting the stories as told by the injured parties, without having [himself] been present at the event or without receiving an Israeli response.

The report by Michael Sheridan gives the Palestinian version of the death of a youth in Ramallah. This long version overpowers the limited response of the IDF spokesman.

As long as there is no detailed Israeli version, aside from the routine response, whose credibility is impaired by its very nature, it is difficult not to believe the other version. Consequently, that's the way we appear there. Worse than that—it is chilling to think that it is possible that this is how we are behaving here.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Types of Intifadah Graffiti Compared

90AE0066A Tel Aviv HA'IR in Hebrew 11 May 90 p 30

[Article by Nawwaf 'Ataminah]

[Text] Even without Sy Heyman, wherever you turn in the territories, the walls are full of graffiti. Layer upon layer, a kaleidoscope of colors, phrases within phrases, until it is impossible to know which word belongs to which graffiti. It doesn't matter where you are, in the center of the city or in some isolated village in the territories, your eyes will fall upon the writings on the walls.

This phenomenon of graffiti in the territories did not begin with the intifadah. As early as 1967 it was possible to find writings on the walls in the territories. But until the outbreak of the intifadah, graffiti were written and drawn at long intervals and only on certain events. Since the intifadah, it's almost like a plague.

The graffiti in the territories reflect the Palestinian reality in all of its variations and all of its problems, and deal with different subjects. As everywhere else, graffiti in the territories are also an instrument of protest. But here, the graffiti fulfill additional functions. Among the many phrases on the walls, we can find the broad range of positions, from the Palestinian Communist Party through Fatah and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. There are writings that are responses to a specific

event, there are instructions for action, and calls for demonstrations and strikes, and there are proposals for political solutions.

The graffiti in the territories have played and play (although less lately) a decisive and very important role in the intifadah, in constituting a strong and rapid medium of communications and a source of continual confrontation with the authorities. Graffiti are easier, for example, than leaflets. The latter require a lot of time for planning and agreement among all sides, and there are also difficulties in printing and distribution. Graffiti do not require a big effort or a lot of planning, and due to the speed of execution, they succeed in closing the gaps in the transmission of information to the residents.

Graffiti express not only the political position of the organization that signs them. The quantity of graffiti also faithfully expresses the balance of power in a given region or village. Thus, for example, Fatah in the West Bank is the leader in the writing of graffiti, and following it, in order of importance, the Popular Front, Hamas, the Democratic Front, and, in the last place, the Palestinian Communist Party. In contrast, in most of the refugee camps, almost no writings are to be seen except for those of Fatah.

Hamas and the Palestinian Communist Party are the only organizations that used graffiti to transmit ideological messages. In certain, but rare, cases, the Popular Front, as well, wrote social graffiti: "There is no master besides the people, and there is no servant other than the national movement" or "Our communist party is Palestinian in its affiliation and proletarian in its identity."

A graffito that was written as an internal protest and not against the conquest is "No to pictures, yes to babies' milk." This graffito was written following the distribution of posters of leaders by the various organizations. The graffiti of Hamas differ in content from all the other graffiti. Most of the graffiti of Hamas are influenced by Islam and the Koran. Their graffiti are short and are written in rhymes. This gives Hamas a certain superiority; they are easy to understand and can be remembered without any effort. The Hamas movement often uses verses from the Koran on religious occasions and events, and its graffiti more than once transmit a double message, political and religious.

The Democratic Front was the first to use the colors of the Palestinian flag in graffiti, when in that place the Front took the trouble to write the same slogan in a different color each time and always to use the colors of the flag. Only the communists and the Popular Front chose to use a standard color. Both parties use red. The Democratic Front used red only when it drew its symbol, a five-pointed star. The other organizations use various colors, and do not take care to use a single color. Other organizations use verse for writing graffiti, as well as pictures of Palestinian leaders.

From discussions with a number of groups, from various factions, that are assigned the drawing of graffiti, it

emerges that the choice of the subject of a graffito and its content are done generally according to directives from a higher level, either national or local. But more than once, local groups and even individuals organize to write graffiti. In certain regions, and especially in the small villages, graffiti reflect the special local situation more than general national positions.

In the West Bank, every faction signs its name under the graffiti that it draws, and sometimes, in the case of one of the components of the United Command, the name of the organization and the signature of the United Command appear simultaneously. The situation is different in the Gaza Strip. Generally, it is possible to see the signature of the United Command or of Hamas. This phenomenon is widespread in the Gaza Strip, especially because of the great strength of Hamas in relation to the strength of the factors that compose the United Command. As the opposite situation obtains in the West Bank, the various factions take the liberty to appear in their own names and not in the name of the umbrella organization.

Another difference between the graffiti of the West Bank and those of the Strip is the outspokenness. The graffiti in Gaza reflect the harsher confrontation with the military forces. Therefore, in the Strip the depiction of various weapons on the walls is more prominent. Pictures of knives, rifles, and other weapons are not seen in the villages of the West Bank.

If in Israel graffiti writers are generally members of left-wing organizations who are writing a political protest, or youths from a high socioeconomic stratum who are engaged in local humor, this division does not exist in the territories. The groups of graffiti writers there are composed of youths from all the social strata and from all the colors of the political rainbow.

As in Tel Aviv, here, too, there are those who write slogans in their own hand and on the spot, and there are those who do their homework and prepare stencils. Graffiti done with stencils are not found in the big cities. This phenomenon exists only in small and distant villages, where the military presence is smaller and there is a greater possibility for manoeuver. In these villages can be seen writings that were prepared with stencils and also colored wall pictures, which show that much work was invested in them.

The walls are perhaps the only place where competing organizations and the holders of different and contradictory positions exist in peace side by side. The slogans of a certain organization or body were erased by another body in only a handful of cases. On most of the walls, it is possible to see contradictory slogans next to each other. More than once, it is possible to see the picture of the hammer and sickle and, next to it, a graffito signed by Hamas. Due to the spread of the graffiti phenomenon, which has taken up every empty place on the walls, there were cases where the graffiti of one movement were written over the graffiti of another movement. At the

beginning of the intifadah, such cases led to tension and disputes. When cases of erasures were repeated, due to lack of space, the organization doing the erasing took care to announce this to the injured organization and to apologize. There is a kind of agreement between the various organizations, according to which the graffiti of another organization are not to be damaged or erased until at least one week has passed since they were written.

It's no wonder that the security forces devote a lot of effort to the war on this phenomenon. Not one day goes by in the territories without the residents being forced to go out from their homes on soldiers' orders and to erase the graffiti. The authorities took it upon themselves to conduct a stubborn struggle with the aim of eradicating the phenomenon. On 19 June 1988, Gabi Ofir, the commander of the West Bank region, issued a military order according to which any Palestinian refusing to erase graffiti could receive a fine of 1,500 shekels or five years imprisonment or both. Afterwards, in November 1989, military order number 1263 was issued, which allows the immediate collection of a 350-shekel fine from any Palestinian on the walls of whose home are written graffiti.

The authorities even made the instructions for the war on graffiti tougher, and in the middle of last October two youths were killed by soldiers' bullets when they were caught writing slogans on one of the walls (Jamil 'Id Jawarishi of Bayt Jala and Ramadan Mahmaq al-Qawasimi of Hebron). As a result of the harsh instructions and heavy fines, the residents began to erase the graffiti on the walls of their houses on their own initiative, and, in this manner, a large quantity of graffiti were erased, especially in the large cities.

The various organizations did not take the residents themselves, who are the main victims of the authorities' edicts, into consideration, and they continued to write graffiti. The only organization that took it upon itself consciously to reduce the writing of graffiti was the Palestinian Communist Party. But it should be noted that, from the beginning, this party did not write a lot of graffiti, and the quantity of graffiti signed with its name does not accurately reflect its real strength. The communists limited their graffiti only to special events, such as the anniversary of the founding of the party or the first of May.

Not only have the various organizations not taken into consideration the harm that was caused to the residents as a result of the writing of the graffiti on the walls of their homes, but they also have not worried about compensating the residents for the heavy fines that they were forced to pay. This forced many residents to erase the graffiti from the walls of their homes, especially after November 1989, when military order number 1263 was issued. Many residents with whom I spoke pointed an accusing finger at the various organizations. The residents are not satisfied with the new role that they have been forced to accept. They would be happy not to follow

the soldiers' instructions to erase the graffiti, but they are not willing and not able to bear the burden. "Let them take care of paying us the fines, and you'll see that none of us will agree to erase the slogans from the walls," several residents told me.

Beyond not worrying about paying compensation for the damage, the organizations even painted a number of slogans warning the residents against erasing the graffiti. On the walls of many homes and offices it is possible to see the graffiti "Woe to the erasers of the national slogans." Recently, there has been a softening in the position of the United Command, and the graffiti "It is forbidden to erase slogans without pressure from the soldiers" is beginning to be written.

Not surprisingly, graffiti also serve the security forces. There are graffiti written by soldiers who serve in a locality, and who find it proper to add their own messages to the covered walls. The soldiers do not write in Arabic, which reduces the chance that the residents will be able to understand their message. Thus, it may be assumed that their aim is not directed at the residents, but rather at writing slogans that will encourage each other. The slogans are few and lack diversity, such as: "The Ramallah Border Police is in the field under tension"; or "'Arafat is dead, the Reds will rule" (by "Reds", the intention is the paratroopers).

There is no documentation on the graffiti from the beginning of the intifadah. Six months after the start of the intifadah, a doctor of political science began to document and to photograph the various graffiti throughout the West Bank and the Strip. Today, he is engaged in preparing a serious study of the subject, which will be published in the coming months.

[Box, p 30] A List of the Various Graffiti

- Long live 1 May, Long live the Palestinian intifadah.
- The unity of the trade unions is the best gift to the working class.
- Unite all the efforts for the support of the unemployed and their employment.
- There is no master besides the people, and there is no servant other than the national movement.
- Fulfilling the demands of the workers—is a national obligation.
- Today we will throw stones, and tomorrow...?
- Hamas is the foundation.
- We will purify the homeland of the seeds of the collaborators.
- The policy of collective arrests will not frighten us.
- The Koran is the sole legitimate representative and statutes of the people of Palestine.
- An Islamic Palestine is the identity.
- No to the salon discussions, yes to the language of rifles.
- No to pictures, yes to babies' milk.
- The West Bank and the Strip are not for sale.
- We will stand up to the settlers with stones and with knives.

- The popular committees are the wall of the intifadah.
- Yes to the days of hunger and a thousand times no to the days of submission.
- To the encouragement of agriculture and domestic production.
- Woe to the distributors of Israeli goods.
- The blood of the victim Abu-Jihad is fuel for the intifadah.
- May the collaborators know that we will not forget and we will not forgive.
- The blood of the victims is the bridge over which will pass the caravans of freedom.
- We will never surrender as long as we have a nursing infant.
- There are no elections in the shadow of the occupation.
- No to the occupation, yes to the Palestinian state.
- The PLO is the address.
- No to the despicable Shultz plan.
- The escalation of the intifadah and the intensification of the people's rule.
- Neither a shekel nor a dinar, we want the currency of Abu-Amar.
- The force of logic will not replace the logic of force.
- If the occupation is of iron, the movement of return is an iron saw.
- Our stones are hand grenades.
- We shall die strong and we shall not surrender.

ALGERIA

Ben Bella Discusses Domestic Political Situation

90AA0135A Paris L'EVENEMENT DU JEUDI
in French 2 May 90 pp 8-12

[Interview with Ahmed Ben Bella by Jean-Francois Kahn; date and place not given;; first two paragraphs are L'EVENEMENT DU JEUDI introduction]

[Text] At the age of 73, he looks 60. The sense of finding himself, for the third time in the course of a lifetime, with a rendezvous with history is without a doubt connected to this apparent youthfulness in some way. For Ben Bella is again today on the threshold of power. The "hermit of Vaud Canton" is being visited by men representing all of the various aspects of the new Algerian pluralism.

The last truly historic personage of the era of the greater postwar changes, Ben Bella is making a final wager today, perhaps the craziest ever. It involves returning to this country, no longer as a vengeful politician, but as the sole common denominator among the apparently irreconcilable major movements. In short, he is making preparations for his version of May 1958. He wants to rally 80 percent of the Algerian citizens in support of the key ideas, in which connection he is one of the unifying elements. He has decided (he does not exclude this) to be the recourse available both to the Islamists and the lay faction, and he is silently weaving the fabric of his surprising consensus. Previously silent, he has broken his

silence here. For the sake of Algeria, but for France as well, which cannot be indifferent to the convulsions that are shaking up a country with a population explosion. Thus this interview is of very special importance.

[Kahn] How would you describe the situation in Algeria today?

[Ben Bella] It is a volcano that could explode in our faces at any moment. In my day, there was talk of vacant properties. Well, what we have today is a vacant government. There is a mediocrity that has become institutionalized. A bankrupt industry. A blocked economy. An atmosphere of civil disobedience. And this situation is replete with the potential for every kind of explosion.

Algeria, you know, and this is perhaps the essential factor, is bursting with youth, for better and for worse. The leading problem, therefore, is the population problem. Unfortunately, there is no miracle solution. And all the efforts of a voluntarist kind have failed, even in China. Today, there is nothing in Algeria that can prevent our advance toward 30 million inhabitants, and we might even surpass the population of France one day. Of all of our citizens, 70 percent are under 30 years of age. In this connection, one should read Braudel, who shows very clearly that in cataclysmic situations, population groups become prolific. What conclusion should be drawn from this? That the only effective regulation will be of a social, economic, and cultural nature. Put in another way, people must eat better, and there must be fewer illiterates. For the time being, in our country, birth control is a concern of the presidents and directors of companies, but not of the poor.

[Kahn] What, then, is your role, with regard to this situation?

[Ben Bella] I am 73 years old, and historically, I have lived a rather full life. I aspire only to be an honest Algerian. But I believe that I can render a service to my country in this dangerous era. I can be a possible solution, if you like.

[Kahn] What does the phrase "a possible solution" mean?

[Ben Bella] Let us say one of the solutions. In any case, at the present time there is an absolute need to establish a consensus, which means mutual concessions. The solution to which I refer will not be found by a single party or a single man. Thus I do not want to speak, myself, as a party leader. Or, if I have a party, it is Algeria. In any case, we must all be humble. We have our feelings, our differences, and no one is in possession of all of the truth. It is necessary therefore for each individual to allow others their space. And then, on the basis of compromise, we can go back to the people and thus prepare for this return to the people. How? By establishing a transition government, one of national consensus that will incorporate the different beliefs and rally the basic forces that exist. Then we can elect a constituent assembly. This

is the only path that will allow the country to emerge from the crisis in which it finds itself.

[Kahn] But who will cause this consensus to emerge?

[Ben Bella] There are not three solutions, there are two. The first is the Ceausescu solution. If the regime is restrictive, deceptive, and biased, then we will proceed in that direction. This would mean a coup d'etat or violence, and whatever the case, it would be terrible. Because confidence is no longer there. It is therefore necessary to reestablish confidence first. Today, there is a definitive split between the system and the people—confidence is gone.

[Kahn] But precisely what are you going to do?

[Ben Bella] What am I going to do? I choose the solution of the Algerian genius, the only one that can help us spare ourselves a revolution of the Romanian type. The system must admit that there is no choice, and it must accept such an alternative.

I therefore propose to begin with the appointment of a Committee of Wise Men of six, seven, or eight individuals, who would be entrusted with the task of preparing for elections to renew the membership of National Assembly, which would have as its goal the adaptation of the Constitution to the new reality of the country. And the purpose of this would be to prevent any irritation with me, including that that might be legitimate. Algeria has an abundance of men of quality and conscience. This discussion could last three months, with the present government remaining in office, and it would culminate in a minimum program. On completion of this process, the Committee of Wise Men would designate a national consensus government, which would give itself between six months and a year to proceed with constituent elections, the framework for the future democratic debate. Thus President Chadli must agree to transfer power. We cannot continue with this eternally absent regime.

[Kahn] But what, more precisely, would your role be?

[Ben Bella] If I am asked to do so, I would agree to serve on the Committee of Wise Men. But I do not insist on participating at all. I can very well be satisfied with making myself available to the committee and offering advice. I have many ideas and I have had the time to reflect on them.

[Kahn] And what if Chadli refuses to withdraw?

[Ben Bella] His withdrawal is written on the wall. There is no other alternative without risk of a military coup.

That having been said, I would oppose imposing even the slightest penalty upon anyone at all (there would be too many). There should be neither vengeance nor revenge here. No one should be excluded from the process of national reconciliation. After all, it was I myself, when I was asked for advice following the death

of Boumedienne, who suggested Chadli. If he departs, we should express our gratitude to him.

[Kahn] And if there were indeed a military coup?

[Ben Bella] Then I would oppose it.

[Kahn] But after all, if Chadli resigns and you are asked to serve as provisional president, what then?

[Ben Bella] If I were asked to serve as provisional president, within the framework of the consensus and the mutual concessions to which I have referred, I would accept, but only to guarantee the transition. Let us say that I am "operational."

[Kahn] Do you not think back sometimes to General De Gaulle's return in 1958?

[Ben Bella] I have great admiration for General De Gaulle. We accomplished great things together. But believe me, where I am concerned, I believe that I have moral credibility, and that is enough for me. I do not want to commit the excesses others have. The younger generation can take over.

[Kahn] But there is a problem. It is being said that you are very close to the integrist movement.

[Ben Bella] What is the integrist movement? Monsignor Lefebvre, this does not exist with us. One should speak instead of fundamentalism. What I can tell you is that I have a cultural sensitivity. I carry within myself that music that is Islam. Even though I do not practice in the same way as others, it is a part of my soul. Whether one likes it or not, there has been and there is in our struggle an Arab-Islamic factor. We did not expect the likes of Khomeyni or others. There was already a spiritual phenomenon underlying the revolt of Emir Abd el-Kader. What you people call the integrist movement, then, I see first of all as a cultural phenomenon. Should one be surprised when the entire cultural world is exploding in our faces? Look at the Basques, the Armenians, the Lithuanians, the Jews. We are living in an era of differences. Islam is exploding because it is being attacked by a triumphant system, which has been artificially imposed upon us. Now, one does not, without risk, impose upon peoples methods of development that do not correspond to what they want to be. We do not want your consumer society, which destroys nature and the environment. In this connection, Islamism is our form of ecological awareness.

[Kahn] And what about the intolerable excesses we have witnessed in recent times? These fanatic bearded men who attack single women, who want to impose their way of life by force?

[Ben Bella] Yes, excesses are to be found. This cultural aspect about which I have been speaking is still, in fact, awaiting its expression. It is in its infancy. We have not yet developed a mature expression of it. I consider myself a universal man, and I love all other men. Thus I say to you that if the cultural expression that I have

described to you is manifested in an intolerant way, then it is not proper expression. I condemn fanatic perversions.

[Kahn] But in the final analysis, do you feel closer to the religious or to the lay faction?

[Ben Bella] I am not willing to let myself be trapped by expressions that are not neutral. The lay movement is your problem, not ours. Because of your own inquisitions or your own St. Bartholomews, you have had to abandon God, but this is not true of us. There has not been a schism within Islam.

But I will go further. As Alain Touraine wrote somewhere, within 100 years, Islam will account for 40 or 60 percent of the world population. It will be necessary to take this phenomenon, which faces us with a number of fearful problems, into account. How can this progression be properly expressed in a diverse world? For my part, I do not abandon Islam, but one can engage in politics without involving Islam in it constantly, at every step.

Basically, of the 6,000 suras, there are 80 that refer to the law or the state. Islam leaves the rest to society, which is and should remain a living entity, not one imprisoned in a rigid framework.

[Kahn] But I would like, nonetheless, to return to the excesses of which I spoke a moment ago—these manifestations of unacceptable intolerance.

[Ben Bella] Well, then, this precisely is a rigid expression. To raise the problem of women, or of the association of the sexes, as some people are doing, is entirely infantile, above all today.

This is really not the priority. Frankly, the priority in Algeria today is onions—because their price has reached an intolerable level, and one can no longer find them. This does not have to do with the association of the sexes. And on this issue, obviously, women have the right to voice their opinions.

[Kahn] What is your real position on the problem of women?

[Ben Bella] For my part, I reject the discourse of the feminist movement that makes work the sole criterion of women's freedom. I favor work for women, but this is not the only path of emancipation and advancement. Work itself can be a phenomenon contributing to their alienation. Personal development involves, first of all, harmony between man and woman, and this is not primarily an economic problem. Piaget clearly demonstrated, for example, that until the age of at least two years, the child has need of the mother's image, without which there is an affective block. I believe that the presence of the mother with the child up to the age of four is essential. Work is not everything, for there is the issue of happiness, as well.

[Kahn] But finally, does a woman have the right to live alone, yes or no?

[Ben Bella] Of course. I reject intolerance.

[Kahn] Can she freely choose whether to wear the veil or not?

[Ben Bella] On principle, I reject attacks on women. I do not see myself in a rigid society. For me, this means civil war. I will point out to you in this connection that when I was president, there were female deputies in the assembly, while today there are no longer any. And what women! I know something about it, because they were members of the opposition. Only I would like to add something in connection with the Islamist movement, and that is that I would rather see youth frequent the mosques rather than give themselves over to drugs.

[Kahn] But the integrist movement and drugs—are they not sometimes the same thing?

[Ben Bella] No, because in the one case, correction is possible, while with drugs, it is not. The childhood diseases of which you speak—these we will be able to cure. In the meantime, I am happy that the young people who are members of an Islamist movement do not sell drugs, but do concern themselves with the poor and are contributing to weaving a social fabric. They are contributing to the recovery of this absolutely essential value which is solidarity.

[Kahn] What do you mean when you say that it is necessary to reject the consumer society?

[Ben Bella] It is very simple. If we, that is to say the countries in the South, the countries of the Third World, were to become consumer societies—and I do not even say like the French or the Swedes, but simply like the Spaniards—there would have to be several Earth planets. One single Earth can only provide what it has. Thus if the Third World were really to embrace your kind of consumer society, there would soon be no more rain forests, and plant and animal species would disappear. And I am not even mentioning the ozone layer or the greenhouse effect. Thus there are physical limits, not to mention the social and cultural limitations, which are still more serious. And this is why I have come to believe that our discourse about development is hollow, and that the words you use are meaningless. And that is the reason for the need for both more cautious consumption and less waste, as well as greater solidarity.

When I became president of the Algerian republic in 1963, I found a country so poor, so ruined, that I was terrified, and I made a trip to Mali. There I realized that in the final analysis, we were rich, and I was ashamed. One shows greater self-respect by effecting better distribution. Why should one support a method of development that has failed everywhere? Look at what is happening in black Africa.

[Kahn] But concretely, then, how do you see the future economic development of Algeria?

[Ben Bella] First of all, agriculture must be reestablished, giving priority to the development of food crops, fruit

trees, and the drafting of an authentic water policy. This will involve the privatization of the land, simultaneous with the reorganization of property ownership. Where industry is concerned, priority must be given to the private businesses of small and medium size. This sector must be developed and protected, even, sometimes, in violation of market law. I advocate a mixed and associative economy, involving the public and private sectors and excluding any kind of primitive liberal economy designed to enrich the rich and impoverish the poor. I want to go beyond socialism. If I were not fearful of excessively pretentious words, I would say that I prefer "solidarism."

[Kahn] What do you think of IMF logic?

[Ben Bella] The IMF is the bulldozer of an evil system. Where the IMF has passed, you can clearly see thousands dead. Its rigidity affects only the slums. I reject the law of the jungle.

[Kahn] And can one pursue the economics of competition?

[Ben Bella] No, but look at this ferocious competition that is supposed to lead to progress, while in fact it is leading our young people into a generalized attitude of self-interest. And note that this will affect you, first and foremost. State bureaucracy, on the one hand, and primitive liberalism, on the other, will have the same consequence. You will have an influx of millions of people, uncontrollable masses that you will not be able to tolerate (and I understand this), provoking frightening reactions in your country of the Le Pen sort. This is why another solution must be found. Not one invented just like that, ready for use. But conservation measures must be drafted.

It was about this that I did the most thinking during my years in prison. I want the people of Algeria to remain in their own country, and for this reason I have offered them a great project. For example, reconquering the South, just as the Americans conquered the West; developing the oasis and the high plateaus—this is what will contribute to the mobilization our young people and to correction of the migratory flow. Because, I reiterate, I absolutely do not want the millions of Algerians to flee to France to find there—what? Nothing. Suspicion, first of all, and then renewed fascism. We must reflect upon this problem together, set it forth clearly together, and this will involve speeding up the process of integration in the Maghreb. Today, trade among the three Maghreb countries does not even come to 4 percent. It must rapidly be increased to 15 percent. The free circulation of goods and people must be encouraged.

[Kahn] In this connection, what are you doing about the Polisario affair, which is poisoning the relations between Algeria and Morocco?

[Ben Bella] We must absolutely reach a definitive settlement and eliminate this potential source of war. I have

some ideas in this connection. We cannot exclude anything, but must conceive of a solution that will not lead to the splintering or division of Morocco.

[Kahn] Do you accept the existence of the state of Israel today?

[Ben Bella] I support Yasser Arafat's PLO. It is moving in the right direction, and that is all I can tell you. If this direction presumes the existence of two states, I approve. But frankly, I am pessimistic about the possibility of a short-term solution. Shamir has understood nothing. One day there will be a serious discussion, and you know who will participate—it will be the Arabs and the "Oriental" Jews, even if they vote for the Likud Party. Because it is they who chant like us, who eat like us, who are like us. We do not understand anything of what Shamir says, and he understands nothing about Andalusian music, our harissa sauce, lamb barbecue, or couscous. The Sephardic Jews—they understand.

[Kahn] What about Shimon Peres?

[Ben Bella] He is much better. He has a real desire for progress, but he is nonetheless an Ashkenazi. In other words, he is from another world.

[Kahn] What do you think of the threatening statements made by Saddam Husayn, the Iraqi chief of state?

[Ben Bella] The Near East conflict will not be settled by a war. Moreover, there is no holy cause to justify, either fully or remotely, the use of an atomic bomb or a chemical weapon. This is a total absurdity. The idea that one can defend the Palestinian cause with an atomic bomb is profoundly perverse.

[Kahn] Do you favor a reduction in Algeria's military forces?

[Ben Bella] Obviously, they costly and dangerous. You know, tanks always give one ideas.

But here again, this should be done within the framework of the consensus. Personally, I do not want to impose anything.

[Kahn] Why is it that so few Arab nations are democratic countries?

[Ben Bella] This is beginning to change. Slowly, but there is movement. In Jordan and Egypt, for example. But it is necessary to be careful not to resume a democratic discourse that is empty of content in the hope of saving an ailing system. Algeria can and must become a truly democratic country. And I must admit that we already have in this country freedom of speech and discussion that does not exist anywhere else in the Third World. And it is our people who have imposed this.

[Kahn] How do you see the development of the relations between France and Algeria?

[Ben Bella] These relations must change so as to become complementary and dignified. We must not become the

marketplace for France, with the inevitable corollaries of usury and corruption. Our governments have been responsible for this, but so has France. Let us admit realistically that we were 80-percent dirty, but we are becoming 80-percent clean. I reiterate that the South cannot emerge from its crisis without the North. And if we do not recover from it, you will be dragged into the tragedy. No police force, no army would be able to slow the tidal wave of immigration. Do not impose your system on us, but help us instead to be different.

[Kahn] Are you willing for the harkis [Algerian soldiers who fought with the French during the Algerian war of independence] and their sons to return to Algeria?

[Ben Bella] They must be allowed to return. The page of history must be turned. A society that does not know how to forgive is a morbid and unhealthy one.

[Kahn] Did massacres occur when independence was declared?

[Ben Bella] Unfortunately, during the unstable period between governments, there were...in Oran, for example.

[Kahn] What is your view on anti-Semitism?

[Ben Bella] It pains me. In general, racism is the result both of underdevelopment here in our country and a lack of balanced growth here. This is how Hitlers are created. When one raises his hand against a Jew, he will always eventually raise his hand against an Arab. The Jew is the cousin of the Arab. When one strikes one, one strikes the other, and that has been true since the Crusades. In fact, Le Pen's target is the Jew.

[Kahn] And how do you regard the pieds-noirs [French colonial settlers in the Maghreb, primarily Algeria]?

[Ben Bella] That depends. There are the Jewish pieds-noirs, of whom the vast majority are Algerians who have been here in the country for centuries, and then there are those who came with colonization, but even they are basically to some extent Algerians. They have been victims, like us. They loved this country.

[Kahn] And what is your position on the Berber movement?

[Ben Bella] I favor respect for the Berbers if they are a part of the Algerian context. I say yes to the Berber movement, but as an enrichment of the Arab context. And why not specific institutes?

[Kahn] What errors did you make when you were president?

[Ben Bella] I made many, but not major ones, I believe. For example, I nationalized certain assets on a personal basis, that is to say by denouncing their owners, and I regret that. I should not have done that. But the nationalizations? As I have told you, I was faced with a void. I

wanted to prevent the occurrence of a raid in which it would not be the most worthy who took over the unoccupied properties.

And then, of course, I regret that I did not devote enough attention to the Army phenomenon. It is true that I could have avoided that.

[Kahn] And today, do you exclude the possibility of another military coup d'etat?

[Ben Bella] I would not return to an Algeria that would allow a new military adventure to occur. You know, when the French Army intercepted our aircraft in 1956, in my pocket I had a proposal for peaceful settlement, which we had negotiated with the representatives of Guy Mollet's socialist government. We were on the threshold of an agreement, and that agreement was already, roughly, the same as that we were to conclude in Evian six years later. You can imagine how many deaths that military "venture" cost us.

[Kahn] You have spent more time in prison than Mandela. What has this brought you?

[Ben Bella] A more precise view of things.

[Kahn] One last question, if you will. You were a soccer enthusiast. Did you see the Marseilles-Benfica match?

[Ben Bella] Of course.

[Kahn] What were your impressions, then?

[Ben Bella] It is obvious, to judge from the return matches, that Marseilles should have won. Victory was stolen from it, in an obvious maneuver. There should be a better verification system. The Marseilles team may still be lacking in experience in international matches, but it is already a very fine team which knows its business, puts on a good show, and is flexible. In my opinion, it is as good as the Milan AC. Watching the match affected me, because, can you imagine, I played center half for Marseilles for a few months in 1945.

Text of 3 April Press Law Issued

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[Law No. 90-07 of 3 April 1990 relating to information]

[Text]

Law No. 90-07 of 3 April 1990 Relating to Information

The president of the republic,

Noting the Constitution and particularly articles 30, 35, 36, 39, and 40 thereof;

Noting Order No. 66-156 dated 8 June 1966, as amended and supplemented, concerning the Penal Code;

Noting Order No. 75-58 dated 26 September 1975, as amended and supplemented, concerning the Civil Code;

Noting Order No. 75-59 dated 26 September 1975 concerning the Commercial Code;

Noting Order No. 75-89 dated 30 December 1975 concerning the Posts and Telecommunications Code;

Noting Law No. 82-01 dated 6 February 1982 concerning the Information Code;

Noting Law No. 84-16 dated 30 June 1984 relating to national property;

Noting Law No. 88-01 dated 12 January 1988 concerning the guideline law for economic state-owned enterprises, particularly article 2 thereof;

Noting Law No. 88-09 dated 26 January 1988 relating to the national archives;

Noting Law No. 89-11 dated 5 July 1989 relating to associations of a political character;

Following adoption by the National People's Assembly;

Promulgates the following law:

Title I: General Provisions

Article 1—The purpose of this law is to establish the rules and principles governing the exercise of the right to information.

Article 2—The right to information consists of the citizen's right to be completely and objectively informed concerning facts and opinions of interest to society on the national and international levels and of the right to participate in information by exercising the basic freedoms of thought, opinion, and expression in accordance with articles 35, 36, 39, and 40 of the Constitution.

Article 3—The right to information is freely exercised within the bounds of respect for the dignity of the human person and the requirements of foreign policy and national defense.

Article 4—The right to information is exercised in particular by the following:

- News publications and organs in the public sector.
- Publications and organs belonging to or established by associations of a political character.
- Publications and organs established by individuals or legal entities under Algerian law.

It is exercised using any written, radio, sound, or television medium.

Article 5—The abovementioned news publications and organs participate in spreading national culture and satisfying the citizen's need for information, technological development, culture, education, and leisure activities within the framework of national values and the

promotion of dialogue among the cultures of the world in accordance with articles 2, 3, 8, and 9 of the Constitution.

Article 6—General news periodicals established after promulgation of this law shall be published in the Arabic language.

Provided, however, that periodical publications intended for national or international circulation and distribution and specialized periodical publications may be published in foreign languages with the approval of the Higher Information Council.

Article 7—The Higher Information Council may issue a motivated ruling prohibiting the use of a foreign language by general news periodicals.

Such a ruling may be appealed to the Administrative Chamber of the Supreme Court.

Article 8—In the case of the written press, news publications and organs shall be organized separately from the activities of printing and press distribution.

In the case of radio and television broadcasting, cultural, artistic, and news production shall be organized separately from the functions of program management and broadcasting.

Article 9—The government shall have the right at any time to program and disseminate to the public such written, spoken, or televised statements and communications as it considers necessary. Those statements and communications shall be announced as having been issued by the government.

In no case may this right constitute a limitation on the freedom of expression enjoyed by the editorial committees of the publications and organs concerned.

Title II: Organization of the Profession

Chapter 1: Public-Sector Publications and Organs

Article 10—Organs and publications in the public sector must under no circumstances take into account any influence or factor likely to compromise the accuracy of information.

They shall provide the various movements of opinion and thinking with equal opportunities to express themselves.

Article 11—Regarding the separation between the functions of distribution, editing, and printing, the legal entity owning a public-sector print publication or organ may transfer no more than one-third of its capital stock to the permanently employed professional journalists concerned, provided that they organize themselves as a civil company of editors in accordance with legislation in effect.

Article 12—Radio and television broadcasting media, the news photo agency, and the press agency belonging to

the public sector shall be organized as public establishments of an industrial and commercial character in accordance with articles 44 and 47 of the abovementioned Law No. 88-01 dated 12 January 1988.

Article 13—Radio broadcasting media in the public sector shall be in charge of the network specializing in the dissemination of popular culture through the use of all the various dialects with a view to communication and the implantation in society of the principle of national unity and of Arabo-Islamic values.

The procedures for implementing this provision will be issued in the form of regulations.

Chapter 2: Publishing of Periodicals

Article 14—The publishing of all periodicals shall be unrestricted. For purposes of registration and verification of truthfulness, a registration statement must be filed 30 days before publication of the first issue.

The said registration statement shall be filed with the public prosecutor for the territory in which the publication will be published.

The said registration statement shall be filed on stamped paper and signed by the editor of the publication in question. A receipt shall be issued to him on the spot.

The said receipt must include information relative to the identity of the editor and of the printer and the characteristics of the publication as provided below.

Article 15—For the purposes of this law, all newspapers and magazines published at regular intervals shall be regarded without exception as being periodicals.

Periodicals shall be divided into two categories:

- General information newspapers.
- Specialized periodicals.

Article 16—For the purposes of this law, general information newspapers shall be those periodicals constituting a source of news concerning national and international current events and intended for the general public.

Article 17—Specialized periodicals shall be those publications devoting themselves to specific topics in particular fields.

Article 18—News publications and organs shall be required to prove and declare the source of the funds constituting their capital and the funds necessary for their management.

With the exception of publications and organs in the public sector, any news publication or organ receiving a subsidy of any kind must be organically linked to the subsidizing organization and must make mention of that relationship.

Direct and indirect subsidies from an individual or legal entity or a foreign government are banned.

Article 19—The registration statement must include the following information:

- The purpose of the publication.
- The title of the publication and its frequency of publication.
- The place of publication.
- The full name and address of the editor.
- The business name and address of the printer.
- The format and price.
- If applicable, the language or languages of publication other than Arabic.
- The name and address of the owner.
- The amount of capital held by the company or enterprise.
- A copy of the bylaws of the company or enterprise.

Article 20—Any change in the information mentioned in articles 18 and 19 above must be reported to the authority referred to in article 14 above within 10 full days of the change in question.

Article 21—Before printing any periodical statement [as published; possibly periodical publication intended], the printer is required to request from the publisher the receipt showing that the registration statement has been filed.

Article 22—The editor of a periodical must meet the following conditions. He must:

- 1) Be of Algerian nationality.
- 2) Be of legal age and in possession of his civil rights.
- 3) Be in possession of his civic rights.
- 4) Be qualified professionally in his special field.
- 5) Not have been guilty of antinational behavior.
- 6) Not have been convicted of any crime involving the loss of civil rights.

Article 23—Every periodical must mention the following in every issue:

- The full name of the publication's editor and its owner(s).
- The address of the editorial and management offices.
- The business name and address of the printer.
- The frequency of the publication, place of publication, and price.
- The print run of the previous issue.

Article 24—The editor of a publication intended for children must be assisted by an advisory educational structure.

The members of that structure must meet the following conditions. They must:

- 1) Be of Algerian nationality.
- 2) Be in possession of their civic rights.

3) Not have been the object of any disciplinary measure for behavior contrary to the educational establishment's code of ethics.

4) Not have been deprived of any or all of their parental rights.

5) Not have been convicted of any crime or offense.

6) Not have been guilty of antinational behavior during the struggle for national liberation.

Article 25—The provisions relative to the deposit of copies as set forth in legislation now in effect notwithstanding, periodical publications must comply with the following deposit formalities at the time of their distribution:

- In the case of all publications: two copies signed by the publication's editor must be deposited with the public prosecutor for the territory concerned.
- Ten copies signed by the publication's editor must be deposited with the National Library.
- In the case of general news publications, five copies signed by the editor must be deposited with the Higher Information Council and five copies signed by the editor must be deposited with the minister of interior.

Any correspondence relative to legal deposits as provided above is exempt from the payment of postage.

Article 26—Regardless of their nature and destination, national and foreign periodicals and specialized publications must not contain any illustrations, write-ups, information, or advertisements contrary to Islamic morals, national values, or human rights or supportive of racism, fanaticism, or treason.

Moreover, those publications must not include any publicity or advertising likely to encourage violence and delinquency.

Article 27—Any authorized institution, organization, or association for the defense of human rights and the protection of children may exercise the right to sue for civil injury.

Title III: Exercise of the Profession of Journalist

Article 28—A professional journalist is anyone who devotes himself to seeking out, gathering, selecting, processing, and presenting information and makes that activity his regular profession and chief source of income.

Article 29—Permanent exercise of the profession of journalist on behalf of a publication or organ in the public sector precludes the holding of another position of any kind with other news publications or organs.

However, articles may occasionally be submitted to other publications or organs under conditions to be set forth by the Higher Information Council.

Article 30—The conditions under which professional press cards will be issued, the agency in charge of issuing them, their period of validity, the means by which they may be canceled, and the means of appeal shall be determined by the Higher Information Council.

Article 31—Professional journalists employed by a foreign entity organized under foreign law shall be accredited in accordance with regulations adopted on the recommendation of the Higher Information Council.

That accreditation is to be issued by the government department having jurisdiction. It may be withdrawn by the same procedure.

Accreditation shall entitle the holder to all the rights and subject him to all the duties of professional Algerian journalists in the same category.

Article 32—In case of violence or aggression, attempted bribery and intimidation, or blatant pressure on a professional journalist in the performance of his duties, his employer must refer the matter to the appropriate court and sue for civil injury.

Article 33—The rights of professional journalists in public news organs shall be distinct from their own opinions and union or political affiliations.

Established professional qualification shall be a basic requirement for appointment, promotion, and transfer.

A journalist shall be required to conform to the general editorial policy of the news organ by which he is employed.

Article 34—A change in a news organ's orientation or content, cessation of its activity, or its sale shall give the professional journalist grounds for breaking his contract and entitles him to the same compensation as that provided by the laws and regulations in effect for individuals who have been laid off.

Article 35—The right of professional journalists to have access to sources of information is recognized.

In particular, this allows the professional journalist to inspect government documents related to his mission other than those included among documents duly classified and protected by law.

Article 36—The right of access to sources of information does not authorize the journalist to publish or disclose information likely to:

- Harm or threaten national security, national unity, or state security.
- Reveal a secret involving national defense or an economic, strategic, or diplomatic secret.
- Harm the constitutional rights and freedoms of the citizens.
- Violate the secrecy of inquiries and judicial investigations.

Implementation of this article will be governed by regulations to be adopted after consultation with the Higher Information Council.

Article 37—Professional secrecy constitutes a right and a duty for journalists governed by the provisions of this law.

Professional secrecy cannot be invoked against judicial authority in the following cases:

- In matters involving national defense secrets as defined by legislation in effect.
- In matters involving strategic economic secrets.
- When the information in question will manifestly harm the security of the state.
- When the information concerns children or adolescents.
- When the information involves the secrecy of inquiries and judicial investigations.

Article 38—Journalists and authors who use a pseudonym shall be required to reveal their true identity to the publication's editor in writing before their articles are published.

Article 39—The editor of a periodical publication shall be bound by professional secrecy.

However, in case of court action against the author of an unsigned article or an article signed with a pseudonym, the editor shall be released from professional secrecy at the request of the appropriate authority to whom a complaint has been submitted and to whom the editor must provide the true and complete identity of the author.

If he fails to do so, he shall be prosecuted in place of the author.

Article 40—In the exercise of his profession, the professional journalist shall be required to strictly observe the rules of ethics and deontology.

In particular, he must:

- Respect the constitutional rights and individual freedoms of the citizens.
- Have a constant concern for complete and objective information.
- Rectify any information that turns out to be incorrect.
- Comment honestly and objectively on facts and events.
- Refrain from defending, whether directly or indirectly, racism, intolerance, and violence.
- Refrain from plagiarism, libel, slander, and self-interested denunciations.
- Refrain from using the moral prestige attached to his profession for personal or material ends.

A journalist shall have the right to reject any editorial directive from a source other than his own editorial superiors.

Title IV: Responsibility, Right of Correction, and Right To Reply

Article 41—Any text published in a periodical publication and any information broadcast by audiovisual means shall be the responsibility of the editor and of the author of the said text or information.

Article 42—The editors or publishers of news organs or, in their absence, the printers, and in the absence of the latter, the distributors, disseminators, sellers, and bill posters, shall be responsible for offenses committed in written, spoken, or filmed form.

Article 43—When the perpetrators of offenses committed in written, spoken, or filmed form are being prosecuted, the editor of the publication or the publisher shall be prosecuted as an accomplice. Also subject to prosecution as accomplices in all cases are the third parties referred to in article 42 above.

Article 44—In the case of daily publications, corrections must be published in the same place and printed in the same characters as the disputed text with no addition, deletion, or reply, and such publication must take place within two days at most.

In the case of all other publications, the correction must appear in the issue next following receipt of the request.

In the case of a regularly scheduled radio or television program, the correction must be broadcast on the following program and within two days of the date on which the request is received.

Article 45—Any person who is the subject of information containing erroneous facts or malicious assertions of a nature to cause moral or material injury may:

- Use his right to reply.
- And/or bring suit against the editor of the news organ and the journalist, who shall be jointly responsible.

The editor of the publication or the audiovisual news medium concerned shall be required to print or broadcast, as the case may be, the reply at no charge and under the same conditions as those stipulated in article 44 above.

Article 46—Any individual or legal entity shall have the right to reply to any written or audiovisual article undermining national values.

Article 47—The right to reply as defined in article 45 above must be exercised within two months of the date on which the disputed information is published or broadcast, after which no recourse is possible.

Article 48—The editor of any periodical publication or any audiovisual news medium shall be required to print or broadcast, as the case may be, at no charge and under the conditions provided in article 44 above, any reply addressed to him by an individual or legal entity affected by information containing erroneous facts or malicious assertions likely to cause moral or material injury.

Article 49—If the individual specifically named in the disputed information is deceased, incompetent, or prevented by legitimate cause from replying on his own behalf, the reply can be made on his behalf by his legal representative or his relatives in the following order of priority: ascendants, descendants, and collateral relatives of the first degree.

Article 50—The editor may refuse to print or broadcast the reply in the following cases:

- If the reply itself constitutes a press offense under the terms of this law.
- If a reply has already been printed or broadcast at the request of one of the persons authorized to do so in article 49 above.

Article 51—The reply must be printed or broadcast, as the case may be, within 2 days following its receipt by a daily newspaper or audiovisual news organ or in the next issue in the case of other print media, as provided in article 44 above.

If a complainant's request to exercise his right to reply is rejected or ignored, the said complainant shall be entitled to take the matter to the appropriate court, provided that he do so within 8 days after the date on which his request to reply was received.

Article 52—Print and broadcast news media have an obligation to publish or broadcast at no charge any final ruling of nonsuit or acquittal with respect to persons implicated by those media.

Title V: Circulation, Distribution, and Peddling

Article 53—The circulation of periodical publications comprises newsstand sales, subscription sales, and free or paid public or home delivery.

Newspaper and magazine distributing enterprises must provide equal and wide distribution of all the periodical publications entrusted to them.

Article 54—The peddling and/or distribution of domestic or foreign periodical publications on the public thoroughfare or in any other public place requires only that a prior application be submitted to the commune in question.

Article 55—The said peddler's application must include the applicant's complete name, occupation, home address, age, and place of birth. A receipt equivalent to a license will be issued to the applicant immediately and at no cost.

Article 56—The distribution of radio or television broadcasts by cable and the use of radio frequencies shall require appropriate authorization and shall be subject to a general schedule of conditions as adopted by the administration in consultation with the Higher Information Council.

Such use shall constitute a concessionary private use of state property.

Article 57—The importation and distribution of foreign periodical publications in the national territory is subject to prior authorization by the government department concerned, the Higher Information Council having been consulted.

The importation by foreign organizations and diplomatic missions of periodical publications intended for free distribution is subject to authorization by the government department concerned.

Article 58—If the provisions of article 57 are not complied with, the authority legally empowered to do so may temporarily confiscate any written or recorded text or any other means of communication and information which has been banned.

The confiscation order shall be issued in accordance with the forms and procedures provided by legislation in effect.

Title VI: Higher Information Council

Article 59—There is hereby established a Higher Information Council to be an independent administrative regulatory authority possessing legal status and financial autonomy.

As such, it shall be responsible for the following:

- Setting forth the rules and conditions for exercising the right of the various trends of opinion to express themselves.
- Ensuring the independence and impartiality of public-sector radio and television broadcasting entities and the respective autonomy of the professions in that sector.
- Taking care to encourage and strengthen Arabic-language publishing and broadcasting by all appropriate means.
- Ensuring the quality of messages and the defense and illustration of national culture in all its forms, notably from the standpoint of the production and dissemination of national works.
- Ensuring transparency in the economic rules governing the functioning of information activities.
- Preventing, through its decisions, a concentration of publications and media under the financial, political, or ideological influence of a single owner.
- Establishing, through its decisions, the conditions for the preparation, publication, production, programming, and dissemination of written texts or broadcasts relative to election campaigns.
- Expressing its opinion on conflicts over the freedom of expression and conscience which arise between the editors of news organs and their contributors, the purpose being to reach an amicable settlement.
- Exercising, at the request of those concerned, prerogatives aimed at resolving situations of conflict inherent in the freedom of expression and the citizen's right to information before one of the parties to

the dispute takes the matter to the court having jurisdiction.

- Establishing rules and ensuring the equitable distribution of any subsidies, grants, and other forms of aid which may be granted to news organs by the state.
- Enforcing compliance with commercial advertising standards and overseeing the purpose, content, and programming of the advertising information disseminated by news organs.
- Ensuring that written, spoken, and televised information is broadcast or distributed throughout the various regions of the country.
- Collecting, from government departments and all news organs or press enterprises, all the information needed for ensuring that they are fulfilling their respective obligations. The information thus collected by the council cannot be used for purposes other than those set forth in this law.

Article 60—If a dominant position is being abused, the Higher Information Council shall order the owner involved to proceed with a transfer of assets.

Article 61—The Higher Information Council shall issue licenses and establish specific schedules of conditions for the use of radio and television frequencies as provided in article 56 above.

Article 62—The Higher Information Council shall be consulted concerning agreements reached between owners and professional journalists. It shall issue public observations and recommendations in cases where schedules of conditions and other obligations stipulated by law are being violated and shall establish the conditions and deadlines for correcting such situations.

Article 63—Every year, the Higher Information Council shall submit a report on its activity, enforcement of the law, and compliance with the schedules of conditions to the president of the republic, the speaker of the National People's Assembly, and the head of the government. That report is made public. The council may also publish a periodic bulletin.

Article 64—When necessary, the Higher Information Council may submit draft laws relative to its field of activity to the government.

Article 65—The Higher Information Council may be asked by the speaker of the National People's Assembly, the head of the government, or the press organs to express its opinion or conduct a study concerning its area of competence.

Article 66—In case of noncompliance with the provisions of this law, the Higher Information Council may sue the organization involved.

Article 67—Specialized committees shall be established under the authority of the Higher Information Council. They shall include in particular:

- A committee on professional organization.
- An ethics committee.

The operation and makeup of those committees will be governed by internal regulations.

Article 68—During their term of office, council members may not take a public stand on matters that have been or may be resolved by acts, decisions, or recommendations of the Higher Information Council, nor may they act as consultants on those same matters.

Article 69—Under the conditions and subject to the penalties provided in articles 301 and 302 of the Penal Code, members and officials of the council shall be required to observe professional secrecy regarding the facts, acts, and information which may have come to their knowledge in the performance of their duties.

Article 70—The Higher Information Council shall have the use of departments placed under the authority of its chairman.

The personnel of those departments may not participate, either directly or indirectly, in an enterprise linked to the sectors of radio broadcasting, television, the written press, publishing, or advertising.

Article 71—The credits necessary for carrying out the missions of the Higher Information Council shall be included in the general state budget.

The chairman of the Higher Information Council shall be the officer empowered to authorize expenditures.

Article 72—The Higher Information Council shall be composed of 12 members appointed by decree and chosen as follows:

- Three members, including the council chairman, by the president of the republic.
- Three members by the speaker of the National People's Assembly.
- Six members elected by an absolute majority from among professional journalists in the fields of television, radio, and the print media who have at least 15 years of experience in their profession.

Article 73—Members of the council serve for six years. They cannot be removed from office, nor can they serve more than one term.

One-third of the council is elected every two years. With the exception of the chairman, who is appointed to serve the entire term, a council member who does not live up to the obligations set forth in this law or who is convicted of an offense leading to imprisonment or the loss of his civil rights is automatically considered by the Higher Information Council to have resigned.

If a seat falls vacant for any reason whatever, a new member is chosen as provided in article 72 above to serve the remainder of the term in question. When that term expires, he may be appointed to serve a full term as a member of the Higher Information Council, provided that the period he served as a replacement member did not exceed two years.

Article 74—The Higher Information Council cannot legally transact business unless eight of its members are present. Decisions are reached by a majority vote of the members present, and in case of a tie, the chairman casts the deciding vote.

Article 75—The duties of the council members are incompatible with any elective office, any employment, and any professional activity.

Article 76—The members of the Higher Information Council may not exercise any functions, either directly or indirectly, in any enterprise connected with the information sectors, nor may they possess a financial interest in any such enterprise.

Title VII: Penal Provisions

Article 77—Any person who, in writing or by sound, pictures, drawings, or any other means, whether direct or indirect, offends Islam and the other heavenly religions shall be punished with a prison sentence of from six months to three years, a fine of from 10,000 to 50,000 DA [dinars], or both.

Article 78—Any person who offends a professional journalist by gestures, remarks, or threats during or in connection with the latter's pursuit of his profession shall be punished with a prison sentence of from 10 days to two months, a fine of from 1,000 to 5,000 DA, or both.

Article 79—Any violation of the provisions of articles 14, 18, 19, and 22 of this law makes the offender liable to a fine of from 5,000 to 10,000 DA and the temporary or permanent suspension of the publication or organ in question.

Article 80—Any person who violates the provisions stipulated in articles 56 and 61 of this law shall be punished with a prison sentence of from two to five years and a fine of from 30,000 to 100,000 DA.

Article 81—Any editor of one of the news publications or organs referred to in article 4 above who accepts, directly or indirectly, for himself or on behalf of his publication, any funds or advantages from a foreign public or private organization other than funds in payment of subscriptions and advertising at the rates and terms in effect shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one to five years, a fine of from 30,000 to 300,000 DA, or both.

Article 82—The sale of foreign periodical publications whose importation and distribution in Algeria are banned is punishable, without prejudice to the collection of any amounts due under the Customs Code, by a prison term of from one month to two years, a fine of from 1,000 to 10,000 DA, or both.

Article 83—Any person who peddles publications without filing an application or who files a false application with respect to peddling as defined in article 54

above shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one month to one year, a fine of from 1,000 to 5,000 DA, or both.

In addition, the court may order that the publications in question be confiscated.

Article 84—Without prejudice to the penalties provided in articles 85 et seq. of this law, failure to deposit copies as provided in article 25 above makes the offender liable to a fine of from 10,000 to 50,000 DA.

Article 85—Any person convicted of lending his name to the owner or who is the co-owner or sleeping partner of a publication, particularly by virtue of having subscribed to capital stock or some other type of share in a publication enterprise, shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one to five years and a fine of from 10,000 to 50,000 DA. The beneficiary of such a "straw man" operation shall be liable to the same penalty.

Article 86—Any person who deliberately publishes or disseminates erroneous or tendentious information likely to harm state security and national unity shall be punished by imprisonment for from five to 10 years.

Article 87—Using any medium of information to incite people to crimes and offenses against state security and national unity makes the editor of the publication and the author of the text liable, if the incitement produces an effect, to criminal prosecution as accomplices to the instigated crimes and offenses.

If the provocation is ineffective, the editor and author shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one to five years, a fine of from 10,000 to 100,000 DA, or both.

Article 88—Any person who uses the means referred to in article 4 above to publish or disseminate any information or any document containing a national defense secret shall be liable to the penalties provided in articles 67 and 69 of the Penal Code.

Article 89—Any person who uses the means referred to in article 4 above to publish any information or document prejudicial to the secrecy of inquiries or preliminary investigations in connection with crimes and offenses is liable to imprisonment for from 1 to 6 months and a fine of from 5,000 to 50,000 DA.

Article 90—Any person who uses any means whatsoever to publish or disseminate photographs, drawings, and other illustrations depicting all or some of the circumstances surrounding the crimes or offenses referred to in articles 255 through 263 and 333 through 342 of the Penal Code shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one to three months and a fine of from 5,000 to 100,000 DA.

Article 91—Any person who, with the intention of doing harm, publishes or disseminates by any means whatsoever any text or illustration concerning the identity and personality of minors shall be punished with a prison sentence of from three months to one year and a fine of from 5,000 to 100,000 DA, unless the publication was authorized or expressly requested by the guardians of the minor in question.

Article 92—Any person who publishes the content of court proceedings when the court in question has ordered a case to be heard in camera shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one to six months and a fine of from 5,000 to 50,000 DA.

Article 93—Any person who publishes or broadcasts reports of court proceedings relative to the status of persons or abortion shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one to three months and a fine of from 2,000 to 10,000 DA.

Article 94—Except when authorized by the court having jurisdiction, the use of any sound recording or broadcasting equipment, television or movie camera, or still camera after a court session begins is forbidden. Any violation of this provision shall be punishable by a fine of from 2,000 to 10,000 DA.

Article 95—Any person who publishes or broadcasts the deliberations of courts and tribunals shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one to six months and a fine of from 5,000 to 50,000 DA.

Article 96—The direct or indirect defense by any means whatsoever of acts classified as crimes or offenses makes the perpetrator liable to a prison sentence of from one to five years and a fine of from 10,000 to 100,000 DA.

Article 97—Subject to the provisions of article 3 above, any person who deliberately uses the news media to insult incumbent chiefs of state shall be punished with a prison sentence of from one month to one year, a fine of from 3,000 to 30,000 DA, or both.

Article 98—Using the news media to engage in insulting behavior toward the chiefs and members of diplomatic missions accredited to the Government of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria makes the perpetrator liable to a prison sentence of from 10 days to one year and a fine of from 3,000 to 30,000 DA.

Article 99—In all the cases provided for under this title, the court may order the confiscation of property involved in the offense and the temporary or permanent closing of the news enterprises concerned.

Title VIII: Final Provisions

Article 100—Advertising is excluded from the scope of this law and will be the subject of a specific law.

Article 101—Public opinion polls are excluded from the scope of this law and will be the subject of a specific law.

Title IX: Transitional Provisions

Article 102—For the purpose of applying this law to print media in the public sector, the activities of publishing, editing, and printing may be separated from each other organically, operationally, and legally.

Article 103—As a transitional measure in setting up the Higher Information Council, those journalists who will be elected by their peers shall be chosen from among journalists possessing their professional card on the date this law is published and meeting the requirements as far as length of service is concerned.

Three shall be elected from among journalists working in radio and television. The other three shall be elected from among journalists employed in the print media.

Article 104—As a transitional measure applying to the first two elections to the Higher Information Council following its original establishment, the seats up for reelection shall be determined by drawing lots in each group in proportion to the size of each:

- One from among the members appointed by the president of the republic.
- One from among the members appointed by the speaker of the National People's Assembly.
- Two from among the elected journalists.

Article 105—All provisions contrary to this law, and particularly the abovementioned Law No. 82-01 dated 6 February 1982, are repealed.

Article 106—This law shall be published in the JOURNAL OFFICIEL DE LA REPUBLIQUE ALGERIENNE DEMOCRATIQUE ET POPULAIRE.

Done in Algiers, 3 April 1990.

Chadli Bendjedid.

University Professors Continue Strikes

Grievances Over Salary, Tenure

90AA0133A Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE in French 19-25 Apr 90 pp 23-24

[Article by Keltoum Staali; first paragraph is REVOLUTION AFRICAINE introduction]

[Text] The teachers' strike that began at the School of Law is spreading little by little to all the institutes at Algiers University. Even the most reluctant are going along with the strikers.

The latent unrest at the university, which everyone was aware of, has suddenly burst into the open. Organizing themselves into an "action and coordination committee," the teachers seem determined: the statement issued in that connection is symptomatic in every way of their feelings of injustice and humiliation. Throughout this survey, the teachers we talked to expressed with bitterness and sometimes rage the painful impression they

have of being treated like "rejects"—of always being kept out of the decisionmaking sphere. Added to that situation of moral crisis are the material conditions under which they work and that are also behind their work stoppage. The chief demand is for an increase in their salaries, which they consider inadequate. That is followed by the eternal issue of housing and, lastly, tenure for trainee teaching assistants.

A teacher starts out earning 5,000 dinars and ends his career earning 9,000 dinars—a salary not considered to be all that wonderful. The rumbling discontent among teachers seems to have been set off partly by the salary increase for magistrates, which was perceived as a real insult, and partly by the ministerial circular ordering "moonlighting" teachers to choose either teaching or some other occupation. Those two events taking place at the same time caused a stir in the teaching profession beginning at the School of Law, where 99 percent of the teachers moonlight. With its ministerial decision to put an end to a situation, which was illegal but had been tolerated until then, the supervising ministry touched a sore spot. Deprived of that privilege, many teachers are going to find their incomes considerably reduced.

But to make things very clear, we need to point out that in its statements, the strike movement is in no way defending the practice of moonlighting. On the contrary. All the more in view of the fact that until now, that practice has made it possible to conceal the salary problem. The course of events may have caused people to think that the strike is simply a smokescreen for the desire to maintain certain privileges. That is why the striking teachers are calling for an internal reorganization of the university which, quite obviously, will require putting a permanent end to the holding of more than one job. They even say that moonlighting has been an obstacle, and an important one at that, to the development of a national university. This is confirmed by a teacher-jurist, who says: "The issue of moonlighting must be resolved for good, and salaries must be increased. Personally, I do not agree with the strike principle, but I am very sensitive to the salary issue. I feel that this is an issue that must be reviewed as part of a national policy for the distribution of wages and salaries and not just split up sector by sector depending on where the pressure is at the moment." Although moonlighting is explained by the need to compensate for low salaries, those in university circles find it hard to accept the idea that teaching should be turned into a secondary activity. The moonlighters, who are disapproved of by the university moral code, have not only stood still in their jobs but have prevented recruitment for those posts. As a result, they have not involved themselves or made any personal investment in the development of the university. They are even reproached for their absenteeism. The general opinion is that it is necessary to put an end to the muddle so as to "finally start looking after the university." At the Institute of Economic Sciences in Le Caroubier, the teachers we spoke with stressed the issue of salaries, which is closely linked to the reorganization

of the university: "The university teaching profession must be upgraded; if we compare it to other sectors, we find that even a department head in a state-owned enterprise is better paid than someone holding the highest grade of doctorate. That is not fair."

The issue of housing, which is second on the list of demands, is also linked directly to improved working conditions and is therefore crucial to a policy for developing the Algerian university system. The estimated demand is for 1,200 housing units for Algiers University. "We are not demanding low-cost housing. We are willing to accept other formulas such as housing cooperatives to help meet the demand."

Salaries, housing, and tenure. According to the strikers, those problems have been brought up constantly for years, but in vain: "We have gotten promises, always promises. Contrary to what may have been said, this strike is the culmination of a series of steps on our part that have never been taken seriously by the authorities."

The first reaction by the Ministry Delegate for Universities was that the strike was illegal because it did not conform to regulations. There had been no advance notice. A statement by the High Council of Algiers University called upon the teachers to go back to work, promising that the problems would be examined.

The strikers have ignored that statement and decided to continue their movement. They are demanding firm guarantees that their problems will be considered and are refusing to be content with "vague promises."

For his part, the rector of Algiers University says he is fully prepared to engage in dialogue but complains that he has no one to talk to: "The university is public property governed by laws and rules. Everyone is required to do his duty. We have a moral responsibility to the students." He admits that the salary and housing demands are legitimate. Concerning the problem of tenure, the dossiers—300 of them—are working their way through channels: "in accordance with the law, all the trainee teaching assistants can take it for granted that their tenure will become effective in January 1991. So that is a false problem. I hope that the strike will end and that reason will win out so that the dialogue traditionally accepted at the university will resume."

The question of tenure, which affects 75 percent of the teaching body, was the cause of a work stoppage last year, and it has been dragging on for years. This precarious situation has sometimes resulted in tragedies. In Le Caroubier, mention is made of cases where teachers have died without receiving tenure, leaving their families with no resources. For all those reasons, the teachers say: "A strike is the only alternative. But there has never been any question of an unlimited strike. We will stop as soon as there are guarantees of a solution. We are ready to negotiate."

Be that as it may, is it not the students who will bear the brunt of this strike? "In any case, the situation cannot be

worse," responds one striker. "Can a teacher decently dispense an education worthy of the name while living in a 'hammam'? We have said, and we repeat, that we are ready to organize to make up classes that have been lost. We see our problems as being tied to the improvement of the university—that is, as being in the interest of the students themselves."

Although the strike is concerned basically with salary demands, it is serving primarily to reveal extreme tensions linked with a crisis in operations and a crisis of confidence. Teachers are discouraged and lack motivation. Their social status has deteriorated steadily over the years and is not appropriate to the mission assigned to them. The social level of the teachers, who have been proletarianized and almost reduced to beggary, matches the dilapidated condition of the institutes into which students are crammed: broken windows, insufficient classrooms, and unusable premises exposed to all kinds of weather. One can understand why university teachers are looking more and more sullen every day. To the point that they are wondering what might be the purpose of this university system that is crumbling under its problems. If one mentions the problem of the quality of education to them, they almost laugh—a hollow laugh, of course. Perhaps one venerable professor was not really exaggerating when he said: "We do not actually have a university. The institutes are not really higher level institutes. I would almost say that they are upper elementary schools."

Despite its blunders and shortcomings, this strike movement does have the advantage of focusing general attention on the serious crisis in a sector as strategic as the university. At the same time, it draws attention to a real sore spot: a union that is genuinely representative and credible and capable of supporting all those demands.

Professor Urges Government Initiative

90AA0133B Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE
in French 19-25 Apr 90 pp 24-25

[Interview with Professor Bencheikh by Keltoum Staali; date and place not given; first paragraph is REVOLUTION AFRICAINE introduction]

[Text] More than two weeks after it began, and contrary to all expectations, the strike by university professors is continuing to challenge public opinion and the government. Is the university suffering because its administration has deteriorated due to the mistakes made? Our purpose in this interview is to try to see things more clearly.

[Staali] What do you think of the strike that is shaking the university?

[Bencheikh] Like all the strikes taking place in the country, this one is obviously not very well organized, and it is difficult to demand, as in the case of other strikes, a strict application of the principles contained in the most recent law on labor disputes. In fact, I believe

that in our country at present, even if a strike does not meet all the conditions laid down in the law exactly, this does not mean that one must close the door on dialogue.

[Staali] Do you think that the Ministry Delegate for Universities is rejecting dialogue?

[Bencheikh] I think that the ministry has not correctly understood the general situation existing in the country. I think that a ministry must look at social conflicts in its sector from the political standpoint and take the country's political and social situation into account instead of clinging to a position of principle far removed from that country's socioeconomic and political realities. Moreover, a jurist such as myself, being sensitive to socioeconomic problems, sees clearly that a strike is never settled solely on legal grounds. I believe, for example, that the recent law on labor disputes needs to be reviewed immediately. It stipulates that negotiation must precede a strike. But there are few examples in the world of cases where negotiations took place before a strike notice was given or a strike began. Our country's history shows that strikes do not fit neatly into regulations that are not based on a prior study of the real balance of power between the various parties involved. Strikes were banned until just a few years ago, but that did not prevent strikes from taking place, and some of them were successful. I think that the government and the ministers are in a poor position to demand scrupulous compliance with a legally imposed condition without regard for the situation. The discontent in the universities runs quite deep, and the role of the MDU [expansion unknown] is to enter into negotiation and organize the necessary contacts and studies for remedying the situation. The time that is passing is costing a lot.

[Staali] Isn't the statement by the High Council of Algiers University a call for dialogue?

[Bencheikh] Any statement calling for negotiation is worthwhile in the present situation. I don't believe, however, that one should take a definite stand on a statement by a university high council, which in fact cannot make a decision in this area. I realize that because of the way things were done in the past, people instinctively turn to an organization to cover themselves and get something done. It is not easy to give up those reflexes even when they are out of date. But we must approach things in a way that will take the drama out of them and discourage extremist positions. The problems concerning the level of training for teachers and students must be solved, and that brings up a number of issues, chief among them salaries and the inevitable question of housing. Those problems should have been solved a long time ago. The government thought it was doing so by publishing laws in the JOURNAL OFFICIEL. But the dam was bound to break someday. In the case of the universities, there have been no salary increases for years. But other sectors are being given pay increases that the country cannot afford. I am thinking in particular of the scandalous salaries paid to deputies and also to judges. You can't keep teachers from rightfully

resenting the fact that students barely out of their institutes are being paid two, three, or four times as much as university professors.

The basic problem is that the universities are being neglected not only on the scientific level but also on the pedagogical and material levels. There is no office for working with students in the third cycle, and the libraries are acquiring almost no new books. None of that is likely to encourage and modernize research. At a time when the government is undertaking economic reforms requiring new visions of the social sciences, it is giving the impression of not taking the measure of the real problems.

[Staal] How do you explain the fact that this situation has been allowed to continue, sometimes in defiance of the law? I am thinking in particular of moonlighting.

[Bencheikh] There have been laws leading us to believe that we were finally moving toward putting an end to moonlighting. There are examples of laws that the government thinks up and publishes but does not enforce. I know that nonenforcement of a law is not due solely to a lack of government follow-up. Nonenforcement of a law is sometimes a sign that the measure itself was not appropriate. To solve the problem of moonlighting out in the field, it is also necessary to solve the salary problem.

[Staal] Don't you think that by closing its eyes to a violation of the law, the government was making a concession to moonlighting teachers in the hope that it could thereby preserve social peace?

[Bencheikh] It's possible, although I don't think a concession was being made. Of course, it is a good thing for a government to seek social peace, but not at any price, and it must not be done to the detriment of the development of the sector concerned and, therefore, of the country. The question that must be asked about moonlighting is: how does it constitute an obstacle to the implementation of a dynamic policy in this sector?

It must be shown how the ban on moonlighting will help remedy the problems being experienced in education. Is it possible for a teacher-jurist to complete his thesis, acquire training, organize pedagogical activities, and provide quality teaching while working as a lawyer? Obviously not. And that being the case, the necessary measures will have to be adopted. I believe that the government cannot afford to avoid a negotiated solution. The era of policies fabricated in government offices by officials taking orders from someone is over.

[Staal] But do solutions to the crisis exist?

[Bencheikh] There are solutions. First of all, there must be negotiation with those concerned. A climate of confidence must be restored. It is impossible to demand that the strikers be well organized, because there is no union

organization capable of organizing people. And the successive governments bear a large share of the responsibility for that lack of credible organization. So the government is in no position now to blame the strikers for being poorly organized. What it must do now is give dialogue a push without waiting, because the students are not waiting. It is in no one's interest to see this situation deteriorate. And the entire question must also be viewed from the standpoint of the foreigners with whom we are seeking economic cooperation. Foreign investors are not going to come here if they see that the cabinet authorities are incapable of working for and achieving social peace.

[Staal] Is it possible that the draft bill on the reform of higher education will provide an answer to the crisis?

[Bencheikh] I don't think so, because that bill relative to university autonomy was drawn up in a way that made consensus impossible, and I believe that the head of the government has implicitly admitted that fact. The bill apparently met with almost total rejection. It was too vague. It was concerned much more with questions asked than with clearly stated principles. So it is far from constituting a solution, especially a solution to the problems posed by the current strike. Specific problems require specific answers.

[Staal] Apart from their salary demands, are the teachers in a position to make proposals concerning a policy for the recovery of their sector?

[Bencheikh] I am not very optimistic regarding university renewal. The policies pursued to date have led to the current stagnation. University standards are a matter of extreme concern. A serious and uncompromising diagnosis is necessary. The government must admit the mistakes it has made, one example being its contemplation of an unorganized and unimaginative reform. The government must be the vehicle for an overall plan for the university, and it must be judged by that plan. It will be difficult to climb back up again because the harm done to the university dates back a long way, and it has caused a lot of damage. Everyone's skills will have to be called upon. Political parties and prominent figures have emerged with diverse opinions, and they need to be consulted. And above all, we need to take into account those chiefly concerned and the contribution they can make. The solutions to the university crisis must fit in with development of the democratic process.

Academician Discusses Education, Social Change

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[Interview with Dr. Nouredine Toulbi, rector of the University of Algiers, by Abderrahmane Lounes: "Cultural Mutation"; date and place not given]

[Text] Dr. Nouredine Toulbi is one of the most original personalities in the Algerian academic world. Before becoming a journalist and writer, scientific

research director, and rector of the University of Algiers (since 1986), he was professor of psychology and director of the Institute of Psychology and Educational Sciences. From that institution he acquired a taste for facts and scientific rigor over mythologies. His works are admired and respected, among them *RELIGION, RITES and MUTATIONS* (National Book Publishing Enterprise, 1984), a major contribution to the theory of social change in Algeria and other countries sharing "similar characteristics of transformation."

In this fascinating interview we get glimpses of his great wealth of insights on the many subjects he has investigated, such as democracy in action, the politicization of culture, the role and future of women in Algeria, university autonomy, Arabization...and other questions that bear on fundamental or current problems. Let us listen to what he has to say.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] How do you define yourself in relation to Islam? And is it true that Islam is filling the vacuum left by discredited ideologies?

[Toualbi] Coming from a family of ulemas, I learned very early that Islam was a religion of openness, progress, and tolerance.

That is why it is a world religion—a reality, however, which could be compromised, at least in terms of domestic and international perception, by the extremist or radical actions of a few. Philosophically grounded in the doctrine of free will, Islam rejects constraint and religious persecution, just as it disavows messianic pretensions that falsely promote the idea that Islamic doctrine is compatible with the existence of individuals who can act as intercessors between the believer and God.

In the country's new sociopolitical circumstances, I think the Ministry of Worship in its capacity as an official authority over religious matters has a much greater role of explanation and guidance to play. Because—and you were saying this yourself just now—Algeria, in the throes of a serious crisis of values, has an existential need for a new ideology. What will it be?

I can only say that the history of civilizations shows us time and again how the monotheistic religions—and not only Islam—serve as a refuge of values in times of crisis and social uncertainty. Look for example at what is happening right now in the countries of East Europe: the resurgence of Christianity in these countries fills the gap left by the sudden death of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] It seems that your book *RELIGION, RITES and MUTATIONS* is becoming increasingly fashionable. Aren't you afraid it will be "appropriated" for partisan ends?

[Toualbi] I must admit that parts of this book, which came out in 1984, proved prophetic with regard to the institutional upheavals taking place in Algerian society today.

In the book I analyze systematically a variety of socio-cultural indicators of the current crisis, taking as a structural framework the diverse social functions of the idea of the sacred. I said it was already being mutilated, manipulated, appropriated—and when my words were not altogether ignored they were sometimes the subject of cordial denunciation.

But all I was saying was this: in the absence of stable, reassuring reference systems, Algerian society—youth in particular—is having an identity crisis. If it fails to resolve that crisis, it could panic and yield to extremist temptations.

The culture has not really helped young people find a clear and hopeful path to the future. It is a sign of the times that our youth today, disappointed with an ineffective socialist experiment, is being seduced by religion. But for how long? I could not say. Unless people's lassitude and fatalism enable it to establish theocratic rule, to compensate for its fundamental lack of identity in a society which, it must be emphasized, seems incapable of offering its young people the existential reference system they need. The problems of unemployment, housing, leisure, sexual, and emotional misery that youth confronts all push it toward renunciation and introversion. This is what really caused the explosion of October 1988, whatever other reasons people might give. We should have seen it as a serious indicator of social crisis, a "cry for help" born of despair.

Instead of doing that, the adults once again confiscated their protest and used it for their own purposes, thinking to shut them up. But again, for how long?

Appropriate my book? I do not think so. It is a plea for the kind of cultural eclecticism that is diametrically opposed to the radicalism that seems to lurk on the immediate horizon.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] How can the Berber language and culture be protected from the decay and ideological-political exploitation that have spoiled other forms of Algerian cultural expression? What can be done to ensure that the Berbers' language and culture flourish, that their uniqueness and special genius continue to enrich Algerian culture? In short, how can we recognize and appropriate our "Berberness," as we have already assumed our "Arabness"?

[Toualbi] The Berber language, I say, is an inseparable part of Algerian culture. By reason of political naivety or puerile ostracism, this fact has been denied historically, a fact that has put the Berbers on the defensive. Their natural and legitimate defense mechanisms have in turn found expression in political demands, which are the source of cleavages and more or less open opposition. Today the Berber language is generally recognized as part of the national patrimony, but much time has been lost since independence over the issue of integration versus cultural synthesis.

Apart from the Berber language, this unresolved question of cultural synthesis brings forcefully back into focus the problem of what social model we want to have.

Are we headed toward a monolithic model, inward looking and cut off from the world, or in the alternative must we take the risk of an increasingly audacious opening to the world, by embracing pluralistic humanitarian ideals?

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Certain obscurantist forces that exploit Islam claim the right to regiment people's private lives and tell them what to believe. What is your perspective on this problem?

[Toualbi] You know, among all the "cultural invariants" one finds in societies, the sacred is the force that is most hostile, most resistant to change and to the diverse risks which change entails.

Certain groups become resistant to many different things, and their resistance is a measure of the anxiety aroused by change. The more society changes, the worse these anxieties get, sometimes to the point of triggering very unusual behavior. The phenomenon of pamphleteers and "commanders" of all sorts who think they must change the world and impose their ideas and code of conduct on everyone is a classic manifestation of this crisis of values. But if one studies the history of civilizations, one realizes that such behavior is a concomitant of every variety of millenarism: eventually they all fade away, only to reappear later on.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] I would like to ask you now, less in your capacity as rector of the University of Algiers and more as a well-known professor and theoretician of social and psychological change, what is your professional assessment of what has been accomplished in the country over the last year, in terms of political reform and democratization. What can you say about this?

[Toualbi] It is obvious that in strictly temporal terms a single year is too short a time for a definitive assessment of such an exalted experiment as the one on which Algeria embarked in October 1988.

But I would like first of all to make several conceptual clarifications regarding the conditions under which these reforms were initiated: they were not the product of evolution or of "political change," but were rather the result of a veritable "mutation." The concept of change suggests a modification in direction—political direction, in this instance—through a series of small alterations in course; ultimately it presupposes a pedagogical effort of preparation, explanation and communication. The concept of mutation, by contrast, implies the sudden emergence of a totally novel situation which was not expected to occur where and when it did.

Mutation thus signifies a rupture in sociopolitical structures, and if serious crisis is to be avoided, we must

change our attitudes quickly—which in practice is rarely possible, in the sphere of social values.

Thus, what has been happening in the country over the last year can perhaps be considered conceptually as revolutionary, with all this term implies with respect to unwanted secondary effects stemming from the reforms. I refer to the current disorders throughout the whole society, all the dysfunctional manifestations, if not actual perversions, we observe in the playing of the democratic "game."

The fact is that the absence of a period of democratic transition in which Algeria's new political landscape could become integrated has perforce led to a kind of collective panic. The workplace is a good example: at the very time when everyone is being asked, because of what is called the economic crisis, to show greater discipline and realism about their aspirations and desires, we see all around us the very opposite. Instead of discipline and rigor in the workplace, we see an ever greater proliferation of welfare and wage demands.

Although these may often be legitimate, the work stoppages to which they lead have the inevitable effect of perpetuating the crisis and thus postponing establishment of conditions that would make it possible to satisfy those demands. It is really a vicious circle, and we have to get out of it posthaste!

In this kind of situation, political rhetoric should at the very least provide and maintain social guidelines to safeguard the spirit and letter of the reforms. One year after their initiation, the phase of democratic apprenticeship can be considered complete, so now we should be able to rehabilitate government based on respect for the law and reject all irresponsible action.

For the real danger is that these irresponsible actions will once again—at the very time when the president's reforms are now establishing a definitive rupture with all the conditions that precipitated the collapse of the previous political system—legitimize the sort of "ideological syncretism" we saw before October 1988.

To come back to your specific question, I personally consider that October 1988 was no fluke but rather an indication that a whole set of social contradictions had ripened, crystallized.

The warning signals we saw before October—the events at Tizi-Ouzou, Constantine, etc.—were never taken seriously or objectively analyzed, and as a result we lost the political opportunity to manage a democratic transition.

So the democratic opening that occurred was somewhat constrained. The problem today is that this democratic opening was never paired with a previously articulated plan for society. That is why we find this sense of collective confusion, of more or less widespread loss of focus due to the absence of a generally accepted social model.

Instead, and to confuse people still more, we see more and more futile diatribes and political exegeses. And much of society's work is being put off. Which quite naturally has led some people to observe that it takes more than democracy to make the wheat grow!

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Culture has become a highly politicized arena. Until the last few years, the political system subsidized culture and made it serve strictly political ends. What is the situation now?

[Toualbi] What is culture? The best definition that comes to my mind is the one from G. Devreux, who said that culture is the way life is experienced.

Now the quality of experience, that is to say the manner in which we experience our human condition, depends in large part on our historical, economic, intellectual, and political capital.

The real value of that capital, of which culture forms an integral part, conditions the quality of life and determines the destiny of any society.

But because culture, when freed from ideological and religious constraints, develops a heightened critical sense, because it questions and challenges the real meaning of things, political regimes are notoriously suspicious of it and loath to encourage it. Thus, at the risk of killing the spirit of the society, they try to suppress the questioning aspects of culture or quite often make efforts to render them harmless by the production of what is called "official culture," or more precisely "normative culture." Then anything that fails to conform to the canons of that normative culture becomes foreign, and like everything foreign it becomes suspect.

The incantatory techniques used for this are also well known: mystification and sanctification of certain values, persecution and exclusion of everything different. In short, at least in my opinion, the result of culture's politicization is its symbolic murder.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] We are familiar with your struggle against all forms of "discrimination." That is why I would like to know how you see the future of Algerian women in a society such as ours dominated by patriarchal and phallogocratic values, where the Islamic tradition is a preponderant factor in the social, political and juridical systems.

[Toualbi] I do not think that Islam, as a philosophy of being in the world, supports any sexual dichotomy. The phallogocentric tradition of which you speak is from my perspective a typical example of the contradictions between theory and practice in Islam. It is a flagrant case of Arabo-Islamic ambivalence, wherein we see a theoretical elevation of woman as mother, wife and believer contrasted with a symbolic deprecation of femininity and its attributes in daily life.

In a situation of social crisis, everyone as we know must find a "scapegoat" to blame for his existential problems or those of the community. And in a society like ours

where woman is traditionally vulnerable, she can offer an extraordinary means of catharsis: certain individuals, by persecuting and anathematizing women, are able to discharge their own anxieties and moreover safeguard their own masculine narcissism.

It is quite often simply to avoid blaming themselves that men blame women for their problems. This is a well-known mechanism for safeguarding the phallic-narcissistic image and results from what in psychoanalysis we call "reaction formations."

Let me explain: our relationship to women is ambivalent, a mixture of desire and anxiety, love and hate. When desire is socialized, civilized, the relationship develops normally and can be integrated into humanitarian culture. One of my acquaintances said to me recently that culture began the day a man first had the idea of offering a flower to a woman.

On the other hand, when we do not accept responsibility for our desire, it is perceived as bad and becomes transformed into its opposite. Confronted with the mystery of woman, with the fantasies and frustrations she excites, there is then an unconscious reaction that is aggressive and destructive in nature. Deprived of the object of desire, one tries one's best to destroy it, if only at a symbolic level.

Thus, in the discrimination that sometimes accompanies the way women are represented, one gets the sense of a self-defeating group behavior, not unlike the deranged man who destroys the precious stone he is guarding to make sure it contains no impurities.

What kind of future does the Algerian woman face? We have just seen how far she could confuse and subjugate man if she wanted.

We can only hope she will accept her future, whether or not it is what she really wants.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] What would it take to create a high-quality educational system in Algeria?

[Toualbi] My answer is simple: create the conditions for a kind of "democratic elitism" in the university, by offering everyone an equal chance at the start and letting the best succeed.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] University autonomy? A subject that has stirred up a chorus of protest. In the last analysis, what does university autonomy really mean? How is all this going to settle out?

[Toualbi] The multiplicity of contradictions throughout the educational system, and especially in the university, forces us to ponder deeply the question how schooling could be improved. Some initial thoughts were outlined during the second conference on higher education, which reached a consensus on reform.

Thus the issue of university autonomy first arose in response to a request by the university community. And

lo and behold, to our great surprise, it stirred up—as you said—a chorus of protest. Why?

This reaction, which was inherently self-defeating, had in my view two underlying causes. The first was sociological and sociopolitical in nature. The issue was submitted to the people at a time of great political effervescence marked by the breakdown of ideological reference points. Faced with this breakdown or blurring of reference points, people were thrown into a state of confusion. The crisis of confidence between the governed and the government, between the citizen and the political regime, sometimes took on a nihilistic aspect, as you will recall. It was in this general climate of uncertainty that the initial autonomy proposal was given its first reading in the university community.

Mirroring the institutional confusion prevailing at the time, this carefully drafted and tentative document challenged existing assumptions more than it laid down new ones, and posed questions more than it offered answers. The aim of this cautious pedagogical initiative was to stimulate a democratic debate and to force the university to engage in some soul-searching.

But anxiety was stronger, and despite the frequent assurances of the authorities, the autonomy issue was turned into a political football in order to justify its rejection. Today, in light of the clarifications made by the head of government and the responsible minister, things have stabilized, and the theatrics set off by the initial document seem, at least on the surface, to have died down.

The second cause was psychological, involving resistance to change on the part of certain university interest groups. An operational reorganization of the university is needed to implement new standards of personnel evaluation, the ultimate objective being to create the academic conditions for high-quality teaching and professionalism. The university grading system, pedagogical know-how, and competence in scientific research should be the criteria on which teaching personnel are rated, and this objective may be seen as a threat by some academics—not many, fortunately—who are weak intellectually.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Both inside and outside the Algerian university there has been a trend toward the formation of factions; this is natural in a democracy, and I for one see nothing abnormal about it, so long as everyone's freedom of choice is respected and preserved. And I will conclude by saying that if excesses have been seen—and not just at the University of Algiers—we should probably view them only as typical beginners' mistakes while people are making the adjustment to the new democratic rules of the game. Today I feel that after the period of "catharsis," inevitable during a political mutation when old complexes lose their hold on people, a certain discipline in the observance of democracy is beginning to be established at the university.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] During the last decade, there was increasing upstream Arabization, without

much concern for the downstream effects... How do you explain the deep anxiety of among many students today about Arabized courses of study?

[Toualbi] Your description of student "anxiety" needs to be qualified. A student at the University of Algiers enrolling in a course in which all the lessons are given in Arabic knows in advance what he is getting into, and the growing number of university applicants suggests this deep anxiety is not an overwhelming factor, at least in literature and the humanities.

However, if there is some anxiety it is expressed more in relation to professional outlets, where the career prospects for young degree holders seem to have become very poor as a result of the present economic crisis. This sometimes leads students, during the course of their university education, to demand guarantees of employment, which the university administration obviously cannot provide. Yet the problem you mention, the mismatch between Arabized education and the socioprofessional environment (to the extent there is one at all), seriously complicates placement prospects for those with degrees in literature and legitimately exacerbates their fear of unemployment.

It is thus a delicate problem, which can be resolved by orienting courses of study more toward career possibilities, and by a better relationship to the linguistic tools of training, which should henceforth be demystified.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Why do Algerian intellectuals hesitate or simply refuse to speak out on this burning issue of cultural fundamentalism?

[Toualbi] You cannot accuse me of that, as we have been talking of nothing else ever since we began the interview. But if there is a real reluctance to talk about the issue, I think it is mainly due to the feeling (albeit factitious) among certain intellectuals that the question of fundamentalism or cultural radicalism has no place in a movement of historical continuity.

Some see it as no more than a necessarily transient ephiphenomenon, thus one without importance for the future of society as a whole.

This assessment, if it were widely shared, would obviously be dangerous, since cultural fundamentalism, like all other ultraradical movements, makes the most extreme claims possible.

In general, the strategy of cultural radicalism is to emphasize some of the culture's values while excluding others by arbitrarily damning them as vile, as the source of denaturation or a perversion of group identity.

So under the guise of authenticity we see the development of ideologies that suppress the soul, while the poets of freedom and democracy are beaten and killed.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Interdisciplinary group work is in a state of crisis. What is the status of research in Algeria, and how is the researcher perceived?

[Toualbi] Turning to the state of scientific research at the University of Algiers, I am obliged to qualify your observation. In the last three years, since the dissolution of the ONRS [National Office for Scientific Research], the universities' traditional mission of teaching and research has been restored, which was a very good thing.

At the University of Algiers, for example, and with an annual budget of 11 million dinars, we have been able within the last few years to establish about 100 interdisciplinary research teams.

The initial results of their labors have been presented and are currently being evaluated at high levels. We are working today on two objectives: first of all to publish the best of these works and thus bring them to the attention of the general public, and second to establish contractual relationships with socioeconomic sectors, which might want to avail themselves of university research.

When the latter initiative is once under way, the university will not only be able to elevate the status of the intellectual work done by those researchers, but it will also obtain greater financing by being paid for the services it performs.

We have already started doing this: for the last three years, the army museum has been paying us 500,000 dinars a year for our work.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Highly talented Algerian specialists are underutilized in many sectors, with positions of real responsibility going only to foreigners. Is this also the case at the University of Algiers?

[Toualbi] Absolutely not! And I say so for three reasons. First, for some years now the University of Algiers has not employed foreigners except in a negligible number of teaching positions.

Second, the administrative jobs (the rectorate, institute directors, department heads) are filled by faculty members for almost no compensation (15 percent of base salary), a fact which greatly reduces the competition for such academic responsibilities.

Third, the procedure for peer selection of institute directors and their deputies means any educator at the university can win a position of responsibility if he can win the support of his fellow faculty members.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Why is it that in every new book you throw everything back into question, as if for you the important thing were always to go further, to break completely new ground, rather than consolidate the advances already made?

[Toualbi] My books, like most of my articles, have tried with greater or lesser success to analyze various aspects of Algeria's rapidly changing society. Now one must understand that in such a social context the "truths" supposedly unearthed, including those obtained by rigorous scientific research, change very quickly—and

sometimes into their own opposites. I'll give you an example: carry out an opinion poll today on whatever representative sample of the Algerian population you choose, on any subject you choose. You will get a number of responses that I wager will be largely invalidated two or three years from now, even if the same methodology is used.

Who could have imagined 10 years ago, for example, that young people would become so enthusiastic about religion?

At the time—and I remember this well because I wrote about it in this very journal—the public authorities were worried about the resurgence of juvenile delinquency, in regard to which the religious question was seen as a minor footnote.

Now we are seeing a radical change in the forms of protest by which young people express the frustrations of their daily existence.

The fundamental nature of the protest is the same, but today it has become even more aggravated, and manifested in religious radicalism comes as disquieting evidence of a serious rupture between our institutions and a large portion of our youth.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Reading some very obscure works or specialized reviews, one confronts the gaps that still remain in our understanding of postindependence Algerian society. But don't you think that some academics have just made matters more confused, instead of describing and explaining Algerian society? Why is this, and how can the false ideas they have promoted be "corrected"?

[Toualbi] Your question is a good one. I think that the Algerian universities, and those in particular that have made the effort to publish their research, have sometimes yielded to the strong temptation to create abstract models of the operating mechanisms of Algerian society, to the detriment of the methodological conditions required for scientific proof of their conclusions. In such instances it is sometimes obvious that implicit assumptions and theoretical presuppositions have overtaken the empirical reality they were supposed to model. But in my opinion that is not very serious, since as we make progress in our understanding of the world surrounding us we will gradually come, as you say, to correct ourselves and fill the gaps in our knowledge.

We must also realize that any research in the humanistic and social sciences, whatever its intrinsic merits, is above all a testament to the social realities obtaining at a given point in that society's history.

As a consequence, we never treat of immutable verities, and here more than anywhere else our judgments must always be seen as relative—and our errors too.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Many people are saying that the education provided in Algeria's universities is an empty shell. What is your opinion?

[Toualbi] Consider the fact that for 25 years all of us, at every level of responsibility, have passively accepted the subordination of science and pedagogy to political imperatives. Today we are all so to speak harvesting what we have sown.

In the name of educational democracy, for example—a very worthy concept, by the way, and one which at a particular point in our sociopolitical progress served to inspire a generous social program—we have made many misjudgments. We have considered, for example, that the success of the university as an organization could be judged by its quantitative output, and in so doing we have neglected, indeed completely overlooked, the other indispensable aspect of the university's mission, namely the need to maintain quality of education. And so, in order to deal with the growing number of students, Algeria's universities have often resorted to recruiting a professorial corps of very mixed teaching caliber and operated our institutions of higher learning in ways that are very questionable from a pedagogical standpoint.

Naturally the result has been significant variation in the quality of education between one department and the next, one university and the next.

But despite this, I do not agree with those who claim an Algerian university education is worthless. This excessively severe judgment is the result of an impulsive self-deprecation which, paradoxically enough, is espoused by those academics (both instructors and students) who have been least successful in their university careers. After all, it is easier to maintain a clear conscience if one imputes the failure to the university system as a whole!

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] Can you see yourself heading an autonomous university?

[Toualbi] If autonomy means the emergence of conditions in which the university can be transformed into a real center of culture—which presupposes an in-depth pedagogical and scientific reform as well as the decentralization so much desired at every administrative level—then my answer is yes.

[REVOLUTION AFRICAINE] What advice would you have for students?

[Toualbi] Just two things: never yield to the temptation of defeatism, and keep the university out of petty local quarrels.

EGYPT

Mubarak Advised To Make Legislative Elections Fairer

90AA0140A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 20 Apr 90 p 9

[Commentary by Muhammad Isma'il 'Ali]

[Txt] Your Excellency the President, I know that you are devoted to stability, because in your opinion it is a

necessary foundation for investment. Neither I nor anyone else disagrees with you on that. But I disagree with you, Your Excellency, in linking investment to change and considering change harmful to investment. This equation, though it bears truth and fairness in its first half, bears in its other half stagnation, then backwardness, then a retreat from development. I assure you, Your Excellency, that change is not in contradiction with stability, rather it could be a reason for its success.

Let us imagine, Your Excellency, an unsuccessful manager, a losing factory, or a run-down system; then how can we continue with all that on the pretext of stability and encouraging continuity? I have practically asserted, time and time again, that the current "stability," whose real name is "stagnation," is the primary cause of the failure of economic growth and the widening of the gap between the population growth rate and the economic growth rate.

I would like to say that everyone avoids running away, and everyone, Egyptian or foreign, realizes that our "stability" is nothing but serious stagnation that we are unable to develop, and that this stagnation which we call "stability" is the poison that every investor swallows. An investor butts against a rock and bloodies his head; the rock being restrictions upon restrictions, contradictions, and complications that bring one's heart to one's mouth!

Your Excellency, I will not ask you to amend the constitution, or to abolish the emergency law, or the laws on the press and the parties, and I will not ask you to abolish the public sector or 50 percent of the workers and farmers, or free education. I will never demand that. But I ask for only one thing, namely a pivot in the circle of change for the sake of stability to make ready for investment opportunities.

I seek inspiration for my sole request from your words, your inclinations, and your thoughts. I know that you are swamped with proposals one after the other, some contradicting others, and that in the government there are comprehensive elements that benefit, certainly, from the situation staying as it is, and that in the government there are other elements that want change, and each has his argument for you. We have lived, unfortunately, until we saw this weak, feeble ministry, which is headed by another who is politically suitable to head a ministry, and we saw its ministers opposing one another.

The ball is now in your court, Your Excellency, for you to appeal to the people. You will not disagree with me in that appealing to the people is the pinnacle of democracy, but believe me, Your Excellency: I had experiences with the late president when he would complain bitterly about opportunists in the National Party. I say that appealing to the people does not mean appealing to the National Party.

That means that turning to the people must occur through all means that would actually lead to the people,

and you know with certainty when turning to the people is a sincere expression of the fact of the will of the people.

Turning to the "Egyptian people" is different from turning to the "peoples of the Egyptian parties." I am sure that you understand the difference between the two phrases. Therefore I present to you, Your Excellency, only one proposal. It would end the game of turning to the "peoples of the parties," and head directly to the "Egyptian people," the true owners of Egypt, and the sole legitimate representatives of this country.

Your excellency, I propose a "change in the election system." That is the starting point, the beginning of the road; we start from here. When I say "changing the election system," I mean the sum total of the elements that create, influence, and act upon the election process. These in general include the following:

1. With respect to nominations: the door should be opened to all Egyptians, without discrimination to those holding an educational degree, so as to create an educated assembly.
2. To voting: The door should be opened to all (the living) Egyptians to vote once, after the election rosters are reviewed by a judicial committee that does not belong to any party.
3. On the manner of the elections: In party lists and lists of independents with a reduction in percentage of three percent, votes less than that percentage would go to the lowest list or be cancelled finally or in the individual system temporarily, and the matter would then be presented to the elected assembly.
4. To the administration of the elections: They would be administered by the government headed by Husni Mubarak along with the leaders of the parties, and an equal number of judges, and the task of this government would end with the end of the elections.
5. All freedoms would be allowed during the elections, and every party or independent would have no less than half an hour a day on television and radio on the "Face the People" program, with the holding of debates, and this would be done a month before the elections.

After that, Your Excellency, you would have led the people by the hand, without unrest or disturbances, and with the utmost calm, to the road of desired change.

Let us leave this real people's assembly to do what it wants for Egypt. It must abrogate, amend, or leave standing any law, and when that happens, it will have issued from a representative assembly, not from a coup or revolution.

Investments poured, Your Excellency, upon Eastern Europe when peaceful change began with the change in the basic structures of the chambers of deputies.

The current elections systems, Your Excellency, were not set up in the interest of the people. Rather they were set

up to keep certain people in the seats of power forever, and National Party members of the People's Assembly have become officials in a government agency at the party level.

Do not be afraid, Your Excellency, of the issue of a "multitude of elections." Those are the claims of the fat cats who enjoy their food alone at the table while the respectable family is away. Greece, for example, will hold in the next few days the third election in 10 months. Why? Because appealing to the "real" people, without discrimination among citizens, is the way out of crises.

So Mr. President, the door is open before you. You can start from here.

Government 'Aiding' Extremism by Rejecting Opposition

90AA0163A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 25 Apr 90 p 7

[Article by 'Abd-al-Sattar al-Tawilah: "Ruling Party Backs Religious Extremism"]

[Text] Many writers, myself among them, have written, warning the parties of the democratic opposition against indulgence or laxity toward the extremist religious tendency, since such laxity represents a kind of strength for it. No one, however, has written about the basic force that, not content with laxity toward the extremist religious tendency, even helps, aids, and encourages it. This is a force from within the ruling regime itself, no matter how strange and ironic this seems.

Since the removal of the nightmare of former Interior Minister Zaki Badr, it has become evident that the real position of the opposition parties toward religious extremism and its representatives is very clear and decisive in recognizing the danger of such extremism to the democratic process. As a result, the opposition parties, especially the Wafd Party, deserve the appreciation and thanks of the current interior minister.

It has become clear that the point of view of the opposition parties was correct. They defined their principal foe, the real foe of democracy and the source of the main threat to it, as the daily abuses against freedom and democracy emanating from the former interior minister. How could one have opened a side battle with the religious tendency?

Never before has an Egyptian interior minister received so warm a welcome as the one with which the opposition parties have received him. This welcome has turned into backing, praise, and aid. This phenomenon in itself is inimical to the terrorism practiced by the extremist groups and encourages the minister to continue opposing it.

Now, however, it remains to be said that the right arm of these groups lies inside the ruling National Democratic

Party [NDP]. The evidence of the recent terroristic incidents in al-Minya, Abu Qirgas, and al-Fayyum points to this reality.

In al-Minya and Abu Qirgas, NDP-appointed security authorities and even the governor hesitated to confront the extremists. They allowed them to cause havoc for a considerable period of time.

In al-Fayyum, the newspaper AL-AHALI has revealed that the leader of the so-called "New Jihad" group, which robs and plunders property and commits arson, occupies a respected position in the security administration there.

It appears that the Directorate of Security in al-Minya granted members of extremist groups apprehension powers to uncover crimes and criminals and report them to the authorities.

Wherever moves by extremist groups turn up against citizens or against each other, published details make it clear that these groups carry on activities with great freedom, like a state within the state, while the police hamper the activity of a legitimate party, the National Professional Unionist Grouping [NPUG], whenever it tries to respond to the president's own call to combat illiteracy.

This NDP faction that helps the entire religious tendency, including the extremists, is a historical legacy of the theory that the late Anwar al-Sadat introduced and added to the traditionally antidemocratic methods of the July 1952 revolution—namely, encouraging or even reviving the religious tendency in order to confront radical tendencies in society, such as the Nasirists or communists, since al-Sadat lacked any support in the universities when he assumed power.

It was Anwar al-Sadat who through his men put the chains, knives, and knuckle-dusters into the hands of religious extremists, that they might fanatically and savagely spill the blood of opponents of the Sadat regime.

This NDP faction believes that "the religious tendency is good fortune and blessing." They are holding it in reserve for the appropriate time—for the time when the opposition forces in society grow strong enough to oppose their privileges and their plundering of national wealth following their transformation into a new parasitical class of greedy, unprincipled rich. Then they will unleash the members of this fanatical tendency to fight their battle.

Thus, this faction of the ruling party moves against religious extremists only in a paternal context, chiding them whenever they depart from the bounds of propriety, but never for a moment thinking of eliminating their activity.

The parasites in the NDP used to think that the opposition forces dangerous to their interests were the Nasirists and leftists in general. But that danger has greatly

receded: neither the former nor the latter have strength to inflict a even scratch on the surface of political life in Egypt.

The NDP believes that its real enemy is the Wafd Party, since it is the party remote from religious extremism, a party that during its entire life has represented the national capitalism that uplifted the country's economy, confronted colonialism, and strengthened the traditions of democracy.

All these things are achievements that the parasites in the NDP fear and oppose. As we have previously written, addressing the president, "The real opposition to your authority, Mr. President, is from within your ruling party."

We would like to have a word with leftist colleagues who have fallen in with the claims of the parasites, so as to misrepresent the Wafd Party as being against the achievements of the July revolution and as wanting to liquidate it as well as the public sector.

One has to admit that such claims are false. Events have revealed that those who want to liquidate the entire public sector are an important and large tendency within the ruling party. They are present in the party, the People's Assembly, and the government. I have never read in any statement by a responsible Wafdist that the party wants to sell the public sector. All that is being said is similar to what is being said by Nasirist, leftist, and Marxist economists in the socialist world, including the Soviet Union—namely, state ownership of important and large sectors of enterprises, with freedom to operate afterwards being left to the private sector.

I have never read anything by a responsible Wafdist saying that the Wafd Party wants to repeal free education or free medical treatment. They do, however, demand the repeal of the quota for workers and peasants. I think that many leftists and liberals in Egypt see no benefit in the existence of this quota, but rather see it as corrupting both the working class and the peasants.

We are speaking at some length, so that the democratic opposition in the country will wake up and confront the real danger, which is the religious tendency with its moderates and extremists and those who back them in the government. Anyone who wants to confront the danger of fascism in Egypt should extend his hands, calling upon all forces concerned for the democratic process in our country and opposed to any fascistic deceptions under cover of religious slogans. There is no party with democratic traditions more deeply rooted in Egypt's modern history than the Wafd Party.

I do not say the left, because I confess—and I was one of them—that we enthusiastically backed the dictatorship and totalitarianism of the regime of Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir.

The Egyptian regime—that of Husni Mubarak—is hostile to the danger of religious fascism in Egypt and is concerned about Egypt and about reining in such

activity. We have therefore always called for cooperating with it in this area. But we have also called for exposing the tendency in his party and government that collaborates with the religious tendency and sees it as a reserve against time's vicissitudes. Not only does this tendency give the religious tendency relative freedom, it aides it in a more effective and comprehensive way by spreading an atmosphere of religious hysteria over formal matters in the country. The claims of the extremist tendency find an echo in the ruling party's information media.

Look, for example, at the decree that the governor of Dumyat issued in Ramadan, closing cafes in his province until 5 PM and restaurants until 3 PM, and not allowing them to serve any food until after the cannon announcing the termination of the daily fast.

The reader need only take one glance to see that we are confronting utterly fantastic decrees, since there is nothing in the constitution or the law that defines whether a person may sit at a coffee house or eat food.

We see in these decrees an accommodation to the point of view of the religious extremists who want to force people, Muslim or non-Muslim, to conform to religious teachings in small matters.

Some supporters of the governor of Dumyat perhaps defended his decrees by saying that he was aiming at not provoking those who fast.

This is a kind of nonsense and misleading. For hundreds of years, or at least for decades of its modern history, the Egyptian people have been fasting while some people do not fast, but sip tea in cafes or eat food in restaurants, with no harm coming to Islam and no offense to people's feelings. The real Muslim is the one who first respects the right of every person to believe as he will and deal with his Lord in the way he sees fit, as long as he does not steal, kill, commit battery, vilify, etc.

The matter is not restricted to the governor of Dumyat. We have seen something amazing: Extremism has crept into the People's Assembly. We have seen the Committee on Proposals and Grievances approve a proposal by one of its members to punish public violators of the Ramadan fast with imprisonment and fine. In other words, we have moved into a period of daily inanity, provocation, and friction.

Aren't there millions of Christians living among us? Don't they have the right for us not to force them to behave in a certain way?

Aren't there tourists? Have Egyptians complained that some people publicly break the fast, and have they held people's conferences to protest?

The result of all this is to kindle a spirit of fanaticism among people. Could this lead to a demand for a law to arrest any citizen walking in the street and not going to the mosque to attend Friday worship, or stopping any man and woman in the street and questioning them about their relation to each other, and so forth, until the

day comes when women are forced to stay at home behind screens, while men walk close to the wall in great fear. These are the characteristics of any government by religion as understood by the Islamic groups. In the past, Ja'far Numayri used to bring charges of fornication against any man and woman not married to each other who walked by themselves in the street!

We warn of the consequence of this policy, which represents a danger to the ruling party and to the entire regime and course of democracy in Egypt, at a time when the religious tendency is gaining ground with these disturbing developments in the fraternal Sudan, a stone's throw from us.

These collaborationist methods will not succeed in containing the religious tendency. Whatever concessions the government grants it, it will not be satisfied and will consider them a kind of trickery. They will be satisfied only by complete control of the government, even by force and terrorism.

The way to remedy this danger is very clear. The regime must change its policy toward the parties of the democratic opposition. It must cooperate with them and work to expand democracy, so that all ideas can compete with each other. It must encourage the enlightened religious tendencies that can play a part against extremism and terrorism. It must be fair in its information policy in the area of religion and open wide the door to enlightened men of religion and scholars such as professors Muhammad al-Ghazali, 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Namrud, Dr. Muhammad 'Imarah, Khalil 'Abd-al-Karim, Shaykh al-'Asi, Counselor Sa'id al-'Ashmawi, Dr. Faraj Fudah, and many others.

Of course, this must go hand in hand with trying to solve the whole country's fundamental problems economically, politically, and socially. Without this, it will be the deluge; and the ruling party will be primarily responsible.

Government Viewed as Authoritarian, Divided in Policymaking

*90AA0150A Cairo AL-HAQIQAH
in Arabic 21 Apr 90 p 3*

[Article by Najwa Tantawi, Nur al-Huda Sa'd, 'Izzat Salamah, and 'Id Hamid]

[Excerpts] The government's recent inclination to sell some of the public sector units has revealed the existence of contradictory currents and conflicts inside the cabinet. While the Minister of Industry and Supply objects to the sale, we find that Dr. Yusuf Wali, the secretary general of the National Democratic Party [NDP]—the official party—the deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture, has prepared a list of the companies and units that are to be sold, and that the minister of tourism has been implementing such a sale policy for some time.

Politicians and party leaders maintain that a minister whose policy is in divergence with the cabinet's policy must immediately resign, pointing out that a ministerial post has merely become an occupation, and that the selection of ministers is subject to personal and security considerations.

Dr. Hasan Nafi'ah, professor of political science at the College of Economy and Political Science, said it is normal for several trends to exist within the same party, but the government is supposed to articulate one single planned policy. The articulation of differing views by the ministers reflects a weak cabinet because matters should be discussed within the cabinet in order to come out with a resolution or a statement expressing the majority views or the opinion agreed upon. But making contradictory statements to the public on the radio, television, and in the press is odd. Dr. Hasan attributes this to the prime minister's weak personality. Had the prime minister been a strong personality, he says, he would have personally been able to come up with a formula acceptable to all the opposing views.

In Egypt, he stresses, there is not one but several governments, and there no one central coordination center.

One of the democratic principles, he adds, is that the minority should accept the view of the majority, and that the minister who is opposed to the majority should resign. If he does not do so, he should be relieved of his job because he would be making statements contrary to the general policy. The opposing minister's attitude could be deliberately aimed at gaining benefits from certain quarters.

He stresses that it is customary in Egypt that ministers do not resign their jobs because they are employees and bureaucrats; an employee is dismissed and does not resigns. A minister looks at his job as a "prize" that he does not wish to part with. At the same time the prime minister does not dare to dismiss a minister without first referring the matter to the head of state. The prime minister, he adds, does not even dare to merely draw the attention of ministers.

Another explanation he gives for the contradiction in the ministers' positions on the question of the sale of the public sector is that such stands could be a sort of test balloon on the part of the head of state aimed at testing reactions to the various views and reaching an acceptable decision.

Wahid 'Abd-al-Majid, chairman of the Arab Research Center and political sciences researcher, affirms that the Egyptian regime, despite its plurality, is still a regime that does not rely on a political party or organ, but rather depends on the security organs and the absolute authority of the head of state, as well as on certain types of political organizations founded on the concept of amassing power and not on political participation. In these circumstances, talk about a ruling party is out of the question. This regime is simply an establishment consisting of elements, and the only thing they have in

common is the desire to remain in power in order to realize private interests. This party lacks the means to ensure bringing to the fore party leaders that would assume office. When a cabinet is formed the party does not nominate leaders [for cabinet posts]. Rather, the head of state, together with the person he chooses to be the prime minister, begin selecting ministers recommended by the security offices and friends. Thus a capitalist minister and a socialist minister would be selected. As a result, the cabinet becomes a cocktail mix of several trends. These ministers will join the NDP that has no program but only vague rhetorical cliches, and each minister would base his stand on one of these cliches, stressing that he is expressing the party's program. The cabinet, he adds, is not harmonious because of the lack of a ruling party in the real sense of the word.

Regarding relations between the head of state and the cabinet, he says that the President of the Republic is the general policymaker and has the final say in defining policies. The cabinet is an auxiliary body. Regarding the various types of decisions issued by the cabinet and the permissible contradiction, he says, there is a decision of strategic nature, such as the decision to sell public sector units, in which the President plays a major role. A decision of this kind is implemented at several levels through executive decisions. Differences might occur regarding the nature of the units to be sold. Such differences are resolved in discussions taking place in the cabinet hallways, whereas when a strategic decision is to be issued, preparations should be made for the executive decisions that would follow it.

Muhammad al-Mirghani, professor of constitutional law at 'Ayn Shams law faculty, characterizes disagreements among ministers as unhealthy since it has led to obstructing decisionmaking in the case of the public sector. So that disagreements may be healthy, discussions and exchange of views should take place inside the cabinet. The decision that is published in the press is supposed to have the support of the majority or a consensus of views. Otherwise, the words of Dr. Yusuf Wali should be put in the form of proposals and not decisions, as has happened.

He attributes this confusion to the fact that the political regime in Egypt is a mixture of presidential and parliamentary regime. In a presidential system, as is the case in the United States, the president of the republic draws up the government's policy while the ministers are simply his secretaries who collectively implement these policies within the constitutional relations with the parliament. In the parliamentary system the cabinet draws up the government policy. Each minister has the right to give his views in every case. Before a decision is made a vote is taken, and every minister has one vote. In case there is no consensus inside the cabinet, the prime minister's vote cannot tip the balance in favor of one side against the other. In this case he has to announce the decision of the majority, even if he does not agree with it, and those ministers who disapprove of the decision will either have to accept it and defend it or to resign.

In Egypt's case, resolving an issue is in the hands of the president and not the prime minister who, in our constitutional system, has a specific executive role to play, namely to sort out quarrels among ministers over non-essential matters. As for the general policy, it is left to the president of the republic.

Law professor Muhammad 'Asfur criticizes the regime in Egypt for not knowing whether its economic policy is an open-door policy or a nationalization policy or a mixture of both. This was the reason behind the outbreak of differences between the ministers over the sale of the public sector.

All matters in Egypt, he adds, including the economy, are not managed on the basis of principles; rather, they are subject to the personal interest of government members who form conflicting groups.

Regarding the supposed unity of government ministers over economic matters, Muhammad 'Asfur wonders: Does the NDP have clear directions and principles in the first place? The ministers, he asserts, are simply party-appointed functionaries and, therefore, we cannot be sure that we have a cabinet.

Muhammad Hilmi Murad, of the [Socialist] Labor Party [SLP], asserts that there is nothing that we can call a government or a cabinet in order to speak about differences between its members. [as published] The cabinet, he says, meets in places other than its headquarters, and often without all the ministers attending.

There is no provision in the constitution, he adds, that gives the president of the republic the right to meet with some ministers anywhere and exclude others, and yet adopt decisions having the power of cabinet decisions, and call this meeting a cabinet meeting. This is in violation of the constitution.

The government's responsibility, he adds, is judicial and not a matter of specialization, even if the matter concerns a critical subject such as the sale of the public sector. This does not justify the president meeting with only four ministers.

Even the committees set up by the cabinet cannot decide finally on anything. Rather, they prepare reports to be put to the cabinet in order to adopt a decision. Therefore, he adds, I can affirm that this cabinet does not respect the constitution, which is the reason for its present state of confusion.

Dr. Hilmi Murad affirms that the current disputes between government members who have become divided into two groups is a deliberate attempt at creating confusion and has nothing to do with their differences on the policies and principles in which they believe.

The objective of this confusion is that the government wishes to strike a balance by which it would please all the parties opposed to the sale. For instance, the working

class would be pleased with the views of Rif'at al-Mahjub, 'Abd-al-Had Qandil, and Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab, and those who favor selling the public sector, such as the United States, the IMF, and the World Bank, and would agree with the views Yusuf Wali, Kamal al-Janzuri, and others. This was exactly what happened when the tourism sector was sold. Differences among everybody occurred over the question of selling or waiting. I believe that a single minister cannot be stronger than all the ministers, or even a small number of ministers, such as the opposing group. But the objective is that public opinion should be left in the dark regarding the question: Should we sell or not sell?

A minister who is opposed to the sale cannot be quite serious, because if he really believes in his views and is opposed to a certain idea and sees that his views will not be implemented, he should immediately submit his resignation to the head of the government and should not remain in office for one single day. What proves that what happened was also deliberate is the fact that this open disagreement came before the necessary study was carried out concerning which companies should or should not be sold.

Concluding, Dr. Hilmi Murad says that the government generally is not anxious to working as a team.

'Ali Salamah, member of the al-Wafd party parliamentary delegation, says it is strange that the cabinet should be divided into a group supporting an idea and another opposing it, and yet continue to discharge its duties. The prime minister is supposed to submit his resignation so as to reconstitute it with the ministers who agree on the Egyptian policy outlines.

The claim that a group of ministers insists on not selling the failing public sector and the losing companies is considered a violation of the state's higher policy. How can the president remain silent over such serious abuse, wonders the al-Wafd member. Are we not right in saying that Egypt is ruled by conflicting currents and that there is no harmony of views among the ministers? The ministers who are opposed to the ideas of the president and to Egypt's interests, he adds, are the remnants of autocratic and dictatorial rule. It is time for Egypt to get rid of the subversive elements that harm Egypt and drag it into situations which are potentially full of dire consequences.

It behooves those in opposition to submit their resignations from the cabinet since they form only a small minority of the ministers.

'Ali Salamah points out that former minister of education, Dr. Hilmi Murad, immediately resigned when his policy clashed with that of Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir out of self-respect and respect for his beliefs. Also, Muhammad Ibrahim Kamil, al-Sadat's foreign minister, resigned when he opposed Camp David and the peace agreements.

The al-Wafd deputy says that those who insist on remaining in the cabinet despite their opposition to the new reform trend are violating all political traditions and sound dogmas, and their clinging to their positions works against them and not for them.

Ibrahim Faraj, Secretary General of al-Wafd Party, says that the differences taking place inside the cabinet concern the cabinet's policy or the government's program that was submitted to the People's Assembly. The arbitrator in this dispute is the president of the republic in his capacity as the chief executive. If the ministers disagree and each one of them follows a path contrary to the others over a certain matter, the dissenting minister should then resign. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Hamid al-Shaykh, member of the Central Committee of the National Progressive Unionist Party [NPUG], says that there are contradictions inside the government. While minister Fu'ad Sultan defends the policy of selling the public sector or leasing it, the minister of industry defends this sector. Because the government has no clear and steady policy regarding the question of development based on clear planning of the role of the public sector, the cooperative sector, and the private sector according to their real capabilities, the confusion, the lack of clarity, and differences in positions within the cabinet will continue.

Al-Shaykh calls on the prime minister to dismiss the minister whose policy is contrary to the policy of the cabinet he is heading.

The Most Famous Disagreement [box insert]

Perhaps the most famous disagreement between the prime minister and one of his ministers occurred between Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and the Minister of Tourism Fu'ad Sultan. This happened when Dr. Sidqi more than once rejected the establishment of the Investment Ground Services Company which is in competition with the national Company Egypt Air, and which would steal from the latter \$33 million annually. But Fu'ad Sultan insisted on establishing the company, allocating it a headquarters, and allowing its general assembly to meet. Recently, the matter was put to a parliamentary committee which is still discussing the matter.

Shaykh Sees Egypt's Policy Adrift in Ethiopia

90AA0146A Cairo LIWA' AL-ISLAM
in Arabic 26 Apr 90 pp 48-49

[Article by Asma' al-Husayni al-Ghabashi: "Muslim People of Oromia Break the Ethiopian Blockade"]

[Excerpts] Egyptian foreign policy must be overhauled with regard to Africa, that important continent that represents deep-rooted Egyptian interests and a deep-rooted Arab, Islamic presence. This policy is singlehandedly administered and created by Dr. Butrus Ghali, the

minister of state for foreign affairs. If we may be specific, it has become evident that, despite Dr. Butrus Ghali's statements regarding firm cooperation with Ethiopia, the ruling regime in that country does not hesitate to threaten Egypt's national security, with its games concerning Nile resources, to threaten Sudan's national security by its support to rebellious Sudanese elements in the south, to threaten Somalia's national security by arming pro-Ethiopian factions, and to threaten the national security of Saudi Arabia and Yemen by rumors of giving Israel military bases in the Bab al-Mandab. Furthermore, Ethiopia cooperates with the Zionist entity and the World Council of Churches, in order to contain Islam in Africa and stop its expansion. In addition to all this, four Islamic peoples are under Ethiopian colonial domination in Eritrea, Ogaden, Tigray, and the Muslim people of Oromia, who are the subject of this article. [passage omitted]

Conclusion

Observers think that the Ethiopian regime is markedly weakened, and that Egyptian foreign policy in Africa is attempting to improve that regime's image and bolster its position. This contradicts the rights of the Islamic people who are subjected to Ethiopian imperialism, and their right to freedom, independence, and the determination of their own destiny.

Unfortunately, Egyptian foreign policy in Africa is drifting and deviating, intentionally or unintentionally, along the course of the Zionist, Crusader policy, aimed at eliminating Islam and burying it in Africa forever. Why don't we hear from Dr. Butrus Ghali?

Plan Proposed for Self-Sufficiency in Wheat Production

90AA0147B Cairo LIWA' AL-ISLAM
in Arabic 26 Apr 90 pp 42-43

[Article by al-Sayyid Abu-Da'ud: "We Can Attain Wheat Self-Sufficiency in Three Years"]

[Text] If cotton is the backbone of the Egyptian economy since huge industries have been based on it, (when cotton farming foundered in recent years under a sick economy, the picture grew gloomier), wheat is the strategic crop, especially in a country going through difficult times. Growing more wheat and drawing up national wheat self-sufficiency plans have become a popular demand raised by all the various sides and institutions.

Therefore, the question we put to professors and researchers was: Can we attain self-sufficiency in wheat?

Dr. 'Ali 'Abd-al-'Al Khalifah, agro-economics professor at Cairo University, replied:

It is necessary and possible to realize wheat production booms, but this should be done in light of the relative

merits of other crops like cotton and vegetables. In order to raise wheat production, we have to proceed in two directions:

First, expand wheat production at the expense of perennial clover by finding alternatives to green fodder, namely dry and concentrated animal feed.

Second, expand wheat growing in new land, in the northern coastal area in particular, relying on rain water.

Wheat farming booms can be attained by finding drought-resistant varieties. Here is where genetic engineering comes in, for Egypt still has an immense opportunity in this field.

As for Dr. Sami Rida Sabri, a researcher at the Wheat Research Section of the Agricultural Research Center, we put the question to him in another way: Officials are focusing on the fact that Egypt is not part of the international wheat production belt and, consequently, we shall not in any way attain self-sufficiency and, therefore, we should spare no efforts. What do you say to that?

He answered: The wheat belt hypothesis is a great lie and is scientifically false. There is no such thing as a wheat belt. The word belt is a term used to describe areas where a certain crop is grown extensively and refers to the United States, which is a great wheat-growing center.

As for Egypt, it has been historically proven that it used to be the Roman Empire's wheat farm and was exporting wheat up until 1947.

Dr. Mahmud Fahmi, professor at the Cairo University Department of Agriculture, believes that, with good faith and good planning, we can attain wheat self-sufficiency and, indeed, have a surplus for export in a few years.

Dr. Mahmud Fahmi outlined a three-year self-sufficiency strategy, as follows:

We consume about 10 million tons of wheat a year and produce 2 million tons in an area of 1.5 million *faddans* [4200.833m² in Egypt] at a rate of 13 ardebs per *faddan* and we import 7 million tons.

The per capita consumption in Egypt is 200 kg, the highest rate in the world.

The truth is that close to half this amount goes for animal feed and other uses.

In other words, the present food gap is no greater than two million tons of wheat.

If we rationalize our consumption patterns to attain the world level of 90 kg per person, we can close the gap in two ways:

First, vertical expansion by concentrating on scientific technologies, from observing the growing date (around November 15), to the widespread use of select seeds, (certain varieties have yielded 22 ardebs to the *faddan*), to using the appropriate fertilizers in the proper amounts. All this

requires national awareness campaigns to raise productivity from 13 or 15 to 20 ardebs per *faddan*.

Second, allocate part of the area used for clover farming for wheat, because the three-crop rotation principle which we have ignored has been proven to be the best farming system in Egypt.

If Egypt has 5.7 million *faddans* of farm land, the crop rotation system requires that 1.9 million *faddans* be planted with wheat, thus raising the area used for wheat farming by 0.4 million *faddans*, or 8 million ardebs at an average rate of 20 ardebs per *faddan*.

This is in addition to 1.5 million tons of vertical expansion.

Dr. Sami Sabri said: We have great hopes for attaining wheat self-sufficiency, because five years ago the average yield used to be 10 ardebs per *faddan*, and now it has gone up to about 15 ardebs. So, there is great hope, but it is contingent on increasing the cultivated area and, unfortunately, the area cannot be increased in the Nile Valley at the expense of the cotton and clover crops. Therefore, the only choice we have is to turn to new land that requires additional water amid a water crisis that is looming on the horizon.

However, there is no technical impediment in terms of climate or soil for attaining wheat self-sufficiency.

When I asked Dr. Sami about the feasibility of growing wheat in the new areas, he said: Last year, we at the Agricultural Research Center began testing wheat farming along the northern coast and north of the Sinai using rain water instead of Nile and well water.

With regard to newly reclaimed land owned by graduates, where good irrigation systems are used, some farms are yielding 20 ardebs per *faddan*. If the northern coast had water, it would yield the same thing.

When I asked Dr. Sami whether a yield of 20 ardebs per *faddan* constituted a boom, he said: This is not a boom for the Egyptian varieties. The varieties available at the wheat research section yield up to 24 ardebs per *faddan*, but when farmers grow them, the yield is lower because farmers may plant the wheat after the 15 November date, thus losing two ardebs per *faddan*, and may fail to observe the irrigation schedule we recommend, losing three to four ardebs.

Wheat Policies

Dr. 'Ali 'Abd-al-'Al Khalifah outlined and reviewed the set of wheat policies, as follows:

- Wheat price policies: Wheat price policies prompt farmers to turn away from wheat farming to other crops that give them a higher net income. Were it not for the cattle feed, hay, farmers would not grow wheat. Some farmers do not even separate the wheat from the chaff. They give the entire crop to the animals because it is cheaper than other fodder.
- Subsidy policies: They have led to using bread for cattle feed. Prices of fodder have to be lowered to make them more economical than using wheat. Fodder, of course, has a higher nutritional value.

- Bread production policies: The bad quality of bread has widened the nutritional gap due to waste.

Therefore, we have to start thinking of creating a new kind of bread based on less wheat by using a mixture of corn, barley, and wheat.

The professors and researchers I interviewed agreed that there is a deep gulf between the universities, research centers, and the farmers, for they have no connecting link between them. The primary suspect of course is the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Agricultural Guidance Agency is nothing but decor. At the agricultural association level, we find that guidance engineers virtually have no role and none of the farmers know them or feel their presence.

Agricultural guidance is supposed to translate the recommendations of universities and research centers, including the efficient implementation of such recommendations, and to tie research agencies to the farmer and the field.

Dr. 'Ali 'Abd-al-'Al Khalifah said: Agriculture in Egypt has to be based on a basic principle, namely to preserve every drop of water because water resources are the basic determinant of agricultural development. Without water there can be no development and no civilization.

All the new land is sandy and must be planted with crops that thrive in this kind of soil under modern irrigation systems, such as fruits and vegetables. We do not advise traditional crop farming because this requires specific irrigation systems.

Dr. Sami Sabri said: When we draw a new strategy for wheat self-sufficiency, we have to allocate these areas and have to grow the Hijazi clover in the new areas because it grows year round and gives ten cuttings [i.e., harvests] while the "Tahrish" clover gives four cuttings.

Dr. 'Ali 'Abd-al-'Al Khalifah explained this point, saying:

We can have a great boom in corn production. Corn has demonstrated a great response to cross-fertilization and genetic engineering and the field is open for massive vertical expansion, a factor that helps to lower the demand for wheat.

Labor Issues in Selling Public Sector Discussed

90AA0164A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 23 Apr 90 p 3

[Article by Muhi-al-Din al-Gharib: "Future of Workers and Their Rights Protected as Public Sector Is Sold; Company Sales Augment Resources, Expand Activities, and Stimulate Investment and Labor Markets in Egypt; 100 Countries Preceded Us in Public Sector Sales."]

[Text] It may seem to some at first glance that the private sector does not ensure worker rights and tends to rule with a stick in order to realize the most profit as fast as

possible. But Egyptian economic history proved otherwise, especially in the period predating the 1952 revolution when al-Wafd was the ruling party. Al-Wafd, recognizing the value of an industrious and productive labor force, championed the rights of workers in all sectors. It was the first party to devise sound labor rules that contributed substantially to building national industry. Those rules, however, were gravely distorted in the aftermath of the revolution when companies, institutions, and organizations were nationalized into the public sector. Labor regulations, and even labor unions, became merely ceremonial. Suddenly, the public sector found itself out of step with world and regional economic developments driven by the private sector and capitalist growth. [The public sector found itself in that position] because it was fettered by state rules and regulations that forced it to absorb redundant workers and burdened it with a social responsibility that weakened it, ran it down, and took it to areas too far afield from its reason for being—into projects for selling beans, falafal, and chick peas!

The public sector became a ward of the state and the general budget. Worker productivity plummeted to its lowest level ever and the country's unemployment rate, which was only one percent in 1950, shot up to engulf 25 percent of the aggregate work force. This disguised subsidy of redundant workers added to the cost of producing goods and services, causing escalation of prices and inflation. Large industrial companies in most production sectors led the list of losers thanks to the large number of redundant workers they employed. [Firms in the red] are currently calculated at more than 50 public and joint sector companies. The list also includes some 200 major projects for the production of eggs, poultry, dairy products, and cement blocs; local transportation projects in the governorates; and about 2,000 projects sponsored by the Popular Development Agency. All burdened with redundant employees, they have aggregate losses of close to 1 billion pounds. A serious effort must be made to utilize this redundant work force by pointing it in the optimum direction, perhaps by the private sector after acquiring those projects.

But will the labor force be impacted by this new economic orientation? How can it be better utilized? How will it fare under the private sector?

Dr. Fu'ad Hashim, former economic minister and member of the advisory committee of the World Bank, believes that letting the private sector buy into the state-owned strategic public sector would have a positive impact on the companies, and consequently on the work force. The companies, when reformed, would use realized profits to expand operations whereby they could turn their redundant workers into productive capacity.

Such economic transformation would also put the Egyptian labor force on the right track, thereby boosting national productive capacity, augmenting company resources, and energizing the markets for investments

and exports. If some workers are laid off, it means that they were nonproductive and the private sector should not be made to carry them. The private sector, which should be responsible only for its own missteps, never lays off a skilled worker but lets go of the less skilled and the less productive. Here is where the state must devise a painstaking program to employ redundant workers—even if it takes time—in cooperation with the private sector and in accordance with labor market conditions and corporate needs in the various sectors. Social responsibility belongs with the state and not with the private sector. Earnest and productive workers will become more valuable as competition intensifies among private sector concerns. They will forego state cuddling and recognize their proper national responsibility as long as they receive their full due.

Engineer Husayn Sabbur, chairman of the U.S.-Egypt Joint Business Council, believes that the future of labor under privatized public sector companies will not be as bleak as workers and labor leaders imagine it to be. Certain of our private and joint sector projects have shown that the labor force would gain strength in the new sector and that no worker will be without employment.

More than 100 countries have actually begun selling their public sectors. Britain is in the lead. It sold 38 giant corporations and is in the process of selling some 47 others including coal companies, railroads, ship builders, transportation, and electric distribution companies, and even some banks.

Indications are that workers of those companies were not affected in the least by their sale. Rather, they benefited a lot and their incomes increased because they became shareholders. There was no opposition by the Federation of British Labor Unions because it found the new change to serve the interests of the workers, the state, and the populace.

The engineer adds: Statistics indicate that certain companies were sold for as much as 24 million sterling pounds and that British workers and others account for 9 million shareholders. The ratio of worker shareholders in some 10 companies ranged from 91 percent to 99 percent. Worker earnings climbed to five times those of public sector counterparts. Let us illustrate the extent to which the labor force has been impacted by private sector purchases of the public sector: Before it was sold, the general telephone company in Britain did not earn enough to cover wages and operational costs and never substantially added to its workers. After it was sold, profits multiplied 2.5 times and so did the number of workers because the acquiring company launched several new activities.

Engineer Sabbur adds: Labor security and the preservation of worker rights cannot be accomplished by sterile and pliant laws and regulations, but by expert professional management that innovates and creates new opportunities for absorbing a company's labor capacity.

Because the Egyptian experience is new, and is creating some trepidation, the state could form an impartial commission, of neither the public sector nor the private sector, to identify ways and means of effecting the sale [of public sector units], transferring ownership to citizens, and protecting worker rights. The commission would survey each company individually to evaluate its labor force and determine the number of shares to be offered and their price. The Egyptian government should execute the sales gradually and put the companies on the market one at a time. The transfer of ownership would have a relatively direct impact on the labor force if all companies were offered for sale at the same time, especially in the early stages, until new management is settled.

On granting workers equity shares as an incentive for hard work and productivity, engineer Husayn Sabbur says:

In the west, workers who own shares in their companies are rewarded with privileges such as a free share for every ten bought. A ceiling is set on the number of acquired shares in the interest of those on the lower rungs. Other companies give away a free share for each 10 held unsold for three consecutive years. This guarantees continuity of worker involvement should a company encounter financial difficulty as it restructures. It would also guarantee optimum worker productivity and consequently higher profits, multifaceted enterprise, and augmented worker loyalty to the machine he operates and to the state.

Engineer Sabbur does not support a change in labor laws during that period because any new laws issued in Egypt are liable to be worse than the ones they replace, as evidenced by the new investment law which undermined private sector projects and was totally oblivious to the realities of investment in Egypt. Furthermore, present labor laws apply to both private and public sectors and prohibit the dismissal of workers in the private sector.

Lethargy and Administrative Rigidity

Engineer Muhammad Ghanim, secretary-general of the Egyptian Businessmen's Association, believes that the private sector is not adverse to labor safeguards but is supportive of workers and their interests as long as they produce and deliver. The time has come for Egyptian workers to awaken and shed the apathy and lethargy induced by present labor laws. Workers have ignored the spirit of those laws in favor of their form, relying on the advocacy of labor board representatives who protect workers against dismissal or discipline regardless if they are unproductive or at fault. All this is in the name of labor safeguards and in order that the representatives may assure reelection.

Muhammad Ghanim calls for reexamining work rules and the incentive system during the next few years in order for the private sector, as well as the strategic public sector and its giant units, to deliver optimum performance. Management should be given more authority to

deal with labor. Oversight on company CEO [Chief Executive Officer]s should be eased. Regulatory agencies impede company performance and progress by forcing them into innumerable administrative red tape. A program should be launched to hire workers on the basis of location and skill, utilizing the principle of reward and punishment. Bonuses should be awarded and punishment meted out instantly in order to achieve their desired effect.

He emphasizes that the sale of companies will not create further unemployment; rather, large numbers of workers will be sopped up from the labor market once private sector projects take off. Workers of acquired companies will keep all their rights. Private management will not leave them without work because this type of management believes in Egyptian worker proficiency and is flexible enough to set workers straight by making them fully accountable for their actions and their productivity.

He asserts that private sectors in Egypt and throughout the world believe in labor unions as vehicles to safeguard the interests of the working class and advocate them to employers, be they public or private. However, the situation in Egypt differs in respect to those unions whose leadership have been shaped into rigid state-imposed forms. Western unions, by contrast, have earned farreaching authority that enabled them to improve working conditions in all producing sectors, therefore serving the national economies of their countries.

Advantageous Technology

National Planning Institute economist Dr. Ahmad Hasan Ibrahim says: It is fully acknowledged that the private sector is free to set its own employment policies. Nevertheless, current economic conditions in Egypt call for prudence and caution in anything involving labor, especially if unemployment is threatened. Such care must be exercised in any economic measure we take. By the same token, it is conceded that labor may encounter some problem as the private sector assumes management, but this would be no fault of the private sector. The state must promptly take action to create new job opportunities in order to relieve the public sector of social responsibility for the work force. It must also forge cooperation between private and public sectors in order to expedite the pace of development in general.

Companies should stay clear of intensive technology in order to provide workers with new opportunities and to keep technology, on which the private sector depends greatly, from being a burden to labor. Labor must be substituted for capital. Workers should be utilized as an alternative to capital in private sector projects, especially those in land reclamation, small industries, and component assembly such as the electronics industry on which Korea and Taiwan depended for employing workers in city and country.

Unemployment Compensation

National Planning Institute economic advisor Dr. Othman Muhammad Othman says that the realities of the new system would mandate certain labor law amendments in order to safeguard worker rights under private sector ownership, set suitable compensation for laid-off workers, and develop for labor unions a new legal framework that would guarantee them autonomy while defining worker status, activities, and duties in every producing sector. The public sector seller and the private sector buyer must agree on specific controls and parameters involving workers in order to avoid corporate turmoil and discord and define the rules for both employer and employee.

He adds: There is no quick way to accomplish this but we must at least pay unemployment compensation to workers laid off by management because they are redundant or unproductive. The recipients of such compensation must first agree to enroll in training programs to qualify them for other jobs with the same company or elsewhere. Unemployment compensation would cease when the recipient rejoins the work force.

Dr. al-Husayni Badr, professor of economics at al-Sadat Academy for Management Sciences, emphasizes:

The impact of the new system on labor is a function of the manner in which workers participate in ownership and production, and consequently of the manner in which shares will be offered for sale. It is therefore necessary to begin [the privatization program] by selling small enterprises to make sure that their shares are quickly absorbed by market. This [is a better] start than selling giant companies whose shares might not be fully subscribed, causing a deficiency of management and consequently failure to employ workers. This is all a consequence of low worker savings and paltry wages. Some workers may be unable to purchase even a single share. Should privatization fail as a consequence, the company would falter and the problem of nonproductive excess workers would become aggravated. The state would then intervene to infuse the company with outside capital and the venture capitalists would dominate the workers, causing matters to deteriorate.

He also emphasizes, however, that no worker will be hurt if the sale and transfer of ownership proceed properly. Workers may be apprehensive at first but they will feel the [pride of] ownership as time goes by. They will be productive even if they have no equity because profits and losses are theirs to share. Workers benefit from boosting company productivity since that means expansion and additional working shifts.

Mapping Investments in the Governorates

Dr. Muhyi al-Gharib, executive-director of the Investment Authority, asserts: The sale of some public sector projects, especially in the governorates, will serve the interest of workers and the labor movement. A worker who loses a job because he is not qualified or for some

other reason will find another because the new system will stimulate the private sector into more projects and therefore more job opportunities. We have already mapped out investment in the governorates on the basis of recent decrees. We have identified several projects that are ready for implementation once the sale is completed. Examples are in ready-made clothes, electronic calculators, and other labor-intensive industries. The various regions will consequently be served by the employment of their redundant labor force, therefore relieving the state of that burden. [We also] promote family savings on the premise that citizens and workers with discretionary funds will not park them in a bank but will use them to buy shares in their employer or in a nearby company that they can regularly track. This new application of the "direct investment" theory depends on attracting small investors and employing redundant workers. The new system will even allow governorates to benefit from Article 11 of the new investment law since financing and job opportunities will be available, especially since failures beset companies created under Investment Law 43 of 1974 and were managed in accordance with Public Sector Law No. 97. Do not fear for the workers, then, because the change is in their interest and will create new job opportunities for them.

Writer Justifies Creation of Muslim Brotherhood Party

90AA0147A Cairo LIWA' AL-ISLAM
in Arabic 26 Apr 90 pp 42-43

[Article by Dr. Faruq 'Abd-al-Salam: "God Is on Our Side, Mr. President"]

[Text] In a recent interview with the American Magazine U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, President Husni Mubarak stated that he would not allow the Muslim Brotherhood to form its own political party for three reasons:

- First, our laws do not permit the establishment of religious political parties and he, on his part, will not change these laws.
- Second, should he change the laws to permit the establishment of a Muslim Brotherhood party, he would be forced in the future to allow the establishment of a Christian party.
- Third, right now, he is primarily concerned with building and developing the country rather than creating conditions that prompt countrymen to fight one another.

Egypt right now does not permit the establishment of a Christian party and the Muslim Brotherhood is not allowed to form its own political party. Nevertheless, bloody incidents have broken out in al-Minya Governorate among countrymen, incidents that have not abated or cooled down, requiring the government to put out and replace the chief of security and to remove the governor!

In a lead editorial published in the Ramadan issue of LIWA' AL-ISLAM, the Muslim Brotherhood's Supreme Guide, Mr. Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasir, commented on these bloody incidents in a superb article that impressed and caught the attention of Mr. Sa'id Sunbul, editor-in-chief of AL-AKHBAR, who expressed these sentiments in a candid front-page article published in the daily, AL-AKHBAR. In this article, the supreme guide said: In order to preserve the nation, the unity of its people, and its glorious civilizational mission, duty decrees that illuminated Islamic action must not be impeded and must be allowed to perform its role in full by lifting all barriers and obstacles blocking its way and restoring its full rights. This is so that it may give everything it can, through its presence in all arenas, its thorough understanding of Islam and proper awareness of its responsibilities.

Hence, this is a group that is widely known and respected domestically and internationally and carries its weight and has a prevailing presence inside and outside Egypt. It has 35 members in the Egyptian People's Assembly and is the only Egyptian political organization with more than 20 members in the Jordanian parliament. If honest elections were to be held any place in the Arab or Islamic world, it would have as many members or many times more, wherever it has a presence. It alone has spread across Europe!

Inside Egypt today, it sits alone on the throne of the professional unions, and deservedly so, and incontestably controls the teaching clubs and student unions in all Egyptian universities!

So on what democratic basis and with what logic is a group with this kind of clout and such influence denied its right to legitimate official presence?

And yet, the brotherhood's guide, seeing the fire coming up from under the ashes and sedition thundering and creating lightening, bashfully asked with eloquence and great decorum that his group be given the opportunity to do everything it can without impediment to help salvage what can be salvaged! He asked that in the speech that he gave on the first day of Ramadan. Midway through the month, he received the official reply which was made public from the top.

"No," plainly put! The Muslim Brotherhood will not be allowed to have its own party! There is no power and no strength save in God and God is on our side Mr. President!

But for the sake of God and in the interest of truth and justice, we say there is no reason whatsoever to object to the establishment of a Muslim Brotherhood party because of the parties' law! This law is unconstitutional, full of errors and fallacies, and it contradicts itself. If it were to be applied to the letter, all existing parties in Egypt would be illegal!

Suffice it to say that if the law contains provisions disallowing the formation of a party on religious

grounds, the same articles have a provision disallowing the formation of a party on class or sectarian grounds! Fifty percent of the founders of existing parties must be laborers and farmers! This is the essence of factionalism and the ultimate caste system!

Moreover, the constitution stipulates that the Islamic *shari'ah* [Islamic law] is the primary source of legislation and that Islam is the official religion of the country! So, how can a party be formed on nonreligious grounds? Religious parties are found all over the world and the Christian Democratic Party controls all of Europe. Religious parties in Israel are the ones that can tip the scale in forming the cabinet! So, how about Islam, which is a religion and a state with its own complete statutes and its timeless laws that are good for all ages and all places!

The Muslim Brotherhood, O ye people, was not born yesterday! Ever since its birth in the twenties and throughout the first half of this century, it was officially allowed to pursue fully its activities under the king and colonialism! Was the king and were the British more democratic than today?

For the first time in the Muslim Brotherhood's history, the Christian party issue has been raised to deny legitimacy to the Muslim Brotherhood. We did not hear this new tune throughout the reign of the king and colonialism. We did not hear it during the reign of 'Abd-al-Nasir, the despot of despots! This, very simply, is due to the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood is getting along just fine with its Christian brothers, as all fair-minded people will testify, because it, more than anyone else, understands the illuminated Islam and is more anxious to safeguard and uphold the Messenger of God.

International and local enmity to the Muslim Brotherhood began because of "Judaism", and because of the brotherhood's position on Palestine, right after the meeting of the American, British, and French ambassadors at Fa'id in December 1948 up until now.

From that date up to this day, America has had its eye on the Brotherhood. It will continue in this vein for the sake of Judaism and world Zionism! So what can one do and what do you, brother in Islam, expect when America is feeding us and controls our livelihood? God is on our side, there is no power and no strength save in God and I swear by God "No soul but God can lay it bare" [Koran 53/58].

ISRAEL

Life in Gaza Strip Described

90AE0058E Tel Aviv MA'ARIV
in Hebrew 25 May 90 p B5

[Article by Imanu'el Rosen]

[Text] "One madman came and destroyed training for an entire brigade," said Major N., the commander of a

Giv'ati batallion. His remark was heartfelt and pointed out yet another outcome of the murder in Rishon LeZiyyon.

An entire brigade, complete with equipment, tents, vehicles, and officers popped up from nowhere in the sands near the al-Burayj refugee camp in the Gaza Strip Sunday night. This was one of two temporary brigade commands established as reinforcement to the massive forces that were in Gaza this week.

The pace of events in the country can be compared to the pace set by Colonel G., commander of the Giv'ati brigade, when he turned around and faced the intifadah, after having abandoned it with unconcealed joy when he ended his mission as the senior commanding officer of one of the Gaza Strip sectors. The decision this week to dispatch to Gaza considerable forces and commanding officers with intifadah experience reflects the maturing process that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has undergone in the 30 months of the uprising.

The IDF and the defense system have lost all of their illusions. Everyone knows that Gaza Strip is a powder keg teeming with hatred, frustration, and violence that cannot be uprooted. This time, Gaza Strip, the place of the massacre, was far ahead of Judaea and Samaria. Restoring peace there is becoming a much more difficult and complex task.

Wednesday, 1800. The "organized tours" of Israeli and foreign journalists, run by the IDF spokesman, left long ago to report from Tel Aviv about the relative quiet they witnessed. But this is the time when Gaza begins to heat up. The last instruction session is taking place in the brigade commander's tent before the onset of what has become a regular operation: lifting the curfew for two hours in the Dayr al-Balah and al-Maghazi refugee camps.

This is Colonel G's opportunity to remind those in attendance of the new, very tough, fire instructions: In his sector, he is the only one entitled to authorize plastic or rubber bullets, not to mention live ammunition, except, of course, for life threatening circumstances.

This new regulation was issued on Monday this week, after the six were killed. Major General Matan Vilna'i knew that this could not continue. First of all, because it was in no way possible to restore peace in a storming area where close to three sheds are blasted every day. Secondly, because every stray bullet acquires greater ballistic speed these days from Gaza all the way to the White House in Washington.

Commanding officers did ask tough questions, company commanders wanted to know where to find the closest lawyer, and paratroopers challenged Gen. Vilna'i's work abilities. But everyone could tell that the commander of the Southern Command was quite in earnest, judging from the fact that he ordered an investigation, and if

necessary, issued reprimands for any batallion commander or lieutenant colonel who had fired a single rubber bullet at the feet of a rioter without proper authorization.

The IDF of 1990 reacted to the renewed eruption of the intifadah with the kind of experience, knowledge, and means that it did not have two and a half years ago. Among themselves, officers say that even in the two stormy days after the massacre it would have been possible to record fewer dead; no one today is complaining about unclear instructions, gray areas, or lack of equipment. But the soldiers, and inhabitants alike, were on the war path: Assault helicopters landed in the midst of the commotion spewing dozens of soldiers from their bellies who ran out straight into the smell of gas and tires. There was a feeling of war in the air.

On Wednesday at 1815 what was expected did indeed come to pass in Dayr al-Balah and al-Maghazi. The women were going to the market to shop for food, and the men were beginning to riot. On the camp fringes a group of artillery soldiers were pelted with stones at close range. The rioters didn't even bother to cover their faces. The commander ordered his men to pull back, and the soldiers running with their backs to the rioters were a humiliating sight as they were harrassed by joyful cries and mocking whistles.

"Like at the Ramat Gan stadium," shouted furiously one soldier while running: "What's going on? Let's march into them." Colonel G. commanded the troops to return to their original "halt line" at the edge of the camp. The rioters pulled back. Now they were coming from three directions. There were already several hundreds of them. But they were keeping a safe distance of about 100 meters and the stones were not making it to their target. If you like, those 100 meters are proof that the deterrent power of the IDF in the territories may have been impaired, but not lost.

The officers were very angry. "They don't deserve anything," said one. "They should immediately be sent back to their homes and the curfew should be reinstated," suggested the representative of the civilian administration. "We should shoot the main inciter, that kid with the red shirt," said one officer. This was the commander's moment. Colonel G. appeased the men, asking everyone to tone down the "hysterical reports," and continued to watch the crowds. He shared some of his doubts with his officers. He was also angry, but the feeling that restraint was necessary won out. The curfew was to remain lifted, he decreed, and no bullets were to be fired.

At times like that, when some of the media reports tend to slightly exaggerate things, a surveillance plane circling above serves as the main means of determining the real situation. In the airplane, far from the flying stones and from the feelings of rage and hatred, a true picture of what is happening is formed, contributing to reinforce the notion that there is no need to shoot.

Consequently, it is easy to understand the satisfaction of the senior officers who watch the situation in the camps from the main road, when it becomes clear that the day is finally ending in Gaza, without casualties. And it is even easier to understand the terrible rage that seizes them when a report suddenly comes in about a nine-year-old boy shot and killed by policemen who were passing by Bani-Suhayla and were too quick with the trigger.

The man who shot the boy in Bani-Suhayla probably did so out of fear. It is difficult not to feel fear in Gaza Strip, and at times one needs nerves of steel. It must be noted that the riots are not as bad as those at the beginning of the intifadah, particularly because the IDF has since learned how to deal with them. But it is still a war and there is no "free passage" in the area.

Thus, for example, a night ride on which I was expected to go from the al-Burayj camp to the command post in the city of Gaza, a distance of about 20 km, became a genuine military operation. The preparations took a long time, and we finally drove off, after careful instructions, in two vehicles loaded with battle rigs and grenades, a finger on the trigger, and a state of high alert. The ride was very slow because during the time it had taken for darkness to fall people had already managed to escape the curfew, placing obstacles along the main road: fences, roadblocks, ninjas, and tires.

Aside from stones and fire bombs, firearms are the real threat now hovering over Gaza Strip. On Tuesday evening, four 9-mm bullets narrowly missed a motorized IDF patrol coming from the direction of al-Nusayrat. The bullets were fired at very close range, less than 50 meters, and the sniper escaped. Two hours earlier a power charge exploded two meters away from a group of soldiers at Bani-Suhayla. One soldier was lifted off the ground by the blast, but there were no casualties.

There is now fear in Gaza Strip that the burning desire to hurt IDF soldiers will not abate until it succeeds. "It is true that their leaders told them not to use firearms," said Gen. Vilna'i, "but their desire for revenge tells them precisely the opposite."

Efforts Toward Privatization Discussed

44000275 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 11 May 90 p 17

[Article by Joel Bainerman: "Privatization: Seven Myths—and Reality"]

[Text] Five years after plans to privatize much of Israel's state-owned enterprises (SOEs) was formulated as part of the national unity government's economic-stabilization programme, only a handful of companies have been sold.

Through its SOEs, the government directly controls 12 percent of Israel's business activity—with an annual production of \$6 billion and exports of \$1.6b.—and employs 65,000 workers.

In the first stage of the privatization programme, 11 SOEs were to be auctioned off for \$700m. to \$800m. But only two large corporations have actually been sold—Paz, for \$95m., and Jerusalem Economic Corp., for \$55m.

Why has the pace of the programme been so sluggish?

Even as foreign pressure increases to get the privatization programme moving, a series of myths has been perpetuated to the Israeli public as to how the plan should be carried out and the dangers such a sell-off supposedly entail.

Myth No. 1: Israelis don't have enough capital to finance such large public offerings of SOEs. Ze'ev Refuah, outgoing head of the Government Corporation Authority, stated that Israel can't adopt the Thatcher system of selling shares directly to the public because Israeli corporations are smaller, and the country lacks a serious stock exchange. In Israel, he points out, it is the pension and provident funds, not the public, which have the spare cash.

The Reality: What's wrong with selling shares to these funds? The recipients of any future profits will be Israeli citizens whom these funds represent. Also, probably the only way to get the billions of dollars of unproductive underground capital—estimates range between \$5b. and \$20b.—above ground is to offer a general amnesty, and allow all Israelis to purchase dollar-based shares in SOEs.

Myth No. 2: Large companies like Israel Chemicals and Israel Aircraft Industries should search for a "strategic partner" as its major investor.

The Reality: By looking for a strategic partner for these conglomerates, the government is underestimating the potential of these two firms. They are billion-dollar firms who themselves could be stalking and searching the globe for possible acquisition that could enhance their own international marketing position.

Myth No. 3: For security reasons, the government shouldn't sell more than 50 percent of the shares in a SOE.

The Reality: The whole idea behind privatization is to take these enterprises out of government control and force management to be held accountable for their actions. Why bother selling any portion of a SOE if more than half will remain in government hands? Who would buy such unattractive shares?

Myth No. 4: Foreign investors might close down unprofitable divisions and lay off Israeli workers.

The Reality: Employment is only useful when it is productive. Employing workers only to save these people from being jobless is just another form of welfare. Israel's economy would be strengthened if redundant workers were fired, paid unemployment insurance, and retrained

for work in the private sector. If private investors who bought SOEs did this, they would be doing the economy a big favour.

Myth No. 5: Private and foreign owners will not keep the country's best interests at heart and might not put the assets of these companies at the service of the state in times of a national emergency.

The Reality: Companies, especially public ones, don't operate in a vacuum. Considering the Israeli public's deep sense of patriotism, particularly in times of war, what would happen to El Al or Zim's publicly traded shares after a war in which they didn't put their planes and ships at the disposal of the IDF (the IDF could always reimburse them for these costs later)?

Myth No. 6: Private investors might buy SOEs and then sell them later at a huge profit.

The Reality: This can only happen when the government conducts its deals behind closed doors, as it did when the Jerusalem Economic Corp. was sold to the American banking firm Bear Sterns in secret bids given and accepted without the public's knowledge.

Owners of private companies know exactly what their companies are worth and what is a fair selling price. Why shouldn't the government be able to determine the current market value for its SOEs?

If the government is worried about "selling cheaply," then the surest way of getting a fair price is to float these companies' shares on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange and then let the investors take over the companies at stock prices that would more accurately reflect their worth.

Putting these companies on the local stock exchange is also the safest way of protecting Israel's interests. If foreign investors are so adamant on investing in Israel Chemicals or Israel Aircraft Industries, let them establish companies here to buy and sell stocks and manage portfolios for foreign investors. This would also help the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange attain a reputation as a world-class bourse.

Myth No. 7: SOEs have to be sold off in big chunks.

The Reality: If the government is firmly committed to a privatization policy, it shouldn't matter how fast shares are sold. In fact, it might even be better to sell off 20 percent of the shares of Bezek or El Al every six months or so. These companies' financial attraction shouldn't change 12 months down the line.

Certain U.S. investment banks stand to rake in huge commissions from both sides of Israeli SOEs to "strategic partners" and have less to gain if they are sold via public stock exchanges in Israel or the States. When these banks warn the government that "the stock market in Israel is too small," or "the only way to get real value for a company like Israel Chemicals is to find a long-term investor that understands the company's long-term

interests," the government should understand what motivates this sort of advice.

Also, just because those who handled the sale of SOEs in Britain and a few large investment banking houses in New York say, "This is the way to go," doesn't mean that Israel can't implement her own sell-off strategy. It's time the Israeli government began utilizing the great reserve of economic minds this country has to offer to come up with a uniquely Israeli privatization scheme that suits Israel's needs and interests. Where would we be today if we took past American and British advice in dealing with the Arabs?

Beyond the obvious reasons of taking SOEs out of the hands of the politicians and in the process use the funds raised to pay off Israel's external and internal debts, perhaps the best reason to privatize is to give every Zionist, inside and outside Israel, the opportunity to own "a piece of Zion." What better way could there be to foster the connection with Israel among all Jews everywhere than owning shares in Israeli enterprises?

To this end, perhaps the government should just simply divide up the shares in the enterprises equally amongst the Israeli populace. As these companies will no longer be in the hands of the politicians and will be forced to show a profit, their shares will rise in value. It could be seen as compensation to the public for more than four decades of confiscatory taxes and bureaucratic and economic oppression.

Privatization could be the best thing that could ever happen to the Israeli economy, as long as the Israeli public become the sole beneficiary of the initiative and ultimately winds up being the majority shareholder in "Israel Inc."

MOROCCO

CFCIM Discusses Tourism Industry Problems

90AA0128A Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE
in French 20 Apr 90 p 17

[Article by Touria Bachir Bouhali; first paragraph is LA VIE ECONOMIQUE introduction]

[Text] Morocco's tourist industry has experienced a decline over the past two years and the reasons may be more internal than external. At least that was what one could gather from a meeting by Moroccan and foreign tourism professionals on Thursday 12 April. The meeting was sponsored by the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Morocco [CFCIM].

"What is happening in Morocco?" That was the first comment on tourism made by Georges Colson, director and general manager of FRAM [expansion unknown], a French travel agency that organizes tours to 24 countries, including Morocco (69,000 tourists used its services in 1989). FRAM concentrates mainly on attracting the average Frenchman, and it says that 45 percent of its

customers use its services again. That shows the potential market for Morocco, which has just signed a pact with the group. Among its other activities, FRAM manages 3,000 beds, owns hotels around the world, and charters 17 flights to Morocco every week. Colson's first observation was that at the moment, particularly in comparison with the past two years, the growth of tourism is in a real crisis both in Europe and in Morocco, with the latter being caught in the free-for-all of very aggressive competition.

The fact is that if tourism is doing badly in Morocco—and everyone knows that it is—there are many causes, both internal and external. The number of European tourists decreased between 1987 and 1989.

France is largely responsible for that decline. The situation is all the more disturbing because the three largest European markets have reached the crisis point. The number of German tourists has declined by five percent, compared to 10 percent in the case of the Spanish, and 14 percent in the case of the British.

Comparing 1989 to 1988, the number of entries was up by over 5.4 percent at the airports, by 30.8 percent at the maritime points of entry, and by 60 percent at border crossing points on land. That would seem to indicate a 27-percent increase in the number of tourists, but one should not be deceived. That "record" result of 2.5 million tourists is actually due to the influx of some 900,000 Algerians, including a strong majority of emigrant workers passing through Morocco and of border workers.

In 1989, however, Morocco reportedly had 80,000 beds in its rated hotels, and most of the overnight stays were in four-star hotels. A total of 3,000 beds were added in 1987-1988, and that number doubled to 6,200 in 1989, including 3,150 beds in the city of Marrakech alone. Agadir and Fez were in last place with 258 and 249 beds, respectively, exceeded by Casablanca (1,000 beds) and Ouarzazate (600).

Also noted was a sharp rise in tourist earnings between 1965 [as published] and 1989. The total in 1989 was 9.6 billion dirhams, compared to 8.8 billion in 1988, for an increase of over 12 percent. Moroccan banks reportedly also experienced an increase in 1989 of more than five percent over the year before.

'Results Not Up to Expectations'

Chairman Bouamrani of the National Hotel Industry Federation did point out that "the nation's results in regard to tourism are not living up to expectations." He said: "This crisis is probably only temporary, and we know that we must prepare for the Europe of 1993."

The fact is that although great efforts have been made to turn the tourist industry into a major source of foreign exchange for the national economy, the glaring drop in tourism in Morocco is a reality! It is a fact and a reality that we must come to terms with. But by way of

consolation, it can be stated that Morocco is not the only country suffering from this "crisis"—tourist entries in the EEC countries are reportedly down by over five percent in comparison with previous years.

"There are several reasons," Bouamrani explained. There was reportedly a shortage of airline space in 1989 in France, which, among other things, was celebrating the bicentennial of the French Revolution.

Morocco suffered the consequences.

The weather in Europe was very mild last year, a situation that reportedly was not good for "business." There were also economic problems in Great Britain and a major political change in the East European countries. But while all those explanations are more or less related to the conditions of the moment, do they really indicate that the crisis currently being experienced by Morocco is only temporary?

Agadir, which used to be a favorite destination for tour operators, is now said to be bringing up the rear. It is very popular with Germans, French, and Scandinavians, but this year the length of stay has dropped at a breathtaking rate. What happened to the city of Agadir? According to G. Colson, it seems that nobody wants to return there any more.

Bouamrani touched on the land problem—that is, the scarcity and high price of real estate. That explains why a recovery is not obvious. At least at the moment.

"It will be difficult to get back on our feet because Morocco has been absent from tourist promotion for the past three years," said the chairman of the hotel federation, who concluded that more facilities would have to be made available to the industry so that it could increase its investments and step up promotion.

'Morocco Absent From Tourist Promotion'

"Promotion of the 'Moroccan product' among tourists has been nonexistent for a very long time," said Georges Colson.

A "tourist promotion" budget does exist, however. But if publicity about a country stops even for a year, one has no choice but to believe that it is quickly forgotten in the face of the more aggressive competition existing on the European market. Spain experienced a drop in tourism a few years ago, and one reason perhaps was that it had become too self-confident in the matter of promotion. But the Spanish recovered lost ground very quickly! In Morocco, there is talk of promotion. But nothing shows up abroad, say the tourism professionals. Perhaps it is time to wake up to that fact. Especially because today's customers are said to have changed. Tourists are becoming increasingly interested in adventures, theme vacations, shorter stays, and more value for their money. Some Moroccan groups such as the ONA [North African

Trading Company] have already started to go after that market, although they are targeting a very upscale clientele.

Quality-Price Ratio Needs Review

Besides the increasing neglect of promotion, there are other reasons why Morocco is being visited less and less frequently. G. Colson took pains to emphasize that the welcome accorded tourists leaves a lot to be desired. "For vacationers seeking a few days of rest, spending two hours getting through customs, administrative and other procedures at the airport after already spending two hours on the plane, is enough to ruin their vacation before it starts." Colson stressed the fact that Morocco is losing its legendary warmth and hospitality. Is it time to revise the slogan "Hospitable Morocco"? Although the public's awareness in this area is still highly developed, fake guides and other delinquents reportedly continue to assault tourists. But the problem exists at the very start—it resides in the very price of a stay in Morocco. "Those prices are not the best," according to Colson. Professionals in the field should in fact take note of the problem with prices and particularly the relationship between quality and price. None of those factors can do anything but harm the "Moroccan product." Overbooking seems to be growing increasingly common. Without knowing why, a tourist who spends a year preparing for a vacation in Agadir may wind up in Marrakech!

It is not at all difficult to guess that such an experience remains etched in the tourist's memory.

'Because of Indigestion'

Do all those reasons constitute unanswered questions? Among other things, it is said that there is a lack of seriousness in the construction of hotels, "according to a professional in the field of construction and public works," a lack of harmony between Moroccan professionals and foreign tour operators, and so on. Those factors also mean a sizable loss of income. The means of action all too frequently mentioned may not be enough to make up the difference.

Morocco still has many zones for development; it is a country whose values can be used up every two years [sentence as published].

The most important thing is to show a little of "that seriousness" so often mentioned by foreigners in the business. When one hears that seminars on top of conferences on top of meetings have been held to discuss Morocco's problems with its tourist industry but that nothing has come of them, is there any reason to wonder why tourists are staying away from Morocco?

It seems that a "French tourist apparently had an attack of indigestion." Which only shows how carefully the customer must be handled!

Pharmaceutical Industry Looks at Obstacles

90AA0128B Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE
in French 27 Apr 90 p 22

[Article by A.G.; first two paragraphs are LA VIE ECONOMIQUE introduction]

[Text] The pharmaceutical industry in Morocco represents a turnover of 1.6 billion dirhams, the manufacture of 2,700 products, the supplying of from 80 to 85 percent of the country's demand for medicines, 4,000 jobs, and 200 million dirhams in exports.

In all, about 20 firms make up this industry, which incidentally is 98-percent Moroccanized.

The pharmaceutical industry got its start in the country's dispensing pharmacies, and it began its takeoff in the 1970's thanks to the promulgation in 1969 of the royal decree regulating that profession. Before then, anybody could go into business to produce or sell anything, a situation that did little to encourage drug manufacturers to establish themselves locally or help set up production units.

The period before 1969 was characterized above all by the existence of trading companies that imported pharmaceuticals. It is true that the French were already producing a few therapeutical medicines in Morocco for export, but manufacturing did not really get under way until about 1971-1972. One could say that its development was accomplished through repeated government circulars. This indicates the interest felt by public authorities in the sector's development, but it also reveals the climate of dialogue and consultation that characterized relations between the government and industrialists. "Above a certain level of imports, the state preferred to have local production, and it provided the necessary encouragement and assistance," we were told by Mr. Chawki, chairman of the Moroccan Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry. At first, of course, the manufacturing process was concerned with the simplest products, but it then advanced to more sophisticated products. The result is that at present, 2,700 different items are being manufactured, and they supply from 80 to 85 percent of Morocco's need for medicines. The remaining 15 or 20 percent consists of a few products whose local manufacture would require sizable investments not justified by the very small quantities needed.

Exports

What is more, the Moroccan pharmaceutical industry has become an exporter, and 1990 will see an export turnover of over 150 million French francs, two-thirds of it accounted for by the Algerian market. In this connection, it should be pointed out that medicines are among the few products that are difficult to export because of the particularly demanding standards and documentation connected with the patent medicine business. This just shows how advanced the national pharmaceutical industry has become, since it regularly sells a large

number of hospital products to Europe. Those sales, along with sales to the Maghreb market, would certainly grow even more, according to Chawki, if certain constraints were removed. At the moment, those constraints have to do with the foreign trade policy of Algeria, our chief market in the Maghreb, which insists on balanced trade (excluding hydrocarbons), whereas Morocco advocates complementarity. But they are also due to the refusal by Moroccan export insurers to cover contracts whose payment terms exceed 6 months.

The situation could move in a favorable direction, however, thanks to the new trade regulations adopted by the Algerian Government two weeks ago for the purpose of giving banks and businesses more responsibility for the management of foreign trade.

In the medium and long term, however, the pharmaceutical industry will have to deal with other handicaps which are threatening to seriously hamper its competitiveness.

Import Duties and Taxes

One important aspect of that problem concerns the heavy duties and taxes imposed on medicines. They are so high that they constitute a genuine human "health tax." They are levied at rates varying from 15 to 60 percent on most of the imported raw materials and semifinished products used in the manufacture of medicines. But imported finished products pay a duty of 35 percent plus the P.F.I. [protection from imports?].

The industry has in fact taken steps aimed at alleviating that burden, which increases the price of medicines. For instance, it has proposed that certain medicines regarded as essential or priority items be exempt from customs duties.

This applies in particular to antibiotics, medicines for use in cardiology, and hormones. That request is still under study, and it is to be hoped that it will receive the attention it deserves, all the more since other products regarded as priority items in the fields of animal and plant health are completely or partly exempt from import duties and taxes.

It needs to be said that medicines in Morocco are relatively cheap in comparison with many other countries (the exceptions being those countries that subsidize, sometimes very heavily, their pharmaceutical industries). But consumer prices feel the full weight of a number of noneconomic factors.

Excluding taxes, the production cost of medicines in Morocco accounts for only 58.9 percent of the PPM (Morocco price to the public), with all of the remainder (41.9 percent) consisting of taxes and the profit margins taken by wholesalers and pharmacists.

That may explain the very low amount spent on medical care in Morocco. The consumption of medicines in Morocco comes to 100 dirhams per inhabitant per year,²

compared to 1,200 French francs in a developed country like France.

Makeup of PPM (10 Dirhams)

Level	Dirhams
Ex factory, excluding tax	5.89
Ex factory, including tax	6.30
Wholesaler purchase price	6.30
Wholesaler sales price	7.00
Moroccan price to the public	10.00

Future Threatened?

Faced with that situation, industry professionals are making efforts to use any means of increasing the market that might further the development of industrial activities. But they emphasize bitterly that certain recent actions by the Ministry of Public Health are likely to produce the opposite effect. Among other things, they cite the start-up of a unit for producing medicines in Berrechid and the signing of a loan agreement with the World Bank for financing the purchase of medicines under conditions that practically eliminate domestic suppliers.

Concerning that loan, it should be pointed out that the Ministry of Public Health has just received financial assistance totaling \$171 million, \$48 million of which will be used to purchase medicines in accordance with rules laid down, naturally, by the bank. It is known that in contracts benefiting from its assistance, the World Bank gives domestic suppliers a 15-percent price advantage.

In Morocco's case, that will make almost no difference, because when bids are compared, the customs duties and taxes borne by imported finished products are ignored but the inputs imported and used in the local manufacture of a similar product are taken into account. For local manufacturers, those customs duties and taxes amount to between 15 and 60 percent, a difference that more than offsets the so-called national price advantage.

Added to that threat is the ministry's very recent decision to give the Pasteur Institute a monopoly on its commercial activities for the importation and distribution of medicines.

Industry sources say that Circular No. 3-IP dated 30 January 1990 allows the Pasteur Institute to be the exclusive supplier by agreement and makes no mention of quality requirements or price levels. People in the industry point out that that same decision has the effect of giving the Pasteur Institute's foreign supplier a monopoly on the Moroccan market, since the products in question will no longer be subject to the rules of competition.

The fears of those in the industry are all the more justified in that they still remember the difficulties caused scarcely a year ago when the institute imported meningitis vaccine.

In any case, two questions arise: why, at a time when monopolies are tending to crumble, are they trying to establish one? Also, why are they beginning to put together public investments in a sector that until now has been the exclusive province of private enterprise, and this at a time when the country is on the verge of implementing its privatization program?

In the opinion of those in the industry, the Ministry of Public Health's international call for tenders to build the unit in Berrechid flagrantly contradicts the policy being advocated in connection with privatization. And in any case, they point out that basically, the state, which accounts for three percent of the market for medicines in Morocco, is planning to manufacture a part of its requirements that local industry is in a position to supply with no additional investment and at lower cost. In fact, the installed capacity planned for Berrechid should cover about 20 percent of today's total pharmaceutical market.

But even at that level, the planned production unit cannot be justified on grounds of profitability, say officials of the Moroccan Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry. They say that the legal vacuum surrounding this project leads to the suspicion that it will be led to change course in the future and spill over into the private sector's activities. All in the interest of profitability, of course!

Footnotes

1. Profits that, in their turn, are weighed down with taxes.
2. Source: Moroccan Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry.

QATAR

Impact of Social Changes Discussed

90AE0042A London AL-DUSTUR
in Arabic 30 Apr 90 pp 20, 21

[Article by Yusuf al-Sharif: "Winds of Change Blow on Qatar"]

[Text] Observers believe that the present "end" of the Iraq-Iran war, which lasted about eight years, has signaled a new relaxation in the policies pursued by the Gulf states in particular, where the state of war and its conflicts have adversely affected all relations between the neighboring countries. The war forced Qatar, in view of its geographical and demographic size and location, to maintain a stance of vigilance and caution.

There is no doubt that Qatar, in light of the present domestic and foreign changes, was quicker than the others in adapting to the regional changes and the international changes, whose strong winds have been blowing from Eastern Europe. And it was quicker to react to them in a serious and responsible manner.

However, the constants and innovations in Qatar's foreign policy are in step with and not separate from the constants of its domestic policy and the changes, both in content and in form, that occurred in it since 18 July last year. That was when the emir of the country announced the formation of the new cabinet, which has opened wide vistas for comprehensive change and renewal by providing capable young people the opportunity to assume ministerial posts and to chair higher executive institutions. This step removed a major obstacle that had stood before the winds of change for a long time. It also removed the calls for reform, the exercise of the right of public control, and the duty to criticize certain executive authority figures of traditional and historical standing.

Perhaps one of the most prominent features of the new trends in Qatar's domestic policy is the remarkable easing of censorship on the press as well on artistic and cultural works. Censorship instructions only stipulate that, in adherence to standards of national unity, no leaders of sisterly and friendly states should be attacked nor religious and political beliefs should be criticized. Meanwhile, Minister of Information and Culture Shaykh Hamad Ibn-Suhaym Al Thani has promised to gradually ease censorship restrictions.

Criticism, advocacy of reforms, and advice concerning the executive authorities' practices now fill the pages of Qatari newspapers. An example of this is the newspapers' wise tackling of the problem of increasing unemployment among female university graduates. According to statistics, the percentage of female university students and graduates has reached 60 percent. The problem lies in the relatively slow social development which stands as a stumbling block in the face of female employment and in restricting such employment only to the field of medicine and teaching. In the meantime, the University of Qatar employs Qatari women only in administrative jobs but not in teaching jobs.

The Qatari newspapers call for legalizing the employment of women in the various jobs filled by men, while maintaining controls that would strike a balance between social values and the exploitation of half of society in development and contribution to comprehensive advancement.

Political and cultural clubs in Qatar are open-minded towards the various national and Arab schools of thought and ideologies, with no restrictions or taboos on freedom of expression. For more than a month, the Qatari National Theater nightly staged with great success the play *dawhat tashrif* [Tree of Honor], with Qatari star Ghanim al-Sulayti in the lead role. The play is highly

critical of the Qatari society's obsolete traditions, negative inclinations, and warped behavioral patterns which the petroleum era brought about. It ridicules the "chauvinistic" rejection of dealing with foreigners. It focuses on the failure of officials to honor their promises and on their bombastic statements that are unrelated to reality. What is interesting is that the Minister of Information and the head of the emir's court attended the rehearsal and approved staging the play without any changes or alterations in its scenes.

This is a new phenomenon deserving consideration and examination. In contrast, the most successful Qatari plays lasted no more than three days, and even when the popular Egyptian play *al-wad al-sayyid al-shaghal* [The Servant's Boy] with 'Adil Imam in the lead role was staged in Qatar, it did not last more than three days.

The Minister of Information and Culture is one of the capable young men included in the new cabinet formation. Before that he was undersecretary at the Qatari Foreign Ministry. Answering a question by AL-DUSTUR about the reasons behind easing censorship, he said: "In fact the conditions and circumstances that dictated imposing censorship have now changed to a certain extent. We believe that the press should be enabled to play its effective and influential role in developing society. For this reason, censorship's role has now become more a means of coordination and a way of exchanging views between the Ministry of Information and the press establishments in the public interest. Maintaining the censorship or so-called censorship means never restricting the press or the forums of culture and enlightenment from addressing all the political, economic, social, and cultural issues, provided they adhere to principles of the state's policy. But, naturally, when the circumstances and conditions that dictated imposing censorship disappear, the censorship will be automatically lifted, especially since the world has become merely a small village, thanks to progress and the flow of information. Hence Qatar's initiative to react to the winds of democratic change sweeping the world. Perhaps Qatar was even quicker to react to this change, given its circumstances, its Arab affiliation, and the values, principles, and doctrines in which it believes."

More evidence of political developments in the State of Qatar's policy with regard to its Arab relations, its national commitments, and the changes that have occurred in the structure and trends of the executive authority, is the national project which the Qatari government is now sponsoring in order to establish an Arab Islamic institution whose policies and trends will be directed by an independent and specialized body and independent budget. The body will be elected by the Arab ministers of information within the framework of the Arab League and the ministers of information of the Islamic Conference. The body will study the Zionist and foreign propaganda plans hostile to the Arab and Islamic nation and lay down a national programmed and multifaceted information strategy to counter such plans with facts, using modern technological methods in order to

explain the justice of Arab and Islamic causes to world opinion, bearing in mind Zionist control of more than eight percent of Western information media.

The Qatari Minister of Information and Culture believes that the Arab satellite Arabsat has not been fully exploited if measured against its cost and its available advanced technology. The Qatari Ministry of Information and Culture is now studying another national information plan aimed at exploiting Arabsat in enhancing contact between all the Arab peoples on the level of political, social, and cultural education for the benefit of the coming generations. This is in order to strengthen their national affiliation and unity aspirations through the exchange of knowledge and bringing Arab concepts closer together, as well as to relay live, momentous events as they occur in Arab countries.

An offshoot of this project is a project for broadcasting educational programs and cultural and scientific material sponsored by the education technology branch at the University of Qatar, a branch of the teaching college. This project is considered to be first of its kind in the Middle East and perhaps in Arab universities.

The project aims at exploiting the microwave network linking Qatar with the Gulf states. This is in order to broadcast pictorial academic and cultural programs of various specialties that university and higher education students might need, as well as pictorial scientific material in possession of the university library that includes millions of video tapes which constitute a complete encyclopedia, or materials produced in the university studios. These will be easily received on television screens in all the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries and would be a nucleus of an open university that would serve students and seekers of knowledge in the Arab homeland through utilizing Arabsat.

Qatar University officials told AL-DUSTUR that in view of economic austerity and the plans to cut government expenditures, the open university project will be restricted to Qatar University students and seekers of knowledge, but the "open university" project will be put to the GCC and the Arab League in order to be studied, approved, and financed by the countries wishing to benefit from the project services.

The immediate reasons for the government's adoption of an austerity plan and cutting government expenditure are due to two factors. The first is to "regulate" state revenues and exploit them in a scientific and programmed manner. This created the need a few months ago to establish the Higher Planning Council, whose task is to lay down the short and long-term strategies for the state's policy in the various investment and services fields, to select the programs that fulfill these plans, and to control and monitor the implementation of these plans.

The second factor is that the State of Qatar, according to its Emir Shaykh 'Isa Ibn-Salman Al Khalifah in a speech at the opening of the current Consultative Council

session, throws all its weight and financial and economic resources behind the implementation of the northern gas field whose first stage will be completed in 1990.

The project will double Qatar's oil revenue and, additionally, would enable building the biggest new industrial base. According to the Emir of Qatar, "When its stages are implemented and its work completed, it will become a major mainstay of our economy and would open broad vistas for the comprehensive progress which we are striving for."

The State of Qatar had to choose between two things: either to seek partnership with foreign companies in order to finance the project that will cost billions of dollars—the first stage alone would cost between \$1.3 and 1.5 billion—or to seek obtaining loans, using its petroleum investments as collateral. But in the end, it was decided to adopt a third choice that will be compatible with the state's national and free ownership of all operations and activities relating to crude oil and natural gas that were undertaken by foreign companies until 1974, following the establishment of the Qatari General Establishment for Petroleum.

For this reason it was decided to adopt self-reliance and reliance on the state's own revenue, which has dictated the policy of austerity and government expenditure cutting, and to finance the project from the national budget.

It is worth noting that the northern gas field that was discovered in 1971 has an area of 6,000 square kilometers. Its deposits are estimated at about 150 trillion cubic feet of crude gas, whose production is not linked to crude oil production. It would be possible to produce 4 billion cubic feet of gas daily for a period of 100 years. It is known that actual implementation of the project began in 1987 and is expected to be completed by early 1991. It is expected that Qatar will also be able to export 48,000 barrels daily of liquids and concentrates processed from the produced gas.

The Qataris are optimistic about the future and the expected progress after gas production from the northern field begins. Experts from the Qatar Natural Gas Company, which was established in November 1984, have already begun their tours of and discussions with Japan and the major industrial countries in order to market Qatari gas. This is a complex matter, since it requires technical and engineering adjustments of the equipment and plants now operating with petroleum. Discussions are also underway with the neighboring GCC countries regarding transporting gas to them by pipelines and utilizing gas as a substitute for petroleum.

Qatar is not far away from developments and changes taking place in the world. Indications and signs of change and the desire to break free from the shackles of the past are clearly evident, the most significant of which is the absence of religious extremism. It is true that there are extremist individuals but there are no extremist organizations and groups. This, in the view of officials, is

probably due the fact that in its contemporary history, Qatar did not experience religious persecution or suppression of or ban on religious activity, since religious extremism is always the result of these coercive measures. The press, the mosques, and forums of cultural clubs enable extremist individuals to air their fundamentalist views. They are always countered by those with enlightened and moderate religious views.

Shaykh Khalifah Ibn Hamad Al Thani issued Law Number 21 of 1989 regarding regulating marriage to foreigners. The law recognizes earlier marriages to foreigners if the marriage is documented and in accordance with the rules of Islam. The law grants children from such marriage all Qatari citizenship rights and Qatari travel documents as long as their mother resides in Qatar. It is also their right to apply for Qatari citizenship when they reach majority.

This law has lent "legitimacy" to many earlier marriages to foreigners and permits such married couples to return to Qatar. It has also regulated various other cases of marriage to foreign men or women. It also unconditionally allows marriage with GCC citizens.

The educated elite in Qatar hold the view that the democratic trend now sweeping the world is gradually finding its way to Qatar. The motives, the catalyst of change, and its mechanisms in the government and the executive authority have now extended to the legislative authority represented by the Consultative Council. Proposals put forward in this regard call for equating the number of young council members with that of the elderly members. The council members are government-appointed.

When the question of how acceptable the selection of Consultative Council members by election would be, the consensus was that the size of the Qatari population and the country's present internal and external circumstances do not allow the luxury of disagreement and the establishment of parties. Attention is now focused on Kuwait in order to follow up on the current dialogue between its political factions and cultural figures regarding the restoration of democracy, and to see whether it will follow the return of the People's Assembly, or will come within the framework of a consultative council.

The current Qatari Consultative Council session is seriously debating the state's general policy on every level and studying a number of new laws proposed by the government and the budget of major projects.

However the standards of evaluating the openness Qatar is witnessing may differ, it is inevitable in the end to take into consideration the special circumstances of the state's historical political establishment, its relations with the neighboring countries, the government's and people's aspiration to strike a balance between the need for change and the realities of conservatism, and the ideal way for this difficult equation to be achieved step by step.

SUDAN

Ummah Official on Internal, External Ties, Plans

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[Interview with Sulayman Muhammad al-Diblu, member of the central committee of the Ummah Party and head of the Ummah Party's delegation to negotiations with the Popular Movement, by Muhammad Khalifah; date and place unspecified; first two paragraphs are AL-YAWM AL-SABI' introduction.]

[Excerpts] The Sudanese Ummah party, which came to power after the first elections since the fall of Ja'far al-Numayri and held it until the recent military coup, is trying to reevaluate its experience in light of the new circumstances and its new alliances.

AL-YAWM AL-SABI' continues to present the positions of the parties in the Democratic National Alliance, which brings together the Sudanese opposition parties. Having met with both Lam Akol Ajawin, member of the supreme political leadership of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of the Sudan, and Dr. Mansur Khalid, advisor to John Garang, the leader of this movement, we now publish an interview with Dr. Sulayman al-Diblu, member of the central committee of the Ummah Party and head of the Ummah Party's delegation to the negotiations with the Popular Movement, which ended with the movement joining the Alliance. Herein is the text of the interview. [passage omitted]

[Khalifah] Then who bears the responsibility for upsetting Sudan's strategic relations with the Arab states, especially with Egypt at times and Libya at other times, and for the rapprochement with Iran at the expense of the Arab states?

[Al-Dablu] Our foreign and Arab relations were normal or near normal. Even the problems which occurred with the states that you mentioned were normal problems.

With respect to Iran, our point of view was that the war between Iraq and Iran was an unjustified war in which blood was spilt between two Muslim, fraternal peoples. Therefore we concentrated on the need to bring about peace between them, and we tried to play a positive role to stop the bloodshed and fighting. But we were surprised by violent attacks against al-Sayyid al-Sadiq and his mediation, and by an internal and foreign campaign that caused the initiative and its intent to be distorted.

With respect to Egypt, perhaps relations on the personal level at that time between senior officials in the two states were not good, but relations between the states were good. Perhaps the return to economic and commercial relations confirms this fact.

With respect to Libya, there was a unification plan which our party, the Ummah party, believed was in the interest of Sudan and Libya. When the plan was presented to the

democratic establishments and to the people and it was rejected, we withdrew from it, and we gave in to the public will. Therefore there was nothing that was not normal.

[Khalifah] How do you explain the fact that you are now returning to the policies that you used to reject when you were in power (such as your position towards the Southern Party and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of the Sudan)?

[Al-Diblu] The Ummah Party has never tired of serious efforts to bring about peace and stability in the south since this problem began. The party has always been convinced that there would be no stability, progress, and development in the Sudan in its entirety until after the problem of the south has been solved.

There was no disagreement on the principle; the disagreement was only over the right decision to bring about peace in the south. First making the right decision, then carrying it out, was never an easy process. We began the dialogue with the Popular Movement when it first appeared, and this dialogue has lasted throughout the succeeding years, although sporadically, and here we have recently returned to continue it. It was quickly crowned with the attainment of positive and practical results, an outcome that was not a surprise in view of the previous phases, and in view of the fact that it took place in light of the previous agreement between us on the need to hold a "constitutional conference," and then in light of the agreement which we reached in September 1989 with the other Sudanese parties.

[Khalifah] Doesn't your agreement with the Popular Movement now seem strange, while if you had done that when you were in power you could have stopped the war and solved the problem of the south, if only in part?

[Al-Diblu] I see nothing strange in the agreement between the Ummah Party and the Popular Movement. We came together as Sudanese political powers, and we debated as parties concerned with reaching solutions to all of the Sudan's problems, not only the problem of the South. In fact, foremost among them is the primary national problem, that of the system of government, democracy, and removing the military dictatorship. This meeting was not bilateral, rather it was part of an overall meeting of the principal political parties in the country.

[Khalifah] Where are the armed militias that your party formed when it was in power, and will you use them in your resistance to the military regime?

[Al-Diblu] The story of the militia was just a rumor with no basis to it in fact. If it had been true, the military coup would not have happened and it would not have succeeded. Unfortunately, the Sudanese media was irresponsible. It was the one which started and circulated this rumor. In this regard, I would like to mention that when democracy returns once again there will be no room for such journalistic practices as prevailed during the previous experiment. There must be a media code of

honor to which all publications must adhere and which would control the actions of journalists, so that the media anarchy which we experienced in past years would not be repeated. The media used to cast reckless accusations at will, and in the interests of certain people, and published anything without making sure of its truth or its value.

[Khalifah] Did the elements of your party not have a connection to or a role in the popular disturbances which the western Sudanese region saw recently?

[Al-Diblu] The events to which you are referring were tribal disturbances, with no connection to us or to elements of our party. It was a conflict between certain tribes in which they used arms to defend themselves.

[Khalifah] Won't you resort to the use of arms to resist the military regime?

[Al-Diblu] We as a party do not have the military might to oppose military rule. However, now that the Popular Movement has become one of the forces of the Democratic National Alliance which includes us and the rest of the political parties, the armed forces of the Popular Movement have become part of the activity of the alliance as a whole.

[Khalifah] Do you expect the military regime to fall soon, or do you expect that it will last a long time, as did Ja'far al-Numayri's regime?

[Al-Diblu] We expect that it will fall soon, and although the word "soon" may not mean tomorrow or the day after, in any case we do not expect and will not permit the repetition of any regime like al-Numayri's.

[Khalifah] Have you made some plan to bring down the regime with the allied parties in the Democratic National Alliance?

[Al-Diblu] There is a plan outside of the country that will be made known and announced in the future. And there is a plan for action at home, but it is not for announcement and publication.

[Khalifah] What are the characteristics of the outside plan? In other words, what would be the results of the National Alliance's announcement with respect to the Sudanese question?

[Al-Diblu] The agreement which we reached brought together all the political powers and unified their forces and efforts against the existing government. Now it is tantamount to national unity in confronting the military regime, and tantamount to announcing to the world that the Sudanese people have renounced their rulers. Without doubt, this will have positive results with respect to the Sudan, and negative results, we expect, on the government.

[Khalifah] It seems as if you are concentrating on the foreign aspect more than on the internal one, except for the Popular Movement.

[Al-Diblu] In my opinion, the agreement of the Sudanese parties is enough to show the world that there is a regime stifling the Sudanese people at a time when the whole world is turning towards democracy and multiplicity [of parties].

The announcement which we have agreed upon is guaranteed to have an effect by itself. In addition, we are making other efforts whose results will soon be evident at home.

[Khalifah] What is Cairo's position towards this agreement, especially since you signed it there?

[Al-Diblu] No, it was not signed in Cairo; only the talks took place there. That in itself does not reflect any official Egyptian position towards the agreement or to the parties to it.

[Khalifah] What executive and phased steps will the work of the Alliance take in the next phase? Will you send delegations to Arab capitals to explain your issue?

[Al-Diblu] The next phase will need much effort and work at home and abroad. We are now in the phase of bringing up proposals and ideas, and we will form working committees to take on responsibilities and tasks. These are the first of our steps, and we will study the possibility of sending advance delegations to Arab states.

[Khalifah] How do rate Ummah Party relations with the Arab states now?

[Al-Diblu] Relations are not bad. There are no sharp problems between us and any Arab State, there is no misunderstanding. We hope that they will improve further, and we will work to improve and develop them.

[Khalifah] Won't the Ummah party carry out a review of its previous experience in power, or an evaluation of its mistakes and accomplishments? Won't a conference be held for that purpose?

[Al-Diblu] There is some thought of creating better means for reviewing and evaluating the party's experience in the past years; however, present circumstances are hindering the achievement of this step. But we are going in the direction of holding an expanded meeting for the leaders and cadres of the organization, and laying down ideas for the future.

[Khalifah] Where will this meeting be held?

[Al-Diblu] It will be held outside of the Sudan, of course.

[Khalifah] Will the party leader, al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, attend it?

[Al-Diblu] How will he be able to come, when he is still under house arrest in Khartoum?

[Khalifah] Last question: Does the Democratic National Alliance have an open formula whereby other parties

may join, especially those which are usually described as ideological parties or small parties?

[Al-Diblu] As a matter of principle, there is nothing that would prevent any Sudanese party from joining the front, on condition that it be a party. There is a universal, definite and clear definition of what a party is, and that definition must be applied to whomever wants to join us. In addition to that, there are only objective conditions for joining: most importantly, that the party making the application is not a sectarian or a regional party; that is, that they believe in the current national unity of the Sudan, opposed to any regional, religious, or racial partition.

SYRIA

Israeli Columnist Profiles Hafiz al-Asad

90AE0054A Tel Aviv MA'ARIV
in Hebrew 18 May 90 pp 30-31, 34, 56

[Article by Shefi Gabay]

[Text] At the end of the 19th century, a Turkish man, of gigantic proportions and well-muscled, who asserted that he was a wrestler of the first rank in Turkey, arrived at the 'Alawi village of Qardahah in the mountain heights east of the Syrian city of al-Ladha-aiyah. He burst out in angry shouts: "I have come to you from Turkey after I heard that there are heroes who are capable of defeating me. Where are your heroes? Let them come, and we shall see." The people of the village who gathered in the small square urged those men who were real men to teach this mysterious giant a lesson. They approached him, one after the other, and, after a few movements, he broke their bones, until it was Salman's turn, a strongman known among the entire 'Alawi community. The Turkish giant threatened to shatter his bones, but was disappointed. Salman lifted the giant with an easy movement and threw him with a loud crash onto the ground, a crash from which he did not awake. From that time, the man was known as "al-Wahsh" (the beast).

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad dictates this story to the writers of his "chronicles." "Al-Wahsh, who defeated the Turkish Goliath, is my grandfather on my father's side, who proved to the Turks who ruled over us in those days, that we were stronger than they." And al-Asad adds: "Following this event, my clan became the most outstanding one in the 'Alawi mountains, and even the Turkish Sultan sought to bring it close to him, but all we wanted was for the Turks to allow us to till our mountainous lands quietly so that we could live honorably, because all of them supported families with many children." Al-Asad relates that his father also inherited many of his grandfather's traits. "I remember him, when he was 70, placing a cigarette butt on a tree, aiming his pistol barrel at it, from a distance of 50 meters, and...bull's eye."

Al-Asad does not ignore the fact that his father married two women, who bore him 11 sons and daughters. The first wife, Sa'di, bore three sons and two daughters. The second, Na'asah, who was twenty years younger than him, bore him a daughter and five sons, among them the two most famous names in modern Syria—Hafiz and Rif'at al-Asad. Hafiz, who was in Arab terms "the fourth belly" of Na'asah, was born on 6 October 1930. At that time, the father asked the council of notables of the 'Alawi community to remove from his family the nickname "al-Wahsh" that had stuck to it, and, after deliberations, the notables decided to give the family a respectable nickname: "al-Asad" (lion).

Hafiz al-Asad grew up with the other 10 brothers and sisters in a family neighborhood in the village of Qardahah, which looks out towards the broad horizon of the Mediterranean Sea. In this neighborhood lived the entire clan, which earned its livelihood from unirrigated field crops, and from the cultivation of vegetables, tobacco, and fruit trees. They also had poultry and flocks of sheep, which all the children would tend, especially after the father had become much older. Al-Asad relates that his young mother was the one who controlled the children, especially after the father had died. In fact, the mother tries to control the children to this day, and to this day they honor her.

In the great quarrel several years ago between President Hafiz al-Asad and his brother Rif'at, the mother showed great involvement. Rif'at, who saw his brother in intensive care following a serious heart attack, rushed to organize his men in the murderous defense squads, in order to keep the regime under his control, in the hands of the 'Alawi community. He almost carried out a military coup, and only the sudden recovery of the president stopped him. Al-Asad's confidantes told him about his brother's preparations for a coup and for taking over the regime, and he was infuriated. After he had returned to his office, he directed that the defense squads be disbanded, and advised his brother to go outside the boundaries of Syria. The mother, Na'asah, hurried to appeal to the sick al-Asad, and only then did he satisfy her by appointing for himself three assistants, including Rif'at. But the latter has still not returned from his exile. He came only once to visit the clan and friends, and a second time to marry his daughter off to someone from the family.

Rif'at established for himself a communications empire in France, which even includes an Arabic broadcasting station for the millions of Arab immigrants, and a long line of tourist business on the Italian and French Riviera. It is said that his men took over and purchased with threats profitable restaurants and casinos. The French Government is aware of Rif'at al-Asad's men's rampage, but its spokesmen reply to reporters' questions that it must hold off because Rif'at is still the Syrian vice president, and he is still popular in his country and is liable to be the successor. Rif'at's four wives, with his many children, live in luxurious villas at the edge of Lake Geneva.

Brother Hafiz in Syria does not mix in his doings. Occasionally, he sends him his eldest son Basil, who today manages the presidential office, apparently on secret matters, even though the spokesmen of the palace explain that Basil's trips to Rif'at are not connected with lofty affairs, but that Basil is very attached, since his childhood, to his uncle Rif'at.

The rest of the brothers in the family have not been outstanding in political life, and became big merchants of agricultural products in the al-Ladha-aiyah district. Gossip in the Arab world says that brother Jamil was involved until recently in smuggling goods from Lebanon, and afterwards turned to purchasing goods, mainly luxury items, from various countries in the world, from ships anchored in al-Ladha-aiyah harbor, without paying customs. Complaints about that which reached the president aroused his anger.

Not long ago, the brother imported an entire cargo of all kinds of goods, in a large ship laden with containers, but this time was surprised by the "impudence" of the customs men, who demanded that he open the containers. He did not understand that this was an order from the president. Jamil's men refused, and a violent clash developed in which both sides used firearms. Al-Asad, in his usual manner, told his brother to leave Syria for a cooling-off period.

The president told his biographers: "After my father had grown older, I supported all my brothers and sisters in the village of Qardahah. They worked, but I worked more than they, I took care of all their needs, I built them up, and they must obey me as their elder brother. I kept track of them like a father, until they married and established families. The problem of the family was the young Rif'at, the son of elderly parents, spoiled, whom we all loved. He was a difficult child, a bit disturbed, full of life, he really wore us all out. I tended, out of love, to hold Rif'at close to me as I rode a donkey to work in the fields, and I was a youth at the time."

Al-Asad also related that the father took care to teach his children reading and writing, and to bring them to the school, even though in those days it was very hard for the 'Alawis to be accepted to the schools. "It's true that we lived in mud huts, without water and electricity, but my father wrote poetry, and I learned from him to write poetry. I was the most serious one of the family."

Hafiz al-Asad also remained serious in his marriage—he married a distant relation, Anisah Makhluif, as is the custom of all the 'Alawis. It was not easy for al-Asad to marry Anisah, who was the daughter of a wealthy family from the mountain region. Her parents were opposed, but he loved her very much, and didn't give up. The couple began their life together in Qardahah, until al-Asad had risen from a low-ranking officer to minister of defense, and afterwards to the top, by a roundabout route, full of the dangers of the days of frequent revolutions. He built a villa for himself in Damascus, where, together with his wife, he raised his daughter and his

sons far from the spotlight. The family still lives there. The presidential palace serves only as an office.

Al-Asad does not hide his pride in his children's abilities. The eldest daughter, Bushra, who is the most beloved, is today a young woman, tall and beautiful, who graduated from the School of Pharmacy at the University of Damascus. The son, Basil, studied civil engineering, and is described as a serious man, an excellent athlete, a superior horseman, and a parachutist. It is rumored in Syria that al-Asad made the 27-year-old Basil his chief assistant and the director of the palace office, and that he is grooming him as his successor. The rest of the children are Bashra', who finished medical school; Mahir, who studied business administration; and Majd, who studied electrical engineering. Al-Asad also has never forgotten, and cherishes the memory of his first daughter, who died at the age of six, after a brief illness.

Basil relates: "It is true that our father cared for us with great dedication. But during his early years at the top, we did not get to see him more than a few days a week. Even on the days he came home, he would keep to himself for most of his leisure time. But on holidays, he would go with us to our vacation residence near the family birthplace, Qardahah, and even swim with us in the sea, on the shores of al-Ladha-aiyah."

Al-Asad's solitude is known to everyone at the top, most of them members of his 'Alawi community, especially those who are close to his family. At the beginning of his rise to power, he would open not only his office, but also the doors of his home, to his assistants, advisors, friends, ministers, military men. But since the '80's, he has preferred solitude. He does not like to retire until the wee hours. He ceased his frequent trips throughout the country, and began to be satisfied with the short and very well-guarded path from the palace to his villa. His confidantes say that it is difficult to get into his office, even for the minister of defense and the prime minister. He prefers to receive all the daily reports in writing, and he makes his comments and monitors operations through telephone conversations.

This solitude has lifted him above the people, and through commissars of the ruling Ba'th party, he has become an idol—not among the majority of the persecuted Sunni Muslim people, but among the members of the 'Alawi community and, perhaps, also among a small minority of others, who enjoy privileges in the framework of their membership in and loyalty to the party. The commissars of Ba'th took care to place large statues of him, made of marble and bronze, throughout Syria, and next to them important quotations from his speeches during his few appearances before the central committee of the party or the people's council.

Al-Asad regards himself as "the drawn sword of the Arab people," and believes that what was taken by force, will be regained through force. He continues to tell the Arabs that they must not bend their knee before Israel. Up to now, he has called for strategic balance in all spheres, in

order to overtake Israel, but the changes that have taken place among his allies in the Communist bloc have brought him back down to reality, and are now forcing upon him reconciliation with Arab rulers who are not to his taste.

He returned to the Egypt of Camp David on behalf of what he calls "the building of Arab unity." It is possible that he will also return to the leader of the other part of Ba'th, his bitter enemy, the Iraqi Saddam Husayn. He may also make up with the great deviator, PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat. But his hatred for these two figures will remain until the day of his death. The Iraqi president is the one who impaired his image as a leader, and 'Arafat buried his dream of southern Syria, which is Palestine. These two are liable also to take his army out of part of Lebanon, such as the north, which was always part of Greater Syria.

Reconciliation on the part of al-Asad is conditional upon the attitude of the Arab leaders towards Israel. "Reconciliation only for the sake of Arab unity against Israel," he made clear. Al-Asad told a Western journalist: "Israel is entangled in the same problem from which I suffered. The doctor once asked me to stop smoking immediately, because it endangered my health. I now say openly that the continuation of the Israeli occupation is hazardous to Israel's health. When I obeyed my doctor's orders and stopped smoking, I suffered a lot, but I got over it, and after the withdrawal, Israel, too, will suffer, but it will get over it." But al-Asad did not reply to the big question that the journalist asked him: "What will happen if they force, you [plural], to take up smoking again?"

Commentators say that there are changes in al-Asad in the wake of the changes in the world. Western leaders who have visited him told Israel that he is indeed interested in peace. His flying instructor and friend, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, asserts that al-Asad speaks in two languages, one for internal Arab purposes, and the other, the real one, for his international needs. But his friend, the orientalist Patrick Seale, argues differently—that Hafiz al-Asad has not relinquished his dream of a Greater Syria. His first problem is the return of the Golan, which he calls "my conscience," and the second problem is Palestine.

His 'Alawi community, which had been poor and ostracized, and was forced to send its sons to work as servants in the homes of the Sunni Muslims, has become a wealthy community. The 'Alawi villages are the most developed ones in Syria. The members of the community, who serve in the most sensitive spots in all the security forces and government institutions, fear a mistake that will cost them their lives, given the great pent-up hatred among the majority.

Indeed, the leaders of that majority, who number in the thousands, have sat for years in notorious prisons without trial, but the possibility of subversion on the part of the Muslim Brothers and the other parties exists. A small error would result in a massacre of the 'Alawis.

The members at the top guard the community's rule with scrutiny, and with an iron hand. Even recently, the 'Alawi intelligence arms arrested dozens more new leaders of the Muslim Brothers, who are dominant in the majority community.

Al-Asad was once asked: Who gave the order for the great massacre of Muslims in the city of Hama, where there was a revolt against the 'Alawi regime? He replied: "Even today I am capable of sweeping out all the Muslims who trade in religion for political purposes."

In 1981, on the president's orders, brother Rif'at swept out the merchants in religion in Hama, with dozens of bulldozers that levelled a city the size of old 'Akko with many hundreds of families within. On the flattened ground, al-Asad ordered the construction of the loveliest park in Syria.

All of the figures who met with al-Asad recently relate that he enjoys excellent health. But al-Asad, who regards their words as compliments for the purpose of protocol, hurries to clarify: "It is true that I feel young, but at the same time I feel that my body and my heart do not permit me to feel that way."

[Box, pp 34, 56] But He Survives

Two large, old paintings decorate the main office of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in the al-Muhajirin Palace in Damascus: the great battle at the Horns of Hittin, in which the Crusaders who ruled what the Syrians call the south of their country, that is, Palestine, were defeated; and the image of the Muslim-Kurdish victor, Salah-al-Din al-Ayyubi, who united the Arabs against the foreign conquerors. All the president's visitors, who do not hide their wonder at the two paintings, understand from the explanations that the first picture symbolizes for al-Asad his aspiration of a united Arab army against the new invaders of southern Syria, and that the second painting symbolizes the exemplary Arab leader of all time.

But most Arab leaders have scornful smiles for the man, scion of a minority community in Syria, the 'Alawi or al-Nusayri community, on whose founders, members, and descendants Arab history has placed a black mark of dreadful disgrace as precisely those who aided the Crusaders against the army of Salah-al-Din, and who carried out a failed attempt to assassinate the great leader. Following that attempt, they holed up in their extremely poor mountain villages on the mountain slopes of the maritime city of al-Ladha-aiyah, for a long period, including the village that is the birthplace of the al-Asad clan, Qardahah. Salah-al-Din's men did not harm this minority, but imposed heavy taxes upon it, and made its sons into hewers of wood and drawers of water, servants and shoe shiners.

In its great smear campaign from the beginning of its war with Iran to this day, Iraq has mobilized the best Arab historians in order to expose to the whole Arab world al-Asad's terrible origins. More than once, the historians

made it clear that al-Asad is part of a community that is considered to be more heretical than Jews or Christians, and even more extreme in its traditions than idol-worshippers, and the damage that it wrought to the nation of Muhammad the prophet of Islam is much, much greater than the damage caused to the Arabs by the Tartars, the Crusaders, and the Persians. They quote a fatwa (religious judicial ruling) of the greatest Muslim clerics, which determined: "The burial of 'Alawis is not to be permitted in Muslim cemeteries, and prayer must not be permitted for their dead, and they must not be allowed to participate in Muslim armies, or in the defense of Arab walls and fortifications, and any use of them is like the use of wolves to tend a flock of sheep."

The Arabs say that it is not for nothing that al-Asad is called in his community "Abu-Sulayman", because all members of the community, who are loyal to this day to the ancient and new traditions, customarily give themselves this name, or give the name Sulayman to their eldest sons. Sulayman was a divine figure for the 'Alawis at the beginning of this century. He appeared in East al-Ladha-aiyah as a divine warrior, to save the community from its tormentors. The French conquerors had need of such an emissary in that period, and they raised him to the top. It is said that the governor of the French region worshipped him, to prove that the man was indeed a prophet. The governor even acted to appoint him as a member of parliament in Damascus as the representative of the 'Alawi minority. But after the French withdrawal from Syria, Sulayman was executed in 1946.

To this day, France is accused by the Arabs of having raised up al-Asad, who made his way to the top on tens of thousands of corpses of the Sunni Muslim majority in Syria, of having cultivated the 'Alawi minority, and even of having turned over large quantities of weapons to al-Asad's clan during the evacuation of its army.

The 'Alawis view themselves as a faction of the Shi'ite sect in Islam, but they have their own strange customs, some of which have no connection with Islam. The community is not monolithic, but is divided into tribes. The clan of which al-Asad is a member is called al-Kalbiyah, from the word for dog. That is why every time the Arab enemies of al-Asad (lion) seek to criticize him and to belittle him they remind him of the Golan, which is occupied by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], with the phrase: "al-Asad in Syria and a dog in the Golan."

The big question that is being asked everywhere outside of Syria is how did al-Asad, a member of a poor and ostracized community, rise to the top and even succeed in surviving? His closest Western friend, the orientalist Patrick Seale, who recently published a biography of al-Asad, responds: On 17 April 1946, the last French soldier left Syria, and on that very same day, the 15-year-old youth Hafiz al-Asad organized the pupils in his school to bring all the French-language books to the courtyard and burn them in a great bonfire. In the same period, the underground cells of the Ba'th party came out

of their hiding places into the open. Its leadership established cells in all Syrian villages and cities. In the 'Alawi town of Qardahah, al-Asad was the first youth to join the local branch. From Qardahah, he was brought into wider-ranging activity, in the entire district of the nearby port city, al-Ladha-aiyah.

Seale relates: "Al-Asad proved to be a brave youth who even then knew how to mobilize the youth under his leadership. He organized stormy demonstrations against the central government, himself wrote the hostile slogans on the walls of the buildings in the district, did not shrink from clashes with policemen and with members of the Muslim Brothers, who regarded the Ba'th as a danger to Islam. Al-Asad was once even stabbed in the back by a member of the Muslim Brothers. He was wounded seriously, but he recovered quickly from his wound after treatment in the hospital that lasted for weeks.

"After he had recovered, he gathered the masses around him, which included tens of thousands of Sunni Muslim youths, including the student 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, who today serves as vice president. But political activity did not provide him with a livelihood, and he turned to the army. At that time, wealthy Syrians did not send their sons to the army, and instead ensured that they would study in the universities of Damascus and Aleppo, and even overseas.

"Those who did go to the army did not serve for long periods. The army took in mainly minorities, including the sons of the 'Alawi community. These signed up for the regular army, and rose up through the ranks. Al-Asad was one of them. He rose in rank, and at the same time did not neglect his Ba'thist political activity within the army. He was aided at the time by another Sunni youth, Mustafa T'las, who now serves as his minister of defense. Al-Asad was later sent to study in the army college, and from there he was sent to a pilot's course."

Patrick Seale relates that in an aerial show at the end of the pilot's course, al-Asad flew a Piper and entered heavy cloud cover. He didn't know how to get out of it, got confused by the instruments, and saw that his aircraft was falling quickly. Suddenly, the crowd on the ground shouted, after seeing an airplane that almost brushed the treetops. Al-Asad made one last attempt to save his life. Miraculously, the aircraft shot upwards after it had almost crashed. "From this point, the way to the top was no longer only a dream for al-Asad," Seale tells, adding, "The biggest mistake of the Sunni majority in Syria was in not holding on to the army, and leaving it in the hands of the minorities, especially the regular army. This army is what determined the fate of Syria after it had been very involved in its political life."

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Establishment of Stock Market Proposed

90AE0043B London AL-DUSTUR
in Arabic 9 Apr 90 p 33

[Text] A government report currently being presented to the cabinet in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] emphasizes that

the establishment of a stock market in the UAE has become vital and necessary for the national economy. The report indicates that the facts of the market show that the situation of the market in the UAE is comparable to that in other Gulf markets in terms of the number and capital volume of stock companies, the number of shares, and the amount of liquidity available to individuals. The establishment of a stock market in the UAE has become vital and necessary for the national economy and is a means to encourage citizens to invest their capital in the state. The report states that 71 stock companies are currently in the UAE. Four of them are owned by the government and foreign parties, and their shares are thus nonnegotiable in the local market. The other 67 stock companies, which can circulate their shares, have total paid capital amounting to 14.058 billion dirhams divided into 5.549 billion negotiable shares. The report also indicates that local governments hold 4.078 billion dirhams representing about 652 million shares, and that the shares of 27 public companies, with capital totalling 8.265 billion dirhams or 40 percent of the total value of the above-mentioned [5.549 billion] shares, are negotiated daily, more so than the shares of other companies.

The report notes that the nominal value of a share in the UAE ranges from 1 dirham to 100 dirhams. It also notes that the shares dealt with on the domestic market represent only a small percentage of the total number of shares despite the large capital volume of companies. This is attributed to a number of reasons, the most important being an increase in the percentage of the local governments' share in the capital of companies, the increase in the nominal value of a share, and the availability of liquidity to some individuals who purchase shares as a long-term investment, selling them only in a limited number of cases, which leads to a scarcity of share offerings on the market and a consequent increase in the market value of a share, sometimes to six times its nominal value, thereby preventing small investors from entering the market. Financial sources in Abu Dhabi recently stated that the circumstances have become ripe for the establishment of a stock market in the UAE before the end of 1990.

Improvements Reported in Nonpetroleum Economy

90AE0043C London AL-MAJALLAH
in Arabic 27 Mar 90 p 61

[Text] A study prepared by the Dubayy Chamber of Commerce and Industry states that nonoil sectors, such as commerce, recorded a tangible improvement in 1989, when building and construction activity reached a peak. In addition, the recovery included investment activity, and the number of companies that established projects in the free zone at Jabal 'Ali also increased.

The study presents indices showing that the domestic economy will continue to be active during 1990, given the existence of practical opportunities to increase activity through projects still being implemented and new projects being planned and prepared for implementation. The tourist sector has enjoyed priority in the

annual plans of public and private organizations. The state has started to provide a suitable climate for the development of this sector. The study mentions that the Dubayy Aluminum Company, DUBAL has achieved record figures in the production of metal and the sale of added-value products. DUBAL's metal production totalled 168,028 tons compared to 163,445 tons in 1988. The rate of sales of added-value products increased to more than 99 percent of total production compared to 97.5 percent in the previous year, while the average production of water pumped to Dubayy increased to 24.8 million gallons per day compared to 23.4 million gallons in 1988. DUBAL succeeded last year in producing and marketing an alloy used in the manufacture of car tire rims weighing 20 kg, thereby becoming the largest producer in the world of this alloy.

Economic Statistics on Port Rashid

90AE0043A London AL-MAJALLAH
in Arabic 24 Apr 90 p 41

[Interview with the Deputy Director of the Rashid Port Authority Ahmad Bati Ahmad, by 'Izzah Yahya; first two paragraphs are AL-MAJALLAH introduction; place and date not specified]

[Text] Rashid Port in the Emirate of Dubayy is one of the most important commercial centers in the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. The state economy and import and export operations are clearly dependent on it. Officials have prepared the port to cope with activity connected to the economic resurgence being witnessed by the UAE, especially Dubayy, with regard to shipping activity, given that the economic resurgence is expected to be accompanied by a continued 25-percent increase in port activity during the current year.

In an interview with AL-MAJALLAH, Ahmad Bati Ahmad, the deputy director of the Rashid Port Authority, stated that the port is currently drafting a container expansion program to cope with future increase in activity. The port administration also has development plans that could, if needed, be rapidly implemented to improve services in the port, which has been in operation for 16 years.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is the volume of activity at the port and what are the capabilities and advantages enjoyed by the port, which has won an award for being the best port?

[Ahmad] The original Rashid Port plan included the construction of four deep wharves. During the construction process in 1969, it was decided to add 11 wharves for a total of 15 wharves. For 16 years, Gulf ships have continuously entered this water passage. The port is currently composed of 36 anchorages, five of which have been designated for the container department, and 30 of which are sea anchorages for general cargo and goods. Sixteen of the anchorages have completely covered transit depots, and there is an anchorage designated for coastal ships. Rashid Port specializes in commercial activity for Dubayy. Therefore, it is one of the

most developed and crowded Gulf ports. Cargo traffic totalled 9,715,025 tons in 1989, an increase of 19.54 percent compared to 1988. Sea-air cargo traffic totalled about 17,360,506 tons in 1989, an increase of six percent compared to 1988. The number of containers exceeds 500,000 rigid containers. Despite the reduction in the number of retail commodities in different parts of the world, they have increased in Dubayy. The Rashid Port has developed into a distribution center serving the UAE and neighboring states. Land transit trips from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other neighboring areas are carried out quickly. Within five hours of a ship's arrival, a container is unloaded, and its contents are conveyed to the airport for continued shipment on an international flight, because of the significance of the time factor in port activity. About 60 percent of the goods arriving at Rashid Port are reexported via shipping services, although reexports by air have increased, due to the considerable savings in time and money offered by the land-sea shipping concept that has developed in Dubayy.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What services does Rashid Port offer? Which services distinguish it regarding general cargo traffic and air and sea shipping? What are the expectations regarding future port activity?

[Ahmad] The port authority has focused concern on raising its cargo-handling performance level to that of world standards. Fifty thousand platforms have been constructed in a workshop established especially for this purpose in the port. All of the platforms have been dedicated to activity that increases connection speed and reduces handling time. Commercial traffic last year totalled 592,312 million dirhams, a 17.77-percent increase compared to 1988. There are 130 international air flights per day to more than 85 international airports. The port receives more than 70 percent of the goods sent by sea-air shipment means and has had a share in increasing sea-air shipment traffic. The port enjoys a natural advantage because of its central location between production areas in Southeast Asia, Japan, India, and Pakistan on the one hand, and consumers in Europe and the United States on the other hand. It therefore comes as no surprise that about 60 percent of the goods handled at the port are reexported.

[AL-MAJALLAH] There will be fundamental transformations and economic changes in the near future. Will they affect commercial activity in Dubayy?

[Ahmad] I currently believe that the countries of the world are looking at Dubayy with a view toward making significant investments in the commercial and industrial sector. The Dubayy Government is providing all support and encouragement, as it believes in the importance of commercial freedom. It is pursuing a policy of not taxing individuals or organizations, a policy of open skies and shipping lines, and the designation of a free trade zone where companies can enjoy 100-percent profit recovery. I believe that all of these factors will become more significant as a result of the capital flow and the volume and intensity of activity in Dubayy in the future.

BANGLADESH

Reportage on Settlement of Tin Bigha Corridor Issue

Welcomed by Foreign Office

46001559 Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 7 May 90 pp 1, 10

[Article by Diplomatic Correspondent]

[Text] Dhaka has welcomed the ruling by the Indian Supreme Court given on Saturday finally removing the legal hurdle over the implementation of Indo-Bangladesh agreement of 1982 regarding the handing over of the Tin Bigha corridor by India to Bangladesh.

A Foreign Office source observed that the judgment by the Indian Supreme Court would facilitate handing over of the Tin Bigha corridor and he hoped that New Delhi would start the process of implementing the 1982 agreement on Tin Bigha corridor without any further delay.

A five-member Bench headed by Chief Justice of Indian Supreme Court Mr S.S. Mukherjee gave a 48-page judgment on Saturday saying that the right to free passage to Bangladesh over the Indian territory Tin Bigha under bilateral agreement did not amount to ceding of the territory. They also ruled that no constitutional amendment was required by India for implementation of the 1982 lease agreement.

The 1982 agreement was signed for lease in perpetuity of the Tin Bigha corridor (178 meter long and 85 meter wide) to Bangladesh by India for connecting Dahagram with Panbari Mouja enabling Bangladesh to exercise its sovereignty on Dahagram and Angorpota on the basis of the 1974 Indo-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement. Two Foreign Ministers Mr A.R.S. Doha of Bangladesh and Mr Narashima Rao of India signed the agreement in New Delhi in October 1982. But the delay in handing over the corridor to Bangladesh even after repeated reminder not only added to the number of outstanding issues between Bangladesh and India but it caused irritation in relations between the two neighbours.

New Delhi always referred the case before the Supreme Court whenever the question of handing over of the Tin Bigha corridor was raised by Dhaka. Indian Foreign Minister Mr I.K. Gujral during his visit to Dhaka in February said that the corridor would be handed over to Bangladesh after the verdict of the Indian Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the demarcation of the Tin Bigha corridor has been completed, the Foreign Office source said. The West Bengal government will now have to go for the acquisition of required land for the central government of India to implement the 1982 agreement in leasing the Tin Bigha corridor, the source added.

The question regarding the immediate starting of the process for implementation of the 1982 agreement for handing over the Tin Bigha corridor in view of the ruling by the Indian Supreme Court is likely to dominate the talks during Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud's visit to New Delhi on 20 May for the meeting of the minister-level Indo-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission which is going to be held after a lapse of few years.

More on Indian Judgment

46001559 Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 6 May 90 pp 1, 10

[Text] New Delhi, 5 May—The Indian Supreme Court has held that right to free passage to Bangladesh over the Indian territory of 'Tin Bigha' under the bilateral agreements of 1974 and 1982 does not amount to ceding of territory, reports PTI.

In the 48-page judgment, a five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice Mr Sabyashachi Mukharjee, held that thus no constitutional amendment was needed to give effect to the agreements.

The court further held that the agreements with Bangladesh were for the express purpose of connecting 'Dahagram' with 'Panbari Mouza' of Bangladesh to enable that country to exercise sovereignty over 'Dahagram' and 'Angorpota' and not for any other purpose.

The judges further held that there was no abandonment of sovereignty by Indian in conferring right of free movement to Bangladesh over the Indian territory of Tin Bigha.

The judges observed that "amicable and peaceful settlement of boundary disputes are in the interests of the international community."

Judges set aside findings of Calcutta High Court that a constitutional amendment was needed to give effect to both agreements.

Upholding findings of the High Court which held that there was no cessation of territory and lease in perpetuity, the judges held "if that is so, without the change in the law or in the Constitution, agreements should have been implemented fully and we hope that will be done for restoration of friendly relations between the countries."

The Constitutional Bench comprising the Chief Justice, Mr Sabyasachi Mukharjee, Mr H.M.H. Kania, Mr Justice K.J. Shetty, Mr Justice K.N. Saikia and Mr Justice S.C. Agrawal, allowed an appeal of the Union of India seeking modification of the High Court judgment which held that a constitutional amendment was a must to give effect to bilateral agreements.

The court said so far as the question of taking steps for acquisition of land of Indian citizens in the area was

concerned it was wholly unnecessary as there was no land owned by Indian citizens which could be acquired by the government.

The first agreement was signed in 1974 between the then Indian Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, and the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman under which India agreed to lease in perpetuity to Bangladesh an area approximately 178 meter by 65 meter to connect Dahagram with Panbari Mouza of Bangladesh.

Under the agreement, India, while having sovereignty in the area, permitted Bangladesh to have the right to free passage for its people and armed forces personnel.

Both countries in 1982 worked out detailed modalities about terms and conditions of the lease.

Ershad Welcomes Verdict

46001559 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 7 May 90 pp 1, 10

[Text] Boda (Panchagarh) 6 May—President Hussain Muhammad Ershad today welcomed the Indian Supreme Court verdict rescinding all objections to Bangladesh having free passage through the 'Tin Bigha' corridor to its enclaves of Dahagram and Angarpota, reports BSS.

He said the verdict would pave the way for the implementation of the 1982 Bangladesh-Indian agreement on the 'Tin Bigha' corridor signed by him and the then Indian Prime Minister.

Addressing a huge public meeting at Pathraj College premises here this morning, the President recalled that although a bilateral accord on the 'Tin Bigha' corridor was signed between the two countries in 1974 it did not materialise.

He said, the 1982 accord would have been implemented long ago if the matter were not referred to the Indian courts.

President Ershad said Bangladeshi living in the two enclaves would now get access to better life and be provided with all the facilities and privileges.

The President recalled his two visits to the enclaves and the assurances he had given to the people living there that his government would do everything possible for solving their problem.

He noted that this would also help improve relations between the two neighbouring countries.

President Ershad was the first head of state to visit the enclaves.

President Ershad drove here from Panchagarh where he stayed overnight and was given a rousing reception from

the people of all walks of life. On his way here, the President visited the Dudumari Adarsha village under Panchagarh.

Foundation of Korotoa Bridge Laid

Later, he flew to Debiganj where he laid the foundation stone of the proposed Korotoa Bridge and addressed a public meeting there. He also addressed a public meeting at Shaturia under Domar Upazila.

Communications Minister Anwar Hussain, Social Welfare Minister Rezwanul Huq Chowdhury, and Minister for Sports and Youth Nitai Roy Chowdhury, who accompanied the President, also addressed the meetings.

Addressing the meetings, President Ershad said his government was promise-bound to implement all the pledges it made. My government does not believe in empty slogans, he added.

The President said that the policies pursued by his government had helped create a congenial atmosphere for development throughout the country.

He said the present government had attached top most priority to alleviation of poverty through development of the rural areas and infrastructure building.

In this connection, President Ershad pointed out that 7,000 kilometers of metalled road, 17,000 kilometers of kutch road and 503 bridges, including 18 large ones, had been constructed during the last eight years.

President Ershad urged the people to vote for Jatiya Party candidates in the next elections to ensure the continuity of the present development trend.

Call To Undertake Afforestation Plan

He urged the people to undertake afforestation programme to strike a better ecological balance in the region. Fewer trees would only cause less rains and frequent drought, he added.

Turning to the present population growth rate, the President cautioned that the very existence of the nation would be at stake if the size of the population was not contained. President Ershad advised the people to adopt family planning devices and make the nationwide campaign for population planning a success.

President Ershad said the government had laid emphasis on female education so that the womenfolk were able to establish their rights in society.

At Debigang, President Ershad laid the foundation stone of the proposed 555-metre long and 3.35 metre width Karotoa Bridge. The bridge having 15 spans would be built at a cost of about Taka 16 crore.

The President also announced that the Shaturia Domar road would be metalled.

Earlier at Dudumari Adarsha village, President Ershad visited the homesteads of the artisans who were engaged in producing different cottage industry and handicraft items.

He was also apprised of the various income-generating activities undertaken by the dwellers of the village and the success of the family planning campaign there.

INDIA

Clear Direction Urged Regarding Kashmir Policy

90AS0075B Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES
in Hindi 30 Apr 90 p 6

[Editorial: "Kashmir Policy and George Fernandes"]

[Text] George Fernandes may not have tendered his resignation, but it is clear that he has serious differences with the Kashmir policy of Mufti Mohammed Sayeed and Jagmohan. It seems that George Fernandes is in favor of erecting a political structure in the valley as soon as possible by probing the workers of the National Conference, the terrorists, as well as Farooq Abdullah. But, Jagmohan is not in favor of any such experimentation until the terrorists are completely subdued and the people do not automatically divert to the new options opened for them after bowing down to the government's authority. Farooq Abdullah is not liked either by Jagmohan or by Mufti Mohammed Sayeed. On the other hand, in spite of being home minister, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed does not command any respect in the valley. How can anyone who is himself insignificant erect a political structure? But on the other hand, the logic is that Farooq Abdullah as well has become as insignificant. When not even his father's, Shir-e Kashmir [the Lion of Kashmir], tomb is no more safe in Kashmir, then, what role can his son have there? George's answer is that we can erect a structure sooner or later on the strength of the thousands of workers of the national Conference who are in hiding. Who will their leader be? If Farooq can become their leader, who are we to impose a new leadership from Delhi? But Jagmohan's logic is that until the influence of the government grows more than that of the terrorists the underground workers of the National Conference will not come forward. George Fernandes agrees that for the first few weeks we do not have any option other than to accept Jagmohan's line of action, but this policy cannot continue for months. Again, there is also a conflict between Mufti and George in regard to their areas of authority. In India also those who support the strong policy of Jagmohan do not have much regard for Mufti's competence.

Viswanath Pratap Singh, who employs patent formulas to solve other problems, has employed the same for Kashmir also. When he thought there was some weight in the arguments of those who favored the policy of strictness, he appointed Jagmohan as governor. And when he thought there was some sense in keeping the political doors open, he entrusted Kashmir to George

Fernandes. He made an all party committee with Mufti and George, keeping himself in a position neutral to both lines of thought waiting just to see how they would solve the Kashmir problem.

However, as it is clear from the conflicts between George Fernandes and Mufti Sayeed, the neutrality of Viswanath Pratap will not serve a purpose any longer. The prime minister will have to take the burden of making decisions and taking responsibility for the good or the bad outcome of the decision. The prime minister of India is not an administrator to execute the collective decision of his colleagues. He is a person who has to redeem the country from the inner conflicts of committees. He is the supreme leader who provides direction and leadership to the country by putting his imprint on the national policy. Therefore, V.P. Singh will have to make a decision as to what will be New Delhi's Kashmir policy?

There may be some practical demands of both views before V.P. Singh. After all because of such demands, he has been keeping quiet on the Meham incident. Because of such demands, he is on one hand supporting the reports of the Mandal Commission and, on the other, he has not been taking any steps to implement them. But a problem like that of Kashmir can not be left to incidental conclusions (or lack of progress) out of the tug-of-war between George and Mufti. On the Kashmir issue, the nation expects leadership from the prime minister himself.

Kashmir Said in Good Hands

90P40056A DINMAN TIMES in Hindi
27 May-2 Jun 90 p 10

[Text] It has been learned that Gary (Girish Chandra) Saxena is being sent to Kashmir to replace Jag Mohan. Gary was chief of RAW [Research and Analysis Wing], India's supreme intelligence agency, from '84 to '86. He was the national security advisor to the Prime Minister for two years after that. These days he is connected to V. P. Singh in the same capacity.

Sending Gary to Kashmir means that the government there will henceforth be conducted through espionage and close surveillance rather than political or administrative steps. It seems as though these times as well as the situations have demanded this.

There are many reasons behind sending Gary to the valley. He is from Allahabad. He is also the older brother of home secretary Naresh Chandra. He is the protege of the grandfather of Indian espionage, R. N. Kao. He is an expert at current espionage techniques, especially in the matter of collecting information through the surveillance of people, organizations, and countries, and in analyzing them for the good of the country.

Following the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, Gary had procured sophisticated surveillance instruments for RAW for millions of rupees, and that is the

reason today RAW is equipped with state of the art and special supplies in this matter. It is also to his credit that through surveillances conducted inside countries hostile to India, he had achieved unprecedented success on several fronts.

The Kashmir issue today is the product of the failure of the Indian agencies in the area of surveillance. The communications setup of the separatist elements is better than that of government agencies, and there is an urgent need to penetrate it. It can be hoped that Gary will accomplish this task very well.

Commentary Looks at India's Unity, Democratic Tradition

90AS0075A Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES
in Hindi 30 Apr 90 p 6

[Article by Rajendra Mathur: "India's Unity Has No Preconditions"]

[Text] These days I find that on one hand BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] is trying to cash in on the Hindu majority in the bank of votes and, on the other hand, the leftists and other progressives who are panicked by the above trend are praying for a recovery of North Indian politics from the exercises of casteism so that Hindu communalism may not dominate the country.

Both of the above choices appear strange to me. If we want to see the development of true citizenship in India, we can neither welcome the tendency of using the Hindu bank of votes nor can we condone exploiting the Muslim bank of votes for election purposes. We can not even conceive of a further promotion of the communal bank of votes. But there are a great many people who believe that if it becomes necessary to put a check mark on either Hindu casteism or on Hindu communalism it will be a more progressive act to do so on Hindu casteism. They consider Hindu casteism to be a big guarantee for maintaining secularism in India. (Naturally, neither Nehru, nor Lohia, nor Dange would have conceived of such a use of casteism at their time).

The communists and the socialists originally had thought that the idealism of revolution and social rejuvenation would be able to provide a spirit of true citizenship. They had assumed that these idealisms would also break the walls of religion as well as of casteism. But in the present conditions, no trust can be put on the instruments of revolution. Therefore, today the progressivists can only try to maintain a less unlikable world by utilizing the instruments of status quo.

For the present, I would not like to get involved in resolving which one is better (or less evil) between casteism and communalism. But, history can provide us more instances of choice-making comparable in their unavailability to the present one of making a choice between casteism and communalism.

For example, if you have to choose between breaking up India and a military dictatorship at Delhi which one will you choose? Obviously, both choices are bad as in the example of casteism and communalism. But if you have no alternative but to making a choice between the two what will you do? It is true that a military dictatorship, after establishing a superficial stability, ultimately shatters the nation with great speed. But you are not required to argue, you are required only to put a check mark because now the situation is such as another wave of misadventure in democracy can break the nation. Then, it will only be a dictatorship that will make us capable again to fight for democracy after spending some time in an intensive care unit. In such a situation what will you choose?

More of these kinds of cruel choices may be invented. For example, in order to defend the unity of India if you are forced to eat forbidden things, will you do this or not? Well, an occasion of making such a choice may not actually arise because the unity of India cannot depend upon the compulsions of eating habits. However, if such a choice has to be made anyway, I would rather like to break my food habit any time than to break the nation. When we send our children to the military, they are taught how to survive in remote jungles by eating snakes. Then the choice before them is either to eat the uneatable or to die of starvation. What do they do? What did Vishwamitra do when there was a famine?

Of course, there is always the option that if the unity of India depends only on these conditions it is better for it to disintegrate. It is better for India to disintegrate than to stay united as a nonsecular state. It is better for it to disintegrate than to fail to do justice with the down-trodden and the untouchable. If the power is not properly divided between the center and the states it is better for India to disintegrate. You can give priority to any of your whimsical ideas and rewrite the above sentences accordingly. In November 1989, such a cruel choice did not have to be made, yet, that month the people did choose that it was better to take a little risk of instability at Delhi than to again entrust the government to Rajiv Gandhi and the Indian National Congress.

When an attempt was made to remove the English language from its position, the nation appeared to be disintegrating, therefore, we retained it despite the fact that it was no less than an inedible food. If a civil war between wheat and rice breaks out in this country and religious sentiments are attached to both of them, then, for the sake of the country's unity we might have to eat such foodgrain that has never before been produced in the country, one that became fashionable only after its import from a foreign country.

Now tell me should we cease experimenting with trying to make a nation out of this country by fighting over rice and wheat and reverting back to 18th century India or should we continue with the experimentation using foreign foodgrains as a cement and make a 21st century India?

There is another issue. What is the guarantee that the problems which are vexing us at present in an unbroken India will not be existent in the broken parts of the country? Will there be no Hindu-Muslim problems? Will there be no injustice to the downtrodden and the untouchables? Will the local languages rank high replacing English? What will be the guarantee for the continuation of democracy? Will there be no danger of regional dictatorship? Won't the broken parts of India be religion based? What is not going to be there? There just won't be a capable and strong India to be able to stand with its head high in the community of nations such as the Soviet Union, China, and the United States of America.

After a hundred or two hundred years, even this event might be welcomed. But before that, the traditions of national governments may be totally eliminated from the face of the earth. It is not possible that China will exist and only India will disintegrate. Pakistan continues and India breaks apart. The disintegrated countries of Europe become united and a united India disintegrates.

IRAN

Information on Benevolent Organizations, Hajj Computerized

90AS0077F Tehran *ETTELA'AT*
in Persian 7 May 90 p 4

[Text] Orumiyeh—Information on endowments nationwide will be computerized.

This announcement was made by the deputy in charge of economic development at the Pilgrimage, Endowments, and Charitable Affairs Organization during his visit to the General Office of Pilgrimage and Endowments in West Azarbaijan.

The Islamic Republic News Agency reports that the deputy said: The computerization of information on endowments has started in the central office as well as some provinces and will be carried out in other cities too.

The deputy, who is visiting Orumiyeh, looked into some of the problems related to endowments and visited a few economic development projects as well as the newly established building for the general office of pilgrimage, endowments, and charitable affairs in West Azarbaijan.

The building covers an area of 2,100 square meters and will cost 200 million rials to complete.

Country's Imports, Exports Rose During Feb-Mar

90AS0077B Tehran *ETTELA'AT* in Persian
22 Apr 90 p 2

[Text] Tehran—Central news unit: During Esfand of 68 [20 Feb-20 Mar 1990], 1,981,384 tons of commodities entered into the country and 1,656,000 tons of them were cleared through customs. The central news unit reports that the statistics on imports and exports for

Esfand of 68 [20 Feb-20 Mar 1990] indicate that the weight of the imported commodities, compared to that of the same month last year, has increased by 62 percent, while commodities which have been cleared from customs increased by 40.4 percent in weight and 42.1 percent in value.

According to the same report, 143,156 tons valued at 8,145,801,000 rials were exported during Esfand of 68 [20 Feb-20 Mar 1990]. This represents an increase of 49.7 percent in weight and 4.9 percent in the value of exports compared to the same period last year.

According to the same report, during Esfand of 68 [20 Feb-20 Mar 1990], 96,555 individuals entered into the country by land, air, and sea. Among them were 81,626 Iranians and 14,929 foreigners.

During the same period, 95,119 travellers left the country. Among them were 80,484 Iranians and 145,635 foreigners.

Abkuh Sugar Plant Production Figures Detailed

90AS0077C Tehran *RESALAT* in Persian 25 Apr 90 p 5

[Text] Mashhad, *RESALAT* Reporter:

Last year, the Abkuh plant, a subsidiary of Astan-e Qods-e Razavi [a charitable religious endowment], processed 137,000 tons of sugar beet to produce 9,980 tons of sugar and 7,862 tons of hard sugar.

According to the same report, during last year, 20,520 tons of pressed sugar beet and 7,935 tons of molasses were produced. Also, during last year, equipment to move 2,500 tons of sugar beet per 24 hour was installed. Furthermore, the capacity of the silos was increased by 12,000 tons as a result of the construction of new silos and expansion of the old ones.

The same report indicates that 20 percent of the construction work on the Talanserom [?] silos and the 400 meter-long main channel for moving sugar beet at a capacity of 70,000 tons has been completed. The construction work is expected to be completed during the second half of the current year.

Growth of Mobarekeh Steel Complex Discussed

90AS0077D Tehran *ABRAR* in Persian 3 May 90 p 3

[Text] When the giant Mobarekeh Steel Complex becomes operational, it will produce the sheet iron needed by industries and it will provide work for 13,000 individuals.

Engineer Kargahi, the official in charge of the giant Mobarekeh Steel Complex, made this announcement in an interview with the Islamic Republic News Agency and added: The Mobarekeh Steel Complex will need 4,500,000 tons of iron ore each year and will produce 2,400,000 tons of sheet iron with a range of thickness from 0.3 mm to 16 mm. Such production will meet the

industrial needs of the country and save about one billion dollars in foreign exchange each year.

He added: It is anticipated that the opening of the Mobarekeh Complex will lead to the establishment of many other satellite factories and provide jobs for 51,000 individuals.

He added: The present work force at the Steel Complex is 3,300 individuals, 6,100 at the facilities of contractors who work for the Complex, and 500 at the Iranian Engineering Company (Epertika [? as published]).

This giant project will need 4,500,000 tons of iron ore, 2,300,000 cubic meters of natural gas, 550,000 tons of lime, 600 megawatts of electricity, 77,000,000 cubic meters of oxygen, and 31,000,000 cubic meters of water. The iron ore will come from the Gol Gohar mines in Kerman, the lime from Hoz Mahi mines, and the water from Zayandeh Rud river as required.

New Automation Capabilities Planned

90AS0077E *Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian*
22 Apr 90 p 2

[Text] Tehran—Central News Unit:

Mas'ud Rowghani-Zanjani, vice president and head of the Plan and Budget Organization, broke ground yesterday for the new building to house the Information Processing Institute.

During the ceremonies to mark the occasion, he referred to the software needs during the Five-Year Plan and said: The Iranian Information Processing Institute is a government sponsored organization and produces a major portion of the country's computer systems. It has a major responsibility in meeting the information processing needs of the society, fostering technical and specialized growth at computer centers, and expanding the general knowledge of informatics.

The Iranian Information Processing Institute was a branch of IBM [International Business Machines Corporation] for 25 years and was taken over by the Islamic Republic after the revolution. More than 70 percent of the present computer services in the country are provided by this institute, and plans are under way to expand its offices in a new building and to double its activities.

Commentary on Use of Private Capital To Help Build Airports

90AS0077A *Tehran RESALAT in Persian*
22 Apr 90 p 11

[Text] Some time ago, Mr. Nurian, the director of the National Airlines Organization, announced plans to build new airports in Lar, Abadeh, Lamard, and a few other cities, with the help of the people, to improve the heavy air traffic and provide new airline services for the people of the deprived regions of the country. This is

encouraging and we have to be thankful and commend him as the highest executive authority of that organization for recognizing the pivotal help the people can provide in the establishment of new airports. But the concern remains that he did not make any reference to the method by which the people's support may be secured. Unfortunately, the public opinion perception is that support from the people is wrong in principle. Whenever there is a clear need for a project to be carried out and the government does not have enough resources or the budget does not include provisions for the execution of the project, the government authorities either pressure nongovernmental as well as governmental organizations to provide the necessary financial resources or to utilize banking resources for the same purpose. Either of the above methods is wrong in principle because if governmental or nongovernmental organizations are forced to provide the necessary financial resources, let us say to establish an airport in a deprived region of the country, then all we have done is an indirect use of the budget which will in turn lead to inflation, through the transfer of the cost to commodities and services in the private sector, and a rise in their prices. Alternatively, if the financial resources of banks are used, since the government is the main client of the banks, all we have done is to increase the annual deficit.

If the purpose is to help the government improve the country, we need to find new ways to implement projects. Investment in the establishment of airports and their utilization is among useful investments at the present time, if proper management methods are used. For the same reason, in some countries where governments are faced with deficit problems, they have come up with useful ways to hand over the airports to the people through the sale of shares, and for new airports they have prepared the way for private sector investments.

If the National Airlines Organization chooses the right way to solve the problem which it has correctly detected, undoubtedly it will succeed, otherwise one more problem will be added to the difficulties of governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

As we mentioned above, the establishment and utilization of airports is an economically beneficial task and, therefore, like other investments this one can be done. In the present situation, large sums of money are floating outside the banking system and are tied up in unproductive activities. The best thing to do is to channel this money into productive investment, and the National Airlines Organization can, like some ministries, approve in principle the participation of the nongovernmental sector given that a major portion of the shares, up to 49 percent, are offered to the public. If a specific investor is not found, then formation of joint-stock companies should be seriously considered (of course the other approach is also a joint-stock company).

To attract the people's participation in such investments, the National Airlines Organization must provide the necessary facilities and guarantees to the participating

companies in the implementation of the project—facilities and guarantees such as tax incentives, credit opportunities, maximum number of flights feasible, right to charge and collect tolls from passengers and cars traveling on transit roads, etc.

In conclusion, we may add that since investments are gradual in such relatively small airports, which can be built in three to four years, the companies in charge of implementation of airport projects may start with not-so-large initial capitals and begin proper advertisement to attract the unused capital in the hands of those residents of the deprived regions who are doing financially well and can play a crucial role in this endeavor.

PAKISTAN

Constitution: Revision, Opposition Cooperation Urged

90AS0064B Karachi AMN in Urdu 26 Apr 90 p 3

[Article under byline, "From Jumma Khan's Pen" subtitled, "The Opposition Party Has Committed a Great Political Crime by Ignoring Constitutional Reform"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The fact is that the eighth amendmend is making it difficult to carry on the business of government. But the federal government is unable to do anything about it because it does not have the two-thirds majority to repeal this amendment and the opposition party has decided that, even in a commendable undertaking which would benefit the country and the people, it is not ready to cooperate with the government. Consequently, 25 percent of the government's constitutional life has expired, but the constitutional and administrative structure remains the same as Zia left it. This is at present our greatest tragedy.

All political and religious parties in the assembly cooperated with the government in the preparation of the 1973 Constitution. At that time, the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] enjoyed a two thirds majority and it could have prepared a Constitution in line with its own agenda, but martyr Bhutto wanted that the Constitution be drawn up with a unanimous vote, that it include the stand taken by each of the parties, and that it be so comprehensive as to make it impossible for any party in power to toy with it. Thus, when the Constitution was being prepared, Bhutto set aside his own party's Constitution and that was why all parties achieved a historical success in preparing a unanimously supported Constitution. This Constitution can be regarded in every way as the best document of national agreement. Unfortunately, only four years after the Constitution was put into effect, General Zia imposed martial law and suspended the Constitution. It remained suspended for about eight years, and when it was restored an eighth amendment was added to it which distorted the unanimously approved Constitution. Several basic political issues which had been permanently settled in the unanimously approved Constitution were once more made points of

contention. As a result, ever since the amendment was put into effect, the country has suffered from political crises.

The unanimous Constitution had decreed that Urdu would become the national language within a period of 15 years. That deadline expired in 1988, and Urdu is still not the national language. There is no major government initiative under way to make Urdu the national language. As a matter of principle, the Constitution is not being followed, but experts in constitutional law maintain that since the Constitution was suspended for eight years, those eight years should not be included in the stipulated 15. But this is the view of the experts and is not a court decision. In such matters, it is always better to obtain a court decision. Similarly, according to the Constitution, all laws should have been brought in line with the Sunna and the Koran within a period of nine years, but General Zia ignored this matter more than anything else. Experts in constitutional law say that the years during which the Constitution was suspended should not be included. There are other important problems as well, including the division of power within a specified period of time. After the restoration of democracy, the first task undertaken by the politicians should have been the restoration of the unanimous Constitution in the interest of political stability. If they favoured retaining any part of the eighth amendment, they should have settled the matter through negotiation. But IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad—Islamic Democratic Alliance] placed its political differences with the PPP and its government above the reform of the Constitution and this should be considered a great political crime. The country and the people will suffer the consequences of the opposition's crime as long as the Constitution is not revised. If attention had been paid to constitutional reform, the issues of the period of the joint listing of powers, of making Urdu the national language, and of making all laws compatible with those of the Koran and the Sunna would have been solved by agreement.

Jamaat-e Islami Leader Abbasi Interviewed, Discusses Sindh

90AS0053A Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 13 Apr 90 p 12

[Interview with Maulana Jan Mohammad Abbasi, deputy chief of Jamaat-e Islami, by Afzal Javed in Lahore; date of interview not specified]

[Excerpts] Jan Mohammad Abbasi, deputy chief of Jamaat-e Islami of Pakistan and chief of Sindh province, was in Lahore for a brief visit and, before leaving, he gave an interview expressing his views regarding the new situation in the country, especially Sindh, the recent increases by the federal government in the prices of necessities, and the possibility of an interim national election. The text of the interview is as follows:

[Javed] What are the causes and factors behind the recent bloodshed in Hyderabad?

[Abbasi] The situation in Hyderabad is very serious. Murder and looting continue without let up. Innocent citizens are being killed. The most worrisome aspect of this regrettable situation is that the law enforcement agencies of the government are under attack. There have been many incidents of armed attacks on police cars. Rangers have been killed. Police stations have been set on fire. This unusually serious situation shows that law breakers are now so bold as to challenge authority. If the law enforcement agencies also become helpless, the inhabitants of Hyderabad and Sindh will be faced with ruin. The inhabitants of Hyderabad have intensified their protests over the frequent bloodshed in that area. Small scale merchants have gone on strike and announced their decision not to pay any taxes.

All these disturbances in Hyderabad have a linguistic basis and are causing the situation to deteriorate all over the province. So far there has been no reaction in Sindh over the incidents in Hyderabad, but if the government does not attend to the restoration of law and order which is its primary responsibility, the whole of Sindh including Karachi will become involved in the worst kind of disturbances which would in turn place the entire country in a dangerous situation. Sindh is an area where the outbreak of disorder can injure the safety of Pakistan.

I am sorry to say that the government is ignoring its duties and is not making any attempt to analyze the issues correctly and then take serious steps to solve them. The basic reason why the problems are not being solved is that the government is not carrying out the laws fully. The execution of the laws has fallen hostage to political exigencies, and the government's first preference is to hold on to power.

The recent regrettable incidents in Karachi are clear proof of the government's failure.

In Karachi, certain members of the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government took hostage a number of individuals from an organization upon which the members of that organization took a number of government people as hostages. Then the hostages were subjected to violent treatment. They were physically abused in the steel mills and this major government institution was taken over. The government suffered losses of millions of rupees. When the government was unsuccessful in bringing the situation under control through its civil administration, it had to ask the army for help. Under the supervision of a high army official, the exchange of hostages took place just as though the two sides were two different governments exchanging prisoners.

Not only in Hyderabad, but all over the province, the situation is serious. From Karachi to Jacobabad, whether it be cultivators, shopkeepers, or small scale merchants, all are insecure and victimized by the seriousness of the situation.

Every day, Sindh's newspapers are full of stories about abductions and hostage taking aimed at extracting hundreds of thousands of rupees in ransom. Those who do not pay the ransom are killed. If a car does not stop on the highway, it is forced to do so by gunfire and the driver is killed. In certain areas, if the ransom is not paid on time, entire harvests are set on fire, tube wells and electric transformers are destroyed. All this shows clearly that the government has been completely unsuccessful in Sindh. All these events are happening while the army rounds continue. The rangers are present. Millions of rupees are being spent on extra agencies, and there are reserve forces as well as the regular police. The worsening situation can be attributed to the complete failure of the government.

[Javed] What are the chances of an improvement in the situation now that there is a new chief minister in Sindh?

[Abbasi] It is true that there is a new chief minister in Sindh, but that change has not altered the situation nor is there any possibility of such a change. In fact, the recent bloodshed in Hyderabad in which 20 people were killed was the result of the wrong policy of the present chief minister. He ordered the administration not to impose a curfew at a time when conditions were very bad and out of control. Chief Minister Aftab Mirani was of the view that he would lose his good name if a curfew was imposed and the impression would be created that there was no difference between him and Qaim Ali Shah—that the present government as well was resorting to curfews for its survival.

The wholesale bloodshed in Hyderabad lasted four days, during which dozens of people were severely wounded. The whole city rose up in protest. Businessmen went on full strike, but the chief minister chose to abandon the city to blood and fire in order to preserve his own prestige and good name. He was not prepared to impose a curfew and save the lives of the people. If the government continues to be bound by political exigencies, then the people of Sindh will be forced to live at the mercy of events.

[Javed] How can the situation in Sindh be improved?

[Abbasi] The most effective way to improve the situation is that the government should first of all apply the law to its own people. For example, it should take steps against those PPP members who took certain members of an organization hostage. Then the government should proceed against that organization which took PPP members hostage. Thus, the criminals should be prosecuted, whether they are an MNA [Member of National Assembly] or MPA [Member of Provincial Assembly] and no one should be spared. Only after it has done this can the government take punitive action through its secret agencies against foreign saboteurs. The government knows about domestic criminals and saboteurs. To say that foreign elements are responsible for everything that is going on is to resort to mere excuses. Those who extract ransoms are internal elements. There are terrorist

organizations within our cities and villages. Thus, foreign interference and foreign saboteurs alone cannot be held responsible for the situation. Once antisocial elements within the country are brought under control, no one from outside will be able to attack the peaceful civilians.

I must complain of those political parties as well which have been infiltrated by professional criminals. When one of these criminal members is caught, the entire political party raises a hue and cry and demands the release of the criminal on a political basis. When a political party is unwilling to distinguish between its workers and professional criminals, how can the situation improve? Political parties should fear God and abstain from supporting members who are criminals. They should not become a refuge for criminals.

[Javed] What is your stand on the government's recent price increases in necessities?

[Abbasi] The recent price hikes are a cruel act against the people and the government's action proves that its economic policy has failed. The government's self-indulgent and excessive expenses—the seven billion rupees spent over the past year on meetings and processions, the millions of rupees spent on political bribes, the many government party people sent abroad, the innumerable scandals, the foreign loans received blindly hand over fist—all of these things are causing the economic ruin of the country. The banks are near bankruptcy and the national treasury is empty, but it is the destitute who are being punished. Our country had become self-sufficient in wheat, but now wheat is being imported. The full burden of the increase in the price of diesel fuel and fertilizer has now been imposed on the cultivators. [The cost of] transportation will cause an increase in the prices of all commodities. The price of manufactured articles will rise. The price of kerosene, which is used mainly by the poor, has been raised. The prices of railway tickets have been increased. It is as though the people themselves are being plundered. The bad intentions of the government are evidenced by the fact that prices have been raised near budget time so that the government would be able to say that it has not increased the budget. It is regrettable to see this policy of deceiving the people being followed by a government which talks tirelessly about the poor but continues boldly to bleed them. We have never had any illusions about this government. If any group of people had any illusions or expectations from this government, those hopes have been crushed by the government itself in the past year.

We demand that the government cancel price hikes; that it reduce its expenditure and seek new ways. The world price of oil has fallen but our government has raised the price of oil as a result of which several airlines have decided to cancel their flights to Pakistan. The government's idiotic actions have made Pakistan a target of world ridicule. [passage omitted]

MQM Leader's Hunger Strike Said for 'Petty Reasons'

90AS0053C Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 18 Apr 90 p 3

[Article by Abdul Karim Abid entitled: "Siyasat Namah: Why Doesn't Altaf Hussain Make Basic Demands Instead of Petty Ones?"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] If one gives thought to Altaf Hussain's hunger strike, one can sympathize with him and the MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement]. But instead of making basic and concrete demands, he has raised minor issues. If the hunger strike had been for Karachi province, for a quota system, or for having a formula accepted under which power in Sindh would be divided equitably between Sindhis and non-Sindhis, or at least for putting into effect the formula agreed upon between representatives of the Muhajirs and the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] following the linguistic riots caused by Mumtaz Bhutto, then this hunger strike would have presented a clear picture of Muhajir demands to the nation. There is at present a pretty good social and country-wide force to have these demands accepted. But all issues have been abandoned, and the release and arrest of certain individuals has been made the main and major issue. But the main issue is not individuals, but the reorganization of the government and the executive [system]. In the present government and executive [system], total power is concentrated in the hands of one protagonist, and the non-Sindhis have the status of a mere minority whose sole duty is either to endure in silence the other group's oppression or to rise up in protest and create a commotion. But merely expressing the sense of deprivation and crying out against oppression does not solve the problem. The solution lies in having a formula or new system accepted, which would give the representatives of the non-Sindhi population the right to solve their problems so that they would not remain at the mercy of Sindhi major landowners or pro-Sindhi politicians and administration. It is unfortunate that throughout its struggle, MQM has been influenced by emotion and has made no effort to put forward concrete proposals and have them accepted.

The opportunity to have their demands accepted was lost at the time when MQM's delegates were reaching an agreement with the PPP to bring it into office. A non-sense stand should have been taken on five or seven basic issues, and Benazir would have had to announce an unequivocal acceptance of the conditions. Instead, Muhajir leaders got involved with Prem Kumar Shahani and, when MQM did reach an agreement, a meaningless ledger of 60 points, which deserved to sink into oblivion and did so, was prepared. But the resulting loss was that, on the one hand, the non-Sindhi Muhajir population gained nothing and, on the other hand, since the problem was not solved, the door to severe tensions and clashes in the future remained open. Altaf Hussain's present hunger strike has not brought to the fore the real political and economic problems of non-Sindhis. Only the arrest and release of certain individuals is the main issue. But

even if these individuals should be arrested or released as Altaf Hussain wants, the problem of Muhajirs, of Karachi, or of non-Sindhis in Sindh will not be solved because the problem is not about individuals but involves a change in the system—a change which will bring about a just and equal division of power. Without such a division, disorder will persist. In order to uproot disorder, attention should be focussed on a new system which will allow different groups in Sindh to live in peace and security, without feeling deprived or oppressed. To achieve this end, a brief but specific and concrete political formula is needed. If these are not the principles demanded, what then would be the use of going on hunger strikes, rioting, or wasting energy on nonessential matters?

State of Education Said Deplorable, Campus Violence Condemned

90AS0087A Karachi JANG in Urdu 3 May 90 p 3

[Article by Ahmed Nadim Qasimi: "Raging Sea of Life and the Sinking of Education"]

[Text] A blind man becoming restless once said he sometimes wished he could see. Similarly, sometimes we too wish we could see peace and tranquillity, prosperity, love, people free from want and poverty, people sharing in the development and prosperity of the whole country, that there would be no crime and that words like murder and dacoity would be erased from our dictionaries, political discussion would be the other name of understanding, brotherhood. Under the present circumstances, making such wishes is just like a blind man's wish that he could see sometime. But there is one wish without the success of which the future of our country seems to be faced with danger. This wish is that dishonesty and corruption be eliminated from the world of education. Political parties should be banned from admission in to educational institutions. The function of the students' unions should consist mainly of resolving the difficulties of the students, providing them with legal facilities and nothing more. The people entering and passing through the boundaries of colleges and universities should not get the feeling that they are walking through a jungle where they could be subjected to an attack any time. God forbid, if this wish of ours is not fulfilled, then remember that we do not have any future at all. After all, it is the people undergoing education that have to bear the burden of responsibility. If these elements start brandishing kalashnikovs, instead of using pens, then won't our civilization be blown to pieces? Shujaat Rajvi, an MA student in Urdu, has written some lines on the situation of higher education instruction. We present them to you:

Say something you men of knowledge and wisdom

Who is it that is responsible for bringing me in disrepute

I had left home with books under my arm

Who is it that has handed me a gun

There is smell of gunpowder in the environment

I would like to know who is making merry

Who is it that has kindled the flame of hate

Who is it that has extinguished the flame of love

Differences do occur

But who is it that has aggravated the situation

I am a singer of love, but

Who is it that has suppressed my voice

Who is the oppressor, Shujaat

That has set fire to the flowers

Whatever the private nature of these verses, the underlying grief and sorrow is apparent from every single word. This is the voice of a student who wishes to study, who wishes to acquire knowledge, would like to glorify his individual civilization, would like to beautify his culture...goodness..., would like to end strain, prejudice, hostility, and political competition. We wish that everyone would think and act in this manner and that our educational institutions would turn around into practical centers of learning.

We would like to draw the attention of the statesmen in this direction and tell them with due respect that, for the love of God and his Prophet, for the love, safety, and survival of the country, forgive the students and allow them to apply themselves to their studies. If they do not study, who will build the future of Pakistan? For God's sake, restrict your activities to the legislative assemblies and do not hold rallies and demonstrations one after the other because the whole nation gets involved and in the end you don't get anything out of it, but on the other hand something is always lost, even though it may be the loss of confidence, belief, trust, determination, and resolution.

But the politicians never paid any attention to our requests just as they never did previously. So the only safe procedure would be to address ourselves directly to our youth, our brethren and sons, and request them humbly that we are in deep trouble. Have you heard this story about Noah's storm? When the water level started rising, a mother raised her child to her shoulders; and when the water level rose further, she held him on her head; and when the water entered her mouth and nose, sensing her death approaching, she put the child down under the water and stood on the child. God forbid that we be faced with such...a situation. But isn't it a fact that the level of water is gradually rising every day?

Politics has its own interest. But the limit is that religious parties too have their own expediencies, as such, the persons we should address first must be our young students on whose intelligence and sagacity we can

swear, but who have become involved in politics. After the students, the people we address are their parents. Our society is male oriented. Mothers perform their duties perfectly well. We can ask the fathers of the students that being strict with their children is certainly not right. They should certainly be free to act. But differentiating between freedom and unrestraint should be the duty of the parents.

After the students and the parents, the people we address are the teachers, most of whom have given up hope under the prevalent conditions and left everything to the will of God. But still, there are teachers who are aware of their responsibilities, but who listens to them in these difficult days. With the exception of the teachers who leave everything to the will of God, there are others who are frustrated or are intimidated or believe that these times too will pass away. Their negative attitude has played a major role in the enhancement of lack of activities on the part of the students. To make them aware of their responsibilities would indeed be a good deed.

In the end, we address ourselves to the educational authorities. In the first place, they have painted the antiquated educational system of the days of servitude and are claiming it to be a new system. The truth is, in the words of the coach driver, Mangu, in Saadat Hassan Minto's famous novel "The New Law," there is no new law. It is the same law...the old law. Which educational experts were consulted while preparing the educational system for training the children of a free nation mentally, spiritually, and affirmatively, and what is the sum total of their education? What are the bases used as the standard for preparing books for the curriculum? Do the people preparing the books for the scientific syllabus have a knowledge of the latest developments in the field of science? Couldn't the people selecting books for Urdu literature get any books other than Mir Taqi Mir's...?

How do you explain the fact that the student who studies diligently the year round finds himself at the tail-end of the line of students when the results are announced? Against this, the students who spent practically the whole year attending rallies and demonstrations and kalashnikov training are seen at the head of the line. Do the universities have any answers for the allegations of the diligent students that the examination papers were checked in haste and that some answer papers were not even read and as such were not checked at all to see who did well and who did not do well, whose answer papers were up to the standard and whose answers were not up to the standard? It is difficult to understand what the magical spell was for giving higher marks to the students whose answers were not up to the standard, which pushed the students with correct answers into the background. Do the vice-chancellors have sufficient courage and determination to appoint strong and honest committees which could investigate the irregularities and take steps to put an end to these abuses once and for all?

Do they have the slightest indication of the upsurge of violent, indignant emotions in the industrious young students whose efforts are wasted in this fashion? These could create a psychological revolution in his mentality and bring about anguish and torment in the already tormented society.

Politics, Fighting in Pakistan Steel Mills Condemned

90AS0064A Karachi AMN in Urdu 26 Apr 90 p 3

[Editorial: "There Is No Justification for Violence in Steel Mills"]

[Text] As a result of the exchange of gunfire among the employees of Pakistan Steel, the country's largest industrial organization and the backbone of the country's economy, one man was killed and three employees were wounded including Khaled Murtaza, the chairman of CPA [expansion unknown] United Workers Front, who was shot in the spine. His condition is regarded as very serious. Following the shooting incident, work has virtually stopped in all sections of Pakistan Steel. Army troops have been stationed around the mills and police and rangers have increased their rounds. But until the real causes of the disturbance are removed, the situation cannot be expected to improve.

As in other industrial institutions of the world, Pakistan Steel also has several labor unions and each one claims to be the defender of the interests of workers and to have their true welfare at heart. One labor union is elected by a majority vote of the related workers' organization as their negotiating agent for a specified period of time. All other unions cooperate with it in a democratic fashion. After the expiration of the specified period, the workers have the right to elect a new negotiating agent. This procedure is followed at Pakistan Steel as well. However, ever since the majority of workers have elected as their negotiating agent the MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement]-supported United Workers Front, circles connected with the negotiating agent claim that their rival group, the National Alliance, has been bringing about a deterioration of the situation. There have been previous incidents of exchanges of gunfire among rival labor unions in Pakistan Steel and these incidents started again the other night. The details of why the trouble started and who was responsible have appeared in the national newspapers. It seems that the recent incidents in Pakistan Steel are links in the chain of events involving the tug of war going on between MQM and the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] in Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sindh, and the efforts of these parties to humiliate each other. Commenting on the recent incidents in Pakistan Steel, Dr. Emran Farouq, secretary general of MQM, said: "The PPP has refused to accept, from day one, the success of the MQM-supported United Workers Front in the recent steel mill elections. As a result, not only is the union's work being obstructed, but federal ministers are trying to usurp the union's powers. Khaled Murtaza and other union officials have received death

threats from terrorists, and an attempt on Khaled Mur-taza's life was made in Hasan square where shots were fired at his car. A federal minister has threatened to close down the steel mills."

An opposite view is expressed by the leaders of the rival party, the National Alliance, who claim that the incidents of violence were in fact a conspiracy to shut down the steel mills and that the United Workers Front was responsible for them.

Apart from the questions of who is responsible for the present situation, who is telling the truth, and who is making [false] accusations, the fact remains that the effects of repeated incidents of shootings and assassination attempts in Pakistan Steel will be felt not only in the country's economy and the law and order situation in Karachi, but a severe reaction will result all over the country. The reason for this is that Pakistan Steel is a small scale Pakistan where 22,000 individuals are employed. Thus, 22,000 families are directly or indirectly connected with Pakistan Steel. Families of every area and city are involved in this national institution, and the effects of any incidents occurring here will be felt far and wide.

As mentioned before, the two rival groups of employees in Pakistan Steel are directly or indirectly connected with MQM and the PPP. As long as a practicable agreement is not reached between these two parties, industrial peace will remain in danger, not only in Pakistan Steel but in all of Karachi's industrial institutions. If these conditions are not brought under control, they will grow into political, economic, and industrial crises for the country. It is therefore necessary not to turn insignificant matters into questions of prestige, but to keep in mind the interests of the nation and adopt a course of action which will secure industrial and civil peace and security. This will prove advantageous to everyone including the party in office and the opposition.

Commentary: War With India To Strain Army-Government Relations

90AS0053B Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 17 Apr 90 p 3

[Editorial entitled: "In the Event of War, What Will the Domestic Situation Be?"]

[Text] Judging by the attitudes of India and Pakistan, the danger of conflict appears imminent. However, some British newspapers say that V. P. Singh does not want war, but is talking of war because of domestic pressure, with a view to saving his prestige and popularity. But Indian troops are engaged in large-scale activity near Pakistan's borders. This activity is being called military maneuvers, but American sources as well have remarked on the unexpectedly prolonged Indian winter maneuvers in a desert area near Pakistan's border. The SUNDAY TELEGRAPH of London expressed the view that India and Pakistan were close to a fourth war over Kashmir and that the only way that V. P. Singh could save his

coalition government was to go to war. The London newspaper INDEPENDENT reports that border troops had shot at each other on numerous occasions. In Delhi and Islamabad, American ambassadors are trying to get peace talks started and a high level U.S. state department delegation is touring the area with the same purpose in mind, but there seems to be little chance of negotiations. India's friend and supporter, Russia, also realizes the seriousness of the situation and has advised India to start talks with Pakistan in accordance with the Simla agreement, but India persists in its claim that Kashmir is India's inseparable part which it is not ready to relinquish at any price. There are obvious signs that if India should see Kashmir slipping out of its hands, it will impose a war on Pakistan and impressive preparations for this war have been made, not only on Kashmir's borders but on Sindh's borders as well. If a war should break out, the desert region will become the arena of intense fighting.

India would not want a limited war because it would consider such a war injurious to itself. Hence, Indian military leaders hold the view that by means of a large scale war, India should remove once and for all Pakistan's thorn from its side, otherwise India would lose not only Kashmir but Eastern Punjab as well, and paying such a price for peace would put India on the path to destruction. This point of view is accepted by all Indian political parties, and both the right and the left wing groups are expressing unanimity on this point.

In view of this situation, our own military preparations are complete and we can express satisfaction over this fact. But the way a nation should be united politically in the face of war and be able to forget all its quarrels and think of saving the country—this situation does not exist here. The situation is indeed the reverse of what it should be. Hence, Indian analysts are predicting that, in the event of a war, democracy will be the first casualty in Pakistan. The army will have to remove Benazir and take over the reins of power, otherwise the army will not be able to carry on the war because the unreliable and faithless elements occupying the avenues of power will sabotage everything. It is being said in Pakistan as well that if it should come to a war, it will be necessary first of all to remove the leadership of the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] and the Bhutto family. When a country's political leadership becomes so controversial and suspect, then the preparedness and high quality of the armed forces cannot make up for the lack [of political leadership]. The Indian intellectual Subramaniam goes so far as to write in an Indian newspaper that Bhutto had deliberately pushed the Pakistani army into the two wars of 1965 and 1971, in order to destroy it, and that Bhutto's successors can still use the war remedy. There is no shortage of people in this country who agree with Subramaniam.

But Bhutto was in a different category. He had deep conspiratorial ties with foreign elements and certain self-seeking generals. Bhutto had become a political

power vis-a-vis Ayub Khan. But Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has no deep roots. From the very beginning, she was not given control over the foreign and defense departments and, even now, no decisions can be made in regard to foreign or defense matters without the consent of the army. Most important of all, Benazir holds the reins of power and she does not need to enter into any

conspiracy to hold on to that power because the Pakistani army itself has placed her in the seat of office, has supported her, and wants to keep her in office in the future. The possibility of an outbreak of war has increased the need for keeping Benazir Bhutto and the PPP in office, in order to avoid any unpleasantness in Sindh and to prevent anxiety in the midst of war.